



## CARE's WorkLife Solutions

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[www.caresworklifesolutions.com](http://www.caresworklifesolutions.com)

# Caring for Caregivers

Caregiving means caring for others who have health problems or disabilities. The caregiving help might be grocery shopping, preparing meals, mowing the lawn or more intense assistance. Caring for a parent that cared for you as a child can be a difficult situation. Switching roles and becoming the caregiver is an emotional experience for most children. An estimated 50 million Americans are caregivers. In other terms, nearly one in every four households, is involved in caring for someone 50 or older and that number is expected to continue increasing.

Many of these caregivers are in a common situation - taking care of an elderly relative AND taking care of their own children. 44% of Americans between the ages of 45 and 55, have children under 21 years old.

The average amount of time spent caregiving is 20 hours per week. Recent studies show that caregivers are more vulnerable to serious depression, heart disease, infection—because it is a physically and emotionally demanding responsibility. What can you do to take care of yourself, while caring for others?

### **USE YOUR SUPPORT NETWORK**

Utilize the other people willing to help you, such as family members, friends or co-workers. They might be able to grocery shop, cook, run errands or just allow you some time for yourself. November is National Family Caregivers Month, offering the perfect opportunity for you to explore your available resources.

### **TAKE A BREAK**

Providing yourself personal time is critical to preventing burnout. Take a walk, a drive, or a long bath. Many caregivers feel guilty when they want to do something for themselves. Don't stress yourself out that you want time for you. You won't be able to care for others if you become ill.

### **GET A LIFE**

Continue pursuing hobbies, doing volunteer work and other opportunities that provide you fulfillment

### **GET A PET**

Having a dog or cat or even a bird to keep you company can help provide necessary distractions for both you and the person you are caring for

### **LAUGH IT UP**

Find the humor in situations, allow yourself to enjoy a sitcom, or read the funnies—humor can help release nervous tension

### **STAY HEALTHY**

Remember to do the right things for your own health—good eating habits, exercising, enough rest. Otherwise, you won't be much assistance to those you care for.

### **FIND SUPPORT**

National Eldercare Locator	(800) 677-1116	<a href="http://www.eldercare.gov">www.eldercare.gov</a>
American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)	(800) 424-3410	<a href="http://www.aarp.org">www.aarp.org</a>
National Institute on Aging	(800) 222-2225	<a href="http://www.nia.nih.gov">www.nia.nih.gov</a>
National Family Caregivers Association	(800) 896-3650	<a href="http://www.thefamilycaregiver.org">www.thefamilycaregiver.org</a>
Family Caregiver Alliance	(415) 434-3388	<a href="http://www.caregiver.org">www.caregiver.org</a>
Macomb County Community Services Agency	(586) 469-6999	<a href="http://www.macombcountymi.gov/">www.macombcountymi.gov/</a>