

Caregiving Tips

PROVIDED BY YOU



Encouraging Words

- Remember you are doing the best you can and give yourself grace.
- Spend time with the one you are caring for. Don't put off today because tomorrow might not happen. Enjoy each moment with them. Do as much with them as you possibly can, time is SO important.
- Trust your gut and seek help & guidance.
- Take time for you, too!
- Do things with your loved one as you never know how long you have with them. Make those memories.
- Give yourself credit. The care you give does make a difference.
- When you care for someone at their worst, they may say some things they don't mean because they're frustrated. Never take it to heart and continue showing up to give love and support to them. You don't want regrets when they do pass.
- Have lots of patience/create a balance that works for you.
- Take one day at a time.
- Seek help when needed.
- Be grateful for every moment that you can help.

Making Memories

- Decorate their home for seasonal holidays.
- Take them out to eat as a special treat, such as after a doctor appointment.
- Watch Wheel of Fortune together.
- Make an effort to replace birthday parties with family trips. Include the whole family in celebrations.
- Create a "hands casting." Everyone interlocks hands and someone pours the materials and it creates a cast of the hands interlocked to be a lasting physical memory of loved ones.
- Create a photo collage in the shape of their name or an image.
- Play games to keep their mind active.
- If you have animals, let them visit your loved one. Animals are so gentle and loving.
- Remind them of upcoming holidays/birthdays.
- Continue family traditions (i.e. Weekly Sabbath Dinners, Weekly Sunday dinners, Daily calls, etc.)
- Create a gift for your loved one – Reach out to their friends and additionally family members, and ask them to share a memory or anything that makes them smile when they think of your loved one. They can email it, text it, WhatsApp it, etc. to you. You can then print them out and cut each note into little strips and add them to a vase/jar/whatever works best for your loved one. They can then reflect on the impression they made on the people around them.
 - I also posted the ones for my mother at her memorial.

Caregiving Tips

PROVIDED BY YOU



Medication Management

- Create a visual aid on medication - two rubber bands for medications taken twice a day and one for medications taken once.
- Dispose of medications in kitty litter or coffee grounds - pour vials in and bag up trash.
- Review their medications frequently. Distribute to ensure they do not under medicate or over medicate and that no medications contradict each other. Many elders have too many medications and/or are not taking them properly. Question every medication with the physician who prescribed it.

Practical Advice

- If you hire a nurse from an agency, you can hire for 1 hour in the morning and 1 hour in the evening. Don't feel like you need all day.
- Bring them food – Fresh Market has a Little Big Meal deal for 4 for \$20.
- Have a large clock/calendar screen that lists the date, day of the week, time (including AM/PM). This helps with orienting them around the appropriate time.
- Call PBC Senior Services (or your local chapter) for additional help your loved one may qualify for.
- Make sure someone is a co-signer on their bank account and can review charges.
- Block spam calls on their phone - they target the elderly.
- Give them respect and treat them with dignity.
- Use free EAP Services to find resources.
- Use GrannyNannies.com for day care or housekeeping services.
- Don't be afraid to ask their doctor for Home Health or other services.
- In advance - research your local hospice centers. They are not all the same and you will want to find one that fits your loved one's and family's needs.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions - ask the doctors, nurses, CNAs, etc.
- Utilize grief support services at a child's school when they lose a loved one.
- Be judgement free and don't criticize how other family members choose to do something. Just as leaders in business, sometimes we need to take a less dominant role.
- When you prepare food for them, label the container with what's inside.
- Foot care is important. Take them to get toenails clipped - it's amazing how fast they grow.
- Show appreciation and gratitude to your loved ones's caregivers (ie. CNAs, nurses)
- Get them something to write down things they've done so they can go back to reference. (I.e. Monday took pills)
- Limit sweets.
- Buy garments with snaps/easy to put on.

Caregiving Tips

PROVIDED BY YOU



- For those with memory challenges, get a white board and write reminders on it such as:
 - Important phone numbers
 - To do lists
 - Upcoming birthdays
 - Put on deodorant/charge cell phone
 - Put a reminder that you love them at the end.
 - Get a calendar and put their doctor's appointments on it.

Self-Care

- Have someone that you, as the caregiver, can talk to. Or be there for someone that's in the caretaker role. Listen to them and let them share.
- Ask for help. It does not show weakness.
- Schedule respite for yourself. It's ok to take a break. Take care of yourself!

Senior Living

- Be aware that if you hire homecare or place family in assisted living, you will often have to budget for additional care from a private agency.

Technology

- Remember to place cameras around the house.
- Utilize Storycorps App to interview family members – saves their responses in the app.
- Set up their iPhone with the following:
 - Health ID: Blood type, meds, etc.
 - Emergency SOS (how to use, contacts, etc.)
 - Find My iPhone – share location, and share username/password with a trusted family member
- Have your loved one use Life Alert or set up an Apple Watch to send you a notification if and when they fall.
- Get an Echo Show and you can call and see them on a set schedule - a daily reminder to tell them "I Love You."
- Drop in regularly through Amazon Alexa Devices
- Teach someone who is hard of hearing how to text on a phone to communicate throughout the day.
- Create a playlist of their favorite music.
- Have a form of communication with all family members (email, group chat, WhatsApp, etc.) to keep them informed and provide support and advice.