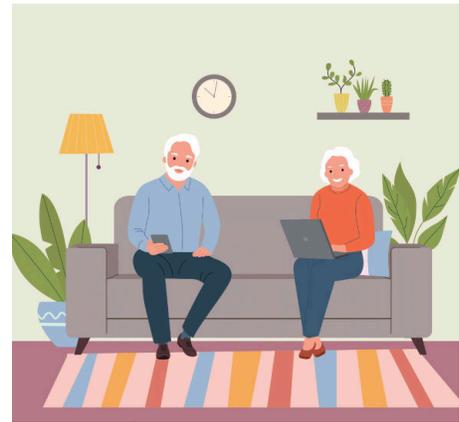


# Spousal Caregiving

*Caring for a spouse can change your relationship dynamic, bringing you closer together or creating challenges, depending on how you approach caregiving.*



## Relationship Changes

Becoming a spousal caregiver often **shifts household responsibilities**, with the caregiver taking on more than they may be used to. The **level of independence** each of you had before and your **personal identities**, or how you view yourself, can change as well. These changes add an extra layer of stress beyond the usual challenges of caregiving.

## Adapt to Now

If you and your spouse have **special traditions**, try to **maintain** or **adapt** them to fit your current situation. For instance, if you usually celebrate your anniversary at a favorite restaurant, consider ordering takeout from there if leaving the house isn't an option.

## Communication

Don't bottle up your feelings. **Be honest** about how caregiving is impacting you, while **remaining empathetic**. If there are ways your loved one can support you as their caregiver, communicate them. If conversations become unhealthy or toxic, consider **seeking professional guidance**.

## Self-Care

**Take time for yourself**. Since you're caregiving at home, it might help to create a special spot just for you - somewhere you can be alone or enjoy activities like reading, exercising, or crafting. Consider joining a support group for spousal caregivers to **get advice from others** who understand your situation.

## Love Language

Strengthen the relationship by expressing and showing love through your spouse's love language:

- **Acts of Service**: Doing helpful tasks or actions to make your spouse's life easier.
- **Gifts**: Giving or receiving thoughtful, meaningful, or symbolic gifts.
- **Quality Time**: Spending focused, undistracted time together.
- **Physical Touch**: Showing love through touch, like hugs or holding hands.