COMMUNITY OF CARE
Casselton & Arthur, ND
(701) 347-0032 / (701) 967-8502

CAREGIVER SUPPORT

The amount of individuals caring for their aging parents today continues to rise. Not every person sets out to be a caregiver, nor has all of the necessary tools to be successful. It is often difficult to juggle taking care of your aging parents, while balancing work life, marriage, children, finances, and all of the other responsibilities that go along with being a caregiver.

Here are some tips to help you seek a healthy balance in your life while caregiving:

* **Remember this is too big a job to do independently. Get help from the start to make caregiving a better experience.**
* **Create a network of people who can help**
	+ Siblings, relatives, friends, caregiver agencies- Rotate roles and responsibilities
	+ Delegate small tasks to lighten the load
	+ Have a list of simple chores other people can help you with
	+ There are great community resources out there- Use them!!
		- * Respite care, transportation services, meals on wheels
* **Join a support group**
	+ Great source of information and comfort
	+ You are not alone!
	+ Local organizations or online support organizations
* **Involve your children**
	+ Another great source for help
	+ Children can provide companionship, play cards, watch TV, etc.
	+ Help with transportation and meal preparation (teens and older children).
* **Make time for yourself—Do not neglect your own well-being!**
	+ Take a break/vacation
	+ Don’t neglect your immediate family
	+ Have lunch with a friend or escape to the gym for a workout
	+ Read a book or watch a favorite TV program
	+ If possible, cut back at work or change your schedule to accommodate family demands
		- * Consider taking Family and Medical Leave Act
* **Having those difficult conversations**
	+ Respect them: Try not to be too controlling- this will also help lower your stress.
	+ You really need to determine what your parent(s) want and need. Try not to impose what you think is best
	+ How have they prepared for the future, legally and financially?
	+ Have they had a recent medical checkup to ensure physical and mental health?
	+ Make sure you have access to important items: medical records, legal documents
	+ Communication Tips:
		- Example: “I’m starting to do my own estate planning, and I wonder what you had drawn up”. If you make it about you, rather than them, your parents are less likely to get defensive.
		- Example: “Let’s figure out a plan for how you can get around town if you no longer feel safe driving.”
		- Have the conversation sooner rather than later when a crisis has occurred.
		- Do not use baby talk.
		- Approach the conversation with a sense of “working together” rather then telling him/her what to do.
		- Focus on the positive instead of the negative

Resources:

**ND Family Caregiver Support Program**

Federally funded under the Older Americans Act, this program offers help to caregivers who are:

\*Caring for an adult age 60 or older, or
\*Age 60 years or older and caring for grandchildren or other young relatives who are age 18 or younger

**Phone:** (701) 328-4601

**Web:** <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/adultsaging/caregiver.html>

**PDF Page:** <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/info/pubs/docs/aging/fact-sheet-family-caregiver-support-program.pdf>

**Caregiver Stress Online**

**Phone:** (1) 701-298-4500

**Web:** <http://www.caregiverstress.com>

The 40/70 Rule: Conversation and Communication Guide PDF

**PDF Booklet:** <http://www.caregiverstress.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/HomeInstead_40-70Booklet_Web.pdf>

This is an good link (PDF) file to use as a resource.

For other resources available please refer to the safety and finance resource pages.