



How to Communicate with An Aging Parent Who Won't Listen

Talking with an older adult about sensitive subjects like aging and necessary lifestyle changes can be tricky. The following tips can help caregiver with communicating with an older adult.

It can be frustrating and even frightening when you're trying to communicate something important to your aging parents and they won't listen to or accept what you are saying.

Adult children and their aging parents may struggle as age, illness, or physical challenges require a change in the parents' living circumstances.

Self-sufficient adults who raised families, ran businesses and households, now face being told they can no longer live the life they spent a lifetime building.

- **Your parents are adults, treat them that way.** First and foremost, even though you may think your parents are acting as stubborn as young children, they are not children. They are adults and any conversation you have with them needs to come from a place of respect and consideration. Don't talk at your parents. Talk to them.

- **It's not what you say, it's how you say it.** Actually, sometimes it is what you are saying. "Mom, I don't think you should be driving anymore" is probably not going to sit well in even the softest, sweetest tones. But, tone does matter. Anyone who feels yelled at or bullied will often back away from the conversation and shut down communication. Take a careful look at how you're communicating because that may be at the core of why your parents are not listening to you.

- **It's not you, it's me.** One effective way to get an aging parent to listen is to make it about you. Explaining to your mom that you can't sleep at night because you're so worried about her getting into a car accident is different than

saying, "You can't see and you're going to get yourself killed, or worse - kill someone else. No more driving."

Many aging parents' worst fear is of becoming a burden to their families. It fuels much of the resistance to getting help in their later years. Honestly, explaining how their unwillingness to listen to you is causing that dreaded burden can go far in bringing them back to the conversation.

- **Include your aging parents in decision-making.** Rather than lay down the plan for your parents, whether it's hiring someone to help them around the house and run errands, moving them to an assisted living facility or simply helping them declutter, bring them in on these decisions. Ask them what THEY want and try to accommodate them.

- **Focus on respect and acceptance.** Aging is one of the few sure things most of us face in life. When respect and acceptance drive your communication with your aging parents, it will always be more effective.

Source: DailyCaring.com



Central Ohio Chapter

Fairfield County

Alzheimer's
Caregiver Support Group

Held in

The Senior Hub-Meals on Wheels Library
1515 Cedar Hill Road • Lancaster

Wednesday, June 9

2:00-3:00pm

Share, learn and gain emotional support from others who are also on the unique journey of caring for a loved one living with Alzheimers disease or other forms of dementia.

To register, please call Linda at
Meals on Wheels of Fairfield County

740-681-5050, ext. 119

Walk-In Hours at Meals on Wheels

No walk-in hours in June 2024

Wednesday, July 17 • 11am -1pm

Have your questions about caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's answered by

Lindsay Blackburn

Alzheimer's Association - Central Ohio Chapter

Caregiver Guilt: Two Common Myths Increase Stress

There are many common misconceptions about what caregivers should do or how they should feel that can cause guilt that isn't deserved.

Unfortunately, these misguided beliefs and unrealistic expectations about caregiving can also hurt you by causing burnout, compassion fatigue, or serious health conditions caused by chronic stress.

Caregiver guilt might also influence you to take on unrealistic responsibilities, avoid getting help you need and deserve, or be too hard on yourself.

All of this only adds to your stress makes you feel worse, and makes an already tough situation even more challenging. To help you recognize when you're feeling guilt that isn't deserved, these are two common myths about what caregivers "should" do and explain the truth behind these incorrect assumptions.

• **Myth #1** - If you don't provide full-time, hands-on care, you're not doing your job as a caregiver.

Popular belief - You can only call yourself a caregiver if you always help your older adult with tasks like bathing, dressing, eating, etc.

Truth - That's absolutely false! There are many roles a caregiver can take on. Everything you do for your loved one is important and makes a difference in their lives.

For example, you might spend hours every week managing your dad's finances. Or, you might be working

closely with a geriatric care manager to make sure your mom, who lives across the country, has the best care possible. Some caregivers are able to go with their loved one to medical appointments and advocate for them. Many regularly buy groceries,, do household chores, or go for long visits. If you didn't take on those responsibilities, your loved one would suffer for the lack of help and companionship. Being part of their support system makes you a wonderful caregiver.

• **Myth #2** - You should be able to do everything by yourself and shouldn't need help from anyone.

Popular belief - One person should take responsibility for everything their loved one needs and should handle it all by themselves. If they can't, it's because they're not doing a good job.

Truth - No caregiver should be made to feel like they need to do everything alone. Caregiving requires a team. It doesn't matter if your caregiving team is made up of family, friends, hired professionals, or care programs. Trying to do everything completely on your own often causes chronic stress that can lead to burnout and serious illness.

Source: DailyCaring.com

Caregivers

You are
not alone.

We all
need a hand.

Call us. We're here to help you and your loved one.



The Senior Hub-Meals on Wheels of Fairfield County provides services for older adults and their caregivers.

You have options - you choose the services that best fit your needs.

Call the Aging Services Office at 740-681-5050.

Services include:

- A Caregiver Support Program to help ease some of the stress caregivers face every day.
- Respite Care, Personal Care and Homemaking
- Medical Transportation
- Personal Emergency Response Systems
- Adaptive Equipment such as shower chairs, transfer benches, wheelchairs and walkers.

Whether you're a new caregiver learning about the first steps of caregiving, or an experienced caregiver wanting to learn additional ways to help with the caregiver journey, The Senior Hub is here to help.

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coaaa.trualta.com

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A variety of topics

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For additional information, call the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging (COAAA) 614-645-7705.