



The Emotional Challenges of Caregiving

Taking care of someone else can be challenging.
Taking care of yourself in the process is often harder.

What *is* emotional support?

Emotional support is when those around you say or do things that help *you* and offer encouragement and comfort during difficult times.

Support can come in many ways - from family, friends, religious organizations, support groups, caregiver chat rooms, or counselors.

It is important to find people and activities that help you feel better.

Caring for others is filled with many mixed and varied emotions such as feelings of love, loss, anger, affection, sadness, frustration, and guilt.

It's not uncommon for family caregivers to feel lonely and isolated. It takes a lot of physical, mental, spiritual, *and emotional* energy to care for a loved one.

Caregivers often experience a higher rate of stress, anxiety, and depression than those who aren't caregivers.

You've probably heard it before - you need to take care of yourself! That can seem overwhelming and often requires energy and support to help make some changes.

The Importance of Emotional Support

It's important for you to feel emotionally supported. Current research is clear that those who get emotional support while caregiving fare far better and provide care longer than those who don't.


Family and friends, while a valuable emotional support system for some, may not always be available or particularly helpful now. This is not unusual. Changing family roles, unresolved past family dynamics, and stress brought on by your loved one's health, can strain even the best of support systems and relationships.

Expanding Your Emotional Support Network

You may need more or a different kind of emotional support than your current support network can offer. What could help you feel more supported?

- A few hours for yourself?
- More information about your loved one's disease or condition?
- Getting some help solving caregiving problems?
- A sympathetic ear ... someone who can listen without judging?
- Spending time with others, especially those in similar situations?

If any of these things would help you feel more supported, there is good news. A variety of family caregiver support services offer this kind of emotional support, information, and knowledgeable advice.

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