

Caring for Yourself While Caregiving

Think · Ask · Do

Caring for someone nearing the end of life can be both rewarding and stressful. This may be a tough time to think about your needs. But caring for yourself can help you better care for others. These ideas about what to think, ask, and do can get you started.



Think About

- **Your role.** Decide how much care you can give while keeping up with your own life. This is a first step in defining and managing your role.
- **Your resources.** Caregiving may require more time, money, and effort than expected. Think about how much you can contribute.
- **Your support system.** Recognize you may not be able to do it all. Family, friends, volunteers, and professional support make it easier.
- **Your relationships.** Consider how your caregiving commitments may affect others in your life.



Ask

- How much time do I think caregiving will take, and can I give that time?
- What are things that can help me manage stress?
- Which professionals can help me make informed decisions?
- Am I comfortable asking for and receiving help?
- With whom do I need to discuss options like assisted living or nursing care?
- How will this affect my job, and do I have the flexibility I need?
- How can I prepare the people in my life for my caregiving role?



Do

- **Get support.** Decide what you cannot do and get help. Consider a few hours of professional caregiving or ask friends to run errands.
- **Plan breaks.** Schedule time to take your mind off caregiving by walking, reading, meditating, or something else you enjoy.
- **Take care of your physical and mental health.** Maintain your routine as much as possible. Try to get enough sleep, eat well, exercise, and connect with others.
- **Manage expectations.** Be honest with yourself, your family, and your employer about what kind of support you need.