

Caregiver Endurance Guide

Caring for Yourself and Your Aging Loved One

Objectives

Identify issues you and your aging loved one may encounter

Define strategies to help you and your loved one approach the aging process

Discuss how to work through resistance

Learn how to look after your own health and well-being, including how the EAP can help

Who are caregivers?

Women (primary caregivers)

Adult children

Parents

Spouses

Partners

Neighbors

Everyone



What is a caregiver?

A family member/paid helper (provides care/oversight)

Companion

Nurse-like aid

Medication-tracker

Financial and legal “expert”

Transportation

Daily living tasks

Tips for new caregivers

Identify yourself as a caregiver

Get a good diagnosis of your loved one's condition

Understand financial and healthcare wishes

Bring family and friends together to discuss care

Identify resources in the community

Find support for yourself and your loved one



What feelings come up with caregiving?

Ambivalence

Embarrassment

Anger

Fear

Anxiety

Frustration

Boredom

Grief

Crankiness/irritability

Guilt

Depression

Impatience

Disgust

Jealousy

Remember, you have a right to
all of your emotions

Caring for yourself

Lack of appreciation

Loneliness

Loss

Resentment

Tiredness



Issues that come up in the aging process

Memory changes (recall, short and long-term)

Decline in ability to think clearly, attention and focus

Slowed reaction time

Hearing loss

Fragility and loss of muscle mass

Mobility impairments

Increase in Dementia, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Lou Gehrig's disease

Visual impairments

Loss of independence (ability to drive)

How to approach the aging process

Patience is most important

Keep in touch and visit frequently (Especially if in a nursing/assisting living facility)

Help them understand 'why'

Get them out of the house and assist with errands

Facilitate spending time with friends they enjoy

Help them develop new interests, hobbies, etc.



Dealing with resistance

Why are they refusing care?

Have a conversation

Ask their opinion

Use simple language

Get help from other family members

Discuss cost

Keep trying

What happens if things become violent?

Try the task you are requesting later

Do not argue back

Apologize even if it's not your fault

Offer a distraction

Remain calm and speak in a loving manner

Rest time

If you are in immediate danger, call 911

Keep track of what triggered the outburst

What about care for the caregivers?

Exhaustion

You are never not a caregiver

How do you know you aren't coping well?

Listen to your body



What about care for the caregivers?

Boundaries

Time for you (at least two hours of leisure time weekly)

Breathing

Maximize your alone time

Physical activity

Contact your EAP



Recommended reading

Burnout-The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle by Emily Nagoski PhD and Amelia Nagoski DMA

The Conscious Caregiver: A Mindful Approach to Caring for Your Loved One Without Losing Yourself by Linda Abbit

Cruising Through Caregiving: Reducing the Stress of Caring for Your Loved One by Jennifer L. Fitzpatrick

Holding the Net: Caring for My Mother on the Tightrope of Aging by Melanie Merriman

My Two Elaines: Learning, Coping and Surviving as an Alzheimer's Caregiver by Martin Schreiber

Your Employee Assistance Program

Call toll-free or visit us on the web

24 hours a day/7 days a week

Thank you!

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