



Caregiver's Answers, Topics, and Helpful Information

In an endeavor to continually assist caregivers in their search for pertinent information regarding eldercare, our Information and Referral Specialists address topics most frequently asked questions via Caregiver's Answers, Topics, and Helpful Information (CATHI). Additionally, caregivers are invited to e-mail individual questions caregiver2@senior-resources-guilford.org and an Information and Referral Specialist will reply.

Dear CATHI,

Question: What are some effective ways to balance my time as a working caregiver?

Answer:

Set Priorities. Decide what is important, less important and somewhere in the middle. You may need to say “no” even if it disappoints others, set priorities based on your own needs, your family needs, job needs, and the care recipients needs. You may have to limit community service or other extra-curricular activities until you have fewer demands on your time. Priorities will change from day-to-day, and week-to-week, depending on the condition of your care recipient.

Set a Telephone Hour At Work. This might be during your lunch break, when your recipient, family members, or doctors can call you.

Rearrange Commitments Creatively. Schedule appointments and errands to make the most of your time.

Invest Time or Money in Things That Will Help You Manage Tasks. Consider using a computer, smartphone, a bookkeeper, or community resources to help manage your time effectively.

Arrange a Flexible Schedule. Try to set up a flexible schedule with your employer to allow you to make up missed time from work and if the demands on your time are too great.

Meet With Other Caregivers and/or Support Groups and Sel-Help Groups. Sharing eases tension, gives a new perspective of the situation, increases understanding and builds a support system around you. Support groups help you feel less isolated and alone. They give you a chance to share how you feel and what you have learned.

Accept Your Limitations. Ask for help from another family member, a neighbor or seek out community services when you need to take a break. What are you willing to give up to make your life easier?

Make Time for Yourself. Set aside time on a regular basis to be alone, take a walk, exercise, or have quiet time, even for a short period of time. You will be more productive, have more energy, and feel better about yourself. The person you care for will also benefit from you taking time to renew yourself.

Keep Good Records. Caregiving requires the use of many services. Working with service providers, insurance companies and others is often confusing and time-consuming. Keep track of contacts and information. Avoid relying too much on your memory. Make notes as you talk in person or over the phone. Keep copies of letters you write or receive regarding services that you use or receive.

Always make sure you ask questions about things you don't understand.

The information in this article was adapted from "Balancing Work, Family, and Caregiving by the University of Maine Cooperative Extension 2004

Note: This is for informational purposes only.

For referrals to community organizations in Guilford County that assist older adults and caregivers with these documents, contact Senior Resources of Guilford's SeniorLine at (336) 884-6981 in High Point, all other areas (336) 333-6981 or the Caregiver Support Coordinator, at (336) 373-4816 or (336) 883-3586 in High Point.



North Carolina Family Caregiver Support Program
Completing the Care