



Care Partner Guide for Daily Care

Emotional & Mental Health Support: Strategies for Managing Stress, Burnout & Accepting Help

One of the hardest parts of caregiving is not the work itself—it is learning to accept help. Many care partners feel pressure to “handle everything,” even as demands increase. Accepting support is not a sign of weakness or failure. It is a strategy for sustainability, safety, and long-term emotional health.

This guide focuses on why allowing others to help matters—and how to make that help meaningful and manageable.

Why Accepting Help Is Essential

Caregiving is not meant to be a solo role. Without support, even the most capable caregiver can become exhausted and overwhelmed.

Reasons accepting help matters:

- Reduces physical and emotional burnout
- Protects the caregiver’s health and safety
- Improves quality of care over time
- Preserves relationships by reducing resentment
- Allows caregivers to rest and recharge

Many caregivers equate asking for help with giving up control or burdening others. In reality, allowing others to help creates shared responsibility and protects your ability to continue caring. Help does not replace love—it supports it.

Letting Go of Guilt Around Help

Guilt is one of the biggest barriers to accepting support.

Common caregiver beliefs that increase guilt include:

- “No one else can do this as well as I can.”
- “Others are busy—I shouldn’t ask.”
- “If I ask for help, it means I’m failing.”
- “It’s easier to just do it myself.”

These beliefs are understandable—but they are not facts. Caregiving well does not mean doing everything alone. Accepting help is a form of wisdom, not surrender. It allows care partners to remain present rather than depleted.

Practical Ways Others Can Help

People often want to help but don’t know how. Specific requests make support more effective.

Helpful ways others can support caregivers include:

- Preparing or delivering meals
- Running errands or grocery shopping
- Sitting with your loved one while you rest or attend appointments
- Providing transportation to appointments
- Helping with household tasks or yard work
- Managing paperwork, bills, or scheduling
- Offering companionship or social time

Help does not need to be medical to be meaningful. Everyday tasks consume energy and time. Offloading even small responsibilities creates breathing room and reduces cumulative stress.

How to Ask for Help Clearly

Asking for help becomes easier with practice and clarity.

Helpful strategies for requesting support:

- Be specific about what you need
- Offer clear time frames (“Tuesday mornings,” “once a month”)

- Accept help without correcting or managing it
- Start small and build gradually
- Use shared calendars or sign-up tools

Vague offers such as “Let me know if you need anything” are common but difficult to act on. Turning these offers into concrete requests allows others to contribute in ways that truly help.

Using Respite & Professional Support

Respite is not a luxury—it is a necessity.

Forms of respite care include:

- In-home respite providers
- Adult day programs
- Short-term facility stays
- Family or friend caregiving rotation

Respite allows caregivers to rest, attend to personal health, and reconnect with their own identity. Planning respite before burnout occurs leads to better outcomes for everyone.

Building a Circle of Care

Caregiving is more sustainable when shared.

Ways to build a care network include:

- Identifying 2–5 people willing to help
- Assigning roles based on strengths
- Using online tools to coordinate care
- Updating supporters as needs change

A care circle distributes responsibility and reduces isolation. Even modest involvement from others can significantly lighten the load.

When Accepting Help Feels Emotionally Hard

Sometimes resistance to help is rooted in grief or fear.

Signs emotional support may be helpful include:

- Feeling unable to trust others with care
- Anxiety when stepping away
- Fear of being judged
- Difficulty letting go of control

Counseling or caregiver support groups can help unpack these emotions and normalize the experience. You do not need to navigate this alone.

A Final Thought for Care Partners

Allowing others to help is not an admission of defeat—it is an act of courage. It reflects love, responsibility, and commitment to doing this well, not alone.

You deserve support, too.

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