

Momentum

Caring for caregivers



Go online to access more information!

Getting help

- ✓ Asking for help when needed will allow you more time for yourself and boost your caregiving resilience.
- ✓ By participating in a local or online support group, you'll get caregiving tips from others facing the same challenges you are.
- ✓ Finding appropriate support services can be as much an act of caregiving as providing them yourself.
- ✓ Arranging for respite care services (in-home or at a center) will give you much-needed time off via skilled caregiving coverage.

Avoiding caregiver burnout

While caring for a family member with a disability or chronic disease can be rewarding, it can also be quite demanding. Caregivers sometimes expend so much time and energy helping others that they neglect their own physical and emotional health. This can lead to caregiver burnout—characterized by physical, emotional and mental exhaustion. It's vital for caregivers to prioritize self-care, and to reach out for the help they may need.

- If you're a caregiver, ask family members for help with tasks (e.g., shopping, housecleaning, errands, etc.), and include them in caregiving decisions.
- Identify the caregiving tasks or situations that typically trigger stress for you, and strategize about how to better handle them.
- Take care of yourself in areas such as diet, rest and exercise. Take breaks and continue to do things you enjoy.



Webinar—Join our Wednesday, November 13 webinar, *Caregiver Endurance Guide: Caring for Yourself and Your Aging Loved One*. Register [here](#).

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Mind Your Mental Health

If you're caring for someone who has a mental illness, you may be well familiar with the ups and downs of the recovery process for both parties. Approximately one out of four caregivers for people with mental illness suffers with depression themselves. However, there are resources available.

- [Review these tips](#) on how to be an effective caregiver—through self-education about mental illness, recovery advocacy, being a trusted friend and practicing adequate self-care.
- Providing care for a family member can have various physical and mental effects, including stress. [Consider these challenges and associated coping strategies.](#)
- [Take this brief quiz](#) to help determine if you'd likely benefit from setting more limits and attaining better balance in your life.

Working on Wellness

If you're a caregiver, recognize that you cannot take care of others unless you take care of yourself too. Here are some tips for maintaining your energy and enthusiasm.

- Plan occasional outside activities with friends. Strive to stay involved in things that give you purpose beyond your caregiving role.
- Practice relaxation techniques. Continue with your medical appointments. Spot signs that you need time off and more support.

Daily Diligence

Many adults face the challenge of coordinating care for elderly relatives who are geographically distant. Know that you can provide valuable help even when not nearby.

- Develop an understanding of the person's health issues and other needs. Serve as an information coordinator for the family regarding medicines, community resources and insurance benefits.
- Stay in regular contact, and provide emotional support and occasional respite care for the primary on-site caregiver.

Additional sources: NIH/National Institute on Aging, Healthwise, Cleveland Clinic, Caregiver.org.

Impacts of family caregiving

53%

of family caregivers reported feeling high levels of stress.

46%

said caregiving had a negative impact on their own health and well-being.

Source: Genworth "Beyond Dollars" 2018 caregiving study.