



Share the Care: Involve the Whole Family in Caregiving

1. Become a Knowledgeable Caregiver: Gather up the necessary tools

- a. Prepare yourself with the facts
- b. Seek professional help
- c. Have a vision in mind- What are your objectives?

2. Provide patient-centered care

- a. Establish goals, focusing on the needs of the care receiver
- b. If they are able to remain involved, keep them involved

3. Involve other family members and friends

- a. Ask for Help
 - i. Identify SPECIFIC tasks that others can fulfill (e.g., household repairs, grocery shopping, cooking, paying bills, grooming, pet care, medication management)
 - ii. Share your list with family members and friends
 - iii. Give everyone a job
 1. Get creative- especially when it comes to long distance family members
 2. Make the necessary changes needed in order for others to help
- b. Accept Help
 - i. Be prepared to share your list
 - ii. The more you practice accepting help, the easier it will become

4. Involve close friends, neighbors, and service providers

- a. Tie up all loose ends
- b. Have a back-up plan
 - i. Access your community resources for volunteers
 - ii. Develop a communication strategy for cancellations

Manage a Family Meeting

1. The best time to communicate with other family members is BEFORE a crisis.
2. Involve all the key players.
3. Develop an agenda: What is the goal? Why are you meeting?
4. Meet in a neutral location that is comfortable and convenient.
5. Identify a facilitator; one who can remain neutral and has good communication skills.
6. Take turns being a talker and a listener.
7. Share suggestions without criticizing.
8. Balance out the pros and cons of each option.
9. Share the care. Make sure that each person understands what they have agreed to do.
10. End with a summary. If a goal was not reached, schedule a time to revisit the issue.

Preventing and Responding to Challenging Situations

1. You can't always be the problem solver or the "fixer."
2. Focus on one or two goals at a time. More than that can become overwhelming.
3. Understand that you can't fix the family issues of the past, but you can move past them in order to help your loved one.
4. Think before you speak. –Take a minute, if necessary, to process your next phrase.
5. If you are going to criticize a suggestion, be prepared to be a part of the solution.
6. Agree to disagree, without being disagreeable.
7. Obtain the help of an objective outside party if needed.
8. Keep in mind that it may take more than one conversation to reach a solution.
9. Meet regularly to plan ahead and respond to issues that arise as you proceed.
10. Remember to B-R-E-A-T-H-E

Tips on How to Handle Familial Relationships

1. Don't expect anything.

This does not mean that it's wrong to ask a brother, sister, or other relative for help. It's simply a matter of perspective. Don't expect and you won't be disappointed.

2. Help yourself by reinforcing positive behavior in others.

Say: "I'm so glad you visited Mom the other day. Your visit really calmed her."

Instead of: "So you FINALLY visited Mom the other day! It's about time!"

3. Be very clear about what you're able to do and not do.

Understand your limitations. Set your boundaries. Share these with others involved in the care.

4. Be open and honest.

Be honest with your needs, requests, and limitations.

5. Be responsible.

If you say you are going to do something, do it. If others see that you are following through on what you say, they will be more likely to do the same. By following through on your responsibilities, you will let others know that they can count on you and vice versa.

6. Be forgiving.

We don't all share the same limitations or views on caregiving. Some people can handle 24/7 care, others can't. Some can handle grief and loss better than others. Learn to be ok with each others' differences. You will continue being family through this experience; allow it to make your relationships stronger.

Take Care of You

I have the right to take care of myself.

This is not an act of selfishness.

It will enable me to take better care of my loved one.



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