



CATHI

Caregiver's Answers, Topics, and Helpful Information

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

Dear CATHI,

Question: I need help balancing caregiving, family, and work. Can you give me tips on how to do this as a working caregiver?

Answer:

No one can do it all.

- If you work, take care of family, and try to provide care for an aging, ill or disabled loved one, you may feel tugged in different directions.
- You may not be able to give 100% to all areas, you may have to make difficult choices.
- Be gentle to yourself. No one can do it all.

Set priorities.

- Make a list of your personal, caregiving, family, and work obligations.
- Let go of less important commitments.
- Put your personal needs first. You cannot care for another person if you are not healthy.

Talk to your employer.

- Find out if you have an Employee Assistance Program that offers support to caregivers.

- Keep your work and caregiving responsibilities as separate as possible. For example, make phone calls to find caregivers on your lunch break.
- Consider job sharing or working part time if possible. Or find out about flex-time schedules.

Join together.

- Do not try to carry the load alone. Enlist the support of your family.
- Talk with your spouse and children about how difficult it is to be pulled in many directions. Protect those family times that are most important to you.
- If other family members are not helping enough call a family meeting to discuss options. Do not wait until you are overwhelmed and burned out.
- Even distant family members can help by making regular phone “visits,” paying bills or researching local agencies by phone.

Seek help outside of family.

- Enlist a friend or coworker to help by running errands or walking your dog.
- Consider hiring someone to help with household chores and other tasks you would normally do yourself.

Use community resources.

- Use professional caregivers or adult day care. Try meal delivery, transportation services or volunteer support.
- Senior Resources of Guilford is able to provide Family Caregivers who are caring for an individual in Guilford County with Respite Vouchers if they meet the eligibility requirements. Contact the Family Caregiver Specialist to see if you and your loved one are eligible for Respite Vouchers. Respite Vouchers provide caregivers temporary relief from caregiving duties so that the caregiver can have time available to shop, go to church/spiritual events, educational events, celebrations, or just time for themselves.

Take care of yourself first.

- Taking care of yourself means that you can provide better care for your loved one. You must be your first priority.
- Try to have a life outside of caregiving. This might be difficult, but it will help you to stay healthier, both mentally and physically.
- Be sure to eat healthy meals, get enough rest, and exercise regularly.
- Consider talking about the situation with supportive friends, family members, or a counselor. Consider joining a caregiver support group.

The information in this article was adapted from the brochure *Balancing Caregiving, Family and Work* created by Mardi Richmond, 2003. (Rev 10/16).

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 Family Caregiver Specialist at (336) 373-4816 or (336) 883-3586 in High Point.



North Carolina Family Caregiver Support Program
Completing the Care