

Care Giving - A Sacred Journey



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Class Schedule

October 4th : Tanya Cooper - Signs your loved one needs more help.
Getting organized, communication and helping from a distance

October 11th : Dr. Sara Qualls - Self care and relationship changes

October 18th : Rich Cooper - Technology and keeping a loved one safe and independent

October 25th : Tanya Cooper - Moving your loved one. Happiness for your loved one

November 8th : Ron Williams Attorney - Legal aspects of preparing or caring for a loved one

November 15th : Craig Tomanini - Scams and frauds targeting the aging and how to prevent them.

November 22nd : Tanya Cooper - Sibling issues. Handling dementia

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Signs that my loved one may need more help

1. Being unsteady (dizzy, wobbly)

Do they appear unsteady, standing or walking?

2. Falls

Have you seen signs of a fall, or have they mentioned a fall as if it was nothing?

3. Changes in hygiene

Is their personal hygiene slipping?

Are they skipping showers or shaving less?

Are their clothes dirty or do they seem unkept or untidy?

4. Weight gain or loss

Has your loved one gained or lost weight?

It could be a sign of depression or that shopping and cooking or eating are becoming a challenge.

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Signs that my loved one may need more help

5.Home maintenance

Is their home maintained as it has always been?

Is the house clean?

Are there lightbulbs that need changing?

Has the carpet been vacuumed?

Is the yard mowed?

Are the flowers planted and the trees trimmed?

6.Personality changes

Has their personality changed? Are they more irritable or talking less?

G.Food safety

Is there food in the house? Is it moldy or spoiled or been left on the counter or stove?

8.Mail and bills

Is the mail stacked and unopened? Do you see bills that have not been paid?

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Signs that my loved one may need more help

9. Confusion or forgetfulness

Is your loved one missing appts? Getting lost in familiar places?

Forgetting important information or losing things frequently?

10. Driving issues

Does the car have new dents? Have they gotten some recent traffic violations? Do you feel unsafe riding with them?

11. Behavioral changes

Have they stopped activities they always enjoyed? Bridge, golf, travel, time with friends?

12. Concerns of Fraud

Is the mail filled with new subscriptions, sweepstake entries, requests for donations or thank you gifts from previous donations?

Are there signs that they may have fallen prey to fraud?

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Communications

1.Begin discussions sooner than later

Start earlier than you think you should.

Ask them their desires and what is important to them and what they are worried about?

Are they worried about money, medical care, loss of independence, distance from family, or being able to stay in their own home?

2.Listen to their needs, fears and desires

If you listen to them they are more likely to listen to you. Don't bulldoze them with your plans.

Ask how they handled things with their parents or what worked or didn't with a cousin or neighbor.

Ask their advice.

3.Repeat what you have heard

This let's them know that you have heard them and understand what's important to them.

4.Include them in planning

If possible include them in the planning process and honor their wishes.

5.Include your siblings in the plan

Reach out to siblings and try to include them in this planning process too.

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Getting Organized

1.Keep a master list of names and numbers

Doctors, caregivers, neighbors, pastor, RX etc.

2.Keep critical information at hand

Medical information, passwords, allergies and prescription list with you. Use a flash drive for travel.

3.Use a calendar

Online or physical. Share with other who need to be informed.

4.Log medical care

Dates of treatment, medication start and stop dates , instructions and symptoms.

5.Record keeping

All relevant information in one place.

6.To-Do list

Accessible from phone or computer. Slips of paper are easily lost.

7.Photograph documents

Have a cell phone with you to photo important documents.

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Getting Organized

8. Banking and billing

See if auto deposits or auto bill pay make sense.

9. Family/friends updates

Facebook group, group text or email, [Caringbridge.org](https://www.caringbridge.org).

10. Keep detailed notes

Lawyer, caregivers, social workers, VA, all healthcare agencies. Include name and what was discussed.

11. Prepare for important calls and meetings

Keep information at hand. Write out questions and take notes on all answers.

12. Confirm appointments

Saves your time and helps spare your loved one unnecessary trips.

13. Make copies of important paperwork before mailing

Taxes, insurance claims, VA paperwork and any checks.

14. Keep your schedule detailed and organized

This will help you organize your day and your mind

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When you can't be with your loved one

1. Have critical information with you at all times
2. All people involved in caregiving know how to reach you
3. Check out local services before you need them
Rehab hospitals, caregivers, grocery delivery
4. Sign up for services as soon as they are useful
Senior Center classes
Transportation (Silver Key)
Meals on Wheels
Home health visits or mobile ER's (Dispatch Health)
Visit the Area Agency on Aging

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When you can't be with your loved one

5. Establish a support network

Make a list of friends, family, clergy and neighbors near your loved one.
Let them know of any concerns and how to reach you.

6. Have the number of a trusted handyman

Someone who can fix small things or perhaps some lawn care.

7. Give a house key or security code to a trusted neighbor or friend

9. Use technology to stay in touch

Hook up the internet or provide a simple tablet. Teach them how to do a video call.

10. Maximize your visits

Try to visit so you can be there for important doctors and financial appointments.

11. Don't let your visits become all about business

Spending quality time with them is a huge part of this journey.

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When you can't be with your loved one

11. Learn to distinguish real emergencies from anxiety or loneliness
If needed talk to their doctor about constant worries or complaints.
12. Arrange visits and or helpers
Church friends, relatives or neighbors who can stop by. Consider hiring a companion or housekeeper.
13. Use technology for safety
Emergency response systems, fall detects, Alexa, AirTags
14. Consider hiring a geriatric care manager
They can handle emergencies when you can't be there and important appointments.
15. Take care of yourself and manage stress well
Recognize your limits. Find ways to relieve stress and guilt.
Seek support from friends or a professional counselor.
Inform your doctor of what you are doing and any stress you may be feeling.