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# Caregiving

Coping. Caring. Communicating.

## The Beginning of Your Journey

Caregiving for a family member or friend may be one of the most challenging --and rewarding--jobs you will ever have. You will be joining more than 53 million family caregivers from across the country who perform a variety of tasks and offer differing amounts of time as unpaid caregivers. While your caregiving journey will be similar to that of other caregivers, your needs will be unique to your individual circumstances.

One of the most critical steps in accepting the role of caregiver is to ensure your own physical, emotional, and social well-being is supported. Taking care of yourself first will enable you to be a better caregiver, but will also help to preserve your own well-being for the future.

**Planning for your own self-care.** Planning for your own self-care will require a thoughtful and intentional approach as you accept your new role as caregiver. This article will provide steps to consider when beginning your journey and provide suggested language as you create your own “caregiver bill of rights”.

Please be reminded that the Senior Hub offers advice, programs, and other resources to help caregivers succeed in their role, reduce stress, and prevent burnout. Give the agency a call to speak with a trained staff member.

**740-681-5050 option 4.**



## 10 Ways to get Started on your caregiving journey

1. Don't go it alone-Being a family caregiver can be exhausting and intense; look to fellow caregivers to show you the way.
2. Build a support network-Enlist family, friends, and community members who are willing to assist with caregiving tasks. Accept offers of help and ask for what you need.
3. Make a budget-Family caregiving expenses can quickly deplete your savings, It is important to create a financial plan and stick to it.
4. Talk early and often-Good communication with family, friends, health care providers, and others in your network is key. Be open to using new technology for communicating to make family caregiving easier.
5. Do a gut check-It's OK to feel angry, resentful, frustrated or guilty; in fact, it is common among family caregivers. Be open to talking with a mental health professional or connecting with a support group.

# Caregiver's

## Sample Bill of Rights

- To take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the capability to take better care of my loved one.
- To seek help from others even though my loved one(s) may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.
- To maintain facets of my own life that do not include the person I care for, just as I would if he or she were healthy. I know that I do everything that I reasonably can for this person, and I have the right to do some things just for myself.
- To get angry, depressed, and to express other difficult feelings occasionally.
- To reject any attempts by my loved one(s) (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me through guilt, and/or depression.
- To receive consideration, affection, forgiveness, and acceptance for what I do.
- To take pride in what I am accomplishing and to applaud the courage it has sometimes taken to meet the needs of my loved one(s).
- To protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me in the time when my loved one(s) no longer need(s) my full-time help.
- To expect and demand that as new strides are made in finding resources to aid physically and mentally impaired persons in our country, similar strides will be made towards aiding and supporting caregivers.

<https://www.ncoa.org/article/caregiver-self-care-why-you-should-create-a-caregiver-bill-of-rights>

Overwhelmed by learning how to be a caregiver?  
Improve your confidence, reduce stress, and  
prevent burnout. Sign up for free today.

## TRUALTA

**Trualta is a free, on-line resource for caregivers to help along the caregiving journey.**

[coaaa.trualta.com](https://coaaa.trualta.com)

- On demand videos with practical advise
- Toolkits for quick, hands on learning
- 500+ articles from caregiving experts

## 10 Ways to get Started on your caregiving journey (continued)

6. Get paperwork organized- Organizing medical information and legal documents provides peace of mind, and it's a real time-saver for when you need it on a moment's notice.

7. Know your limits-Although it isn't easy, sometimes being a great family caregiver means knowing when it's time to seek professional help to care for your loved one.

8. Build your skills-Whether you are employed or are a full-time unpaid family caregiver, the skills and responsibilities you're taking on are real. Learn how to talk about your caregiving role with employers and prospective employers in a clear and professional manner.

9. Take time for yourself-You are doing one of the toughest jobs in the world. Remember to give yourself credit and acknowledge your growth as a family caregiver and find ways to treat yourself when you can.

10. Realize help is available. There is a whole world of information available to support family caregivers. The Senior Hub, Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging, and AARP are good resources.

<https://www.aarp.org/caregiving/basics/info-2023>



**Central Ohio Chapter**

**Fairfield County  
Alzheimer's  
Care Giver Support Group**

**Held at The Senior Hub Library  
1515 Cedar Hill Road, Lancaster**

**Wednesday, September 11  
2:00-3:00pm**

**Build your network of support.**

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

**To register, please call the Aging Services  
Office at 740-681-5050 option 4**

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**Walk-In Hours at The Senior Hub  
Wednesday, September 18 - 11am-1pm**

Have your questions answered about caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or other dementia.

**Lindsay Blackburn**

Alzheimer's Association-Central OH Chapter Representative