

CAREGIVER AWARENESS

Myth & **Reality**

Challenges
of Caregiving

Getting Help
Caregiving Haven

Understanding
Respite Care

The Senior
Alliance

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Finding the Support You Deserve. Caregiving Haven, launched in May 2024 by The Senior Alliance, is designed to provide caregivers and their support networks with valuable resources, guidance, and connections.

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Caregiver Wellness & Communication

Many myths surround caregiving, and identifying the myths from the reality can be a helpful first step in finding support.

MYTH	REALITY
“ I have to do everything myself. ”	Seeking help from others is a sign of strength and good caregiving.
“ I am neglecting my loved one if I take a break. ”	Taking breaks helps maintain your well-being and enables you to provide better care in the long-term.
“ Caregiving should come naturally to me. ”	Like any skill, caregiving needs to be learned and developed.
“ My loved one does not need professional help; I can handle it all. ”	Some care tasks are beyond your capabilities, and that is OKAY.
“ I am a bad caregiver if I get angry or frustrated. ”	Caregivers can experience a range of emotions. Learning how to manage them is important.
“ You are only a caregiver if the person lives with you. ”	Caregiving arrangements vary. If you consistently help someone, you are a caregiver.
“ You are only a caregiver if you watch over a family member. ”	Many people are caregivers for friends, neighbors, or co-workers.
“ There is no support for caregivers, only for care recipients. ”	Caregiver resources exist, but it can take time to find them.

As a caregiver, it is easy to become burnt out by overcommitting and neglecting other areas of your life.

Challenges of Caregiving

Each day, millions of caregivers worldwide support loved ones – aging parents, chronically ill or disabled friends, spouses, or other relatives.

Caregiving is an act of love, and it can also take a significant emotional, physical, and financial toll. Many caregivers put their loved one's needs first, often at the expense of their own wellbeing. Understanding these challenges is the first step toward building a stronger, more supported caregiving journey.

Common challenges caregivers face include:

- **Emotional strain:** Prioritizing others can lead to exhaustion, isolation, and even depression.
- **Physical demands:** Assisting with mobility or daily tasks can cause injuries or chronic pain.
- **Financial stress:** Reduced work hours or job loss, combined with rising care costs, can create serious financial pressure.
- **Limited support:** While resources are improving, many caregivers still lack the help they need.

Caregivers are resilient, and no one should have to do it alone. Acknowledging their sacrifices and expanding access to support are critical steps forward.



Getting Help

There are resources available to help caregivers. Check out the **Support** section of The Senior Alliance Caregiving Haven website to find listings of local resources and for expert advice.



Support Groups

Joining a group can provide caregivers with emotional relief and practical advice that helps reduce isolation and develop coping strategies.



Professional Advice

It is critical to consult with a doctor or mental health professional if the stress of caregiving becomes overwhelming.



Home Healthcare Services

Home healthcare services may include medical care, therapy, and assistance with daily activities provided at home by healthcare professionals.



Financial Assistance

You may have questions about medication – safety of using OTC & prescriptions, possible side effects, managing a medication schedule, and more.

Caregiving Haven

Finding the Support You Deserve

Caregiver support groups, podcasts, and online communities can offer safe havens for sharing advice and receiving empathy and support from fellow caregivers.

Family and friends often find themselves in a caregiving role unexpectedly. Taking care of yourself first is essential for caregivers to remember. If you don't look after your own health, you may find yourself unable to care for your loved one.



[Visit Caregiver Haven Support](#)

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Understanding Respite Care

Respite care is assistance that provides temporary relief for caregivers. Respite care allows caregivers to take time to rest, take care of personal matters, or simply have a break from their duties.

res•pite

[rɛspɛt] noun
an interval of rest or relief



Types of Respite Care

Taking a break is essential for every caregiver. Respite care gives you time to recharge while ensuring your loved one receives safe, supportive care.

Here are some common options:

- **In-Home Services:** A professional caregiver comes to the home for a few hours to several days, allowing your loved one to stay in their familiar environment.
- **Short-Term Residential Care:** Assisted living or nursing homes offer short stays—ideal if you need to travel or take extended time off. Best for those with more complex needs.
- **Volunteer or Community Care:** Local programs or student volunteers provide companionship or basic assistance, often at a low cost—great for those with lighter care needs.

Caregiving Resources

The Senior Alliance's *Caregiver's Guide: Starting Your Caregiver Journey* provides invaluable tips and comprehensive information about assessment and planning, wellness and communication, selfcare, and other topics of interest to family and informal caregivers.

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