



The Joys of Caregiving

Yes, caregiving can be confusing, stressful, and exhausting. But it can also bring you unexpected joys, experiences, and relationships.

Caregiving can bring you closer to the elder in your care. Whatever your relationship was in the past, caring for an elder can bring a new perspective for each of you, resulting in newfound respect, admiration, and understanding.

Caregiving can help you spend more quality time with an elder. You may be able to slow down and do things you may never have had time for before—talk, laugh, reminisce, watch TV or movies together.

Caregiving can get you in touch with your family history. Encouraging the elder in your care to talk about the past can bring new understanding to the events that helped shaped you and your family. Bring out those boxes of old photos and dive in.

Caregiving can sharpen your organizational and multitasking skills. Despite the burdens of caregiving, you may find that you are more competent than you thought.

Caregiving can bring you a deeper sense of your own values. As you talk about and experience end-of-life issues, you'll be able to better define what you believe in.

Caregiving may help you recognize your own support systems. Friends, relatives, coworkers, and health professionals who cheer you up, comfort you, and show concern may unexpectedly enrich your life.

Caregiving can make you more compassionate and loving. You may think you don't have the patience or the personality to care for an elder—but you do. Rising to the challenge of caregiving helps you recognize your own strengths and abilities.

Caregiving can help you plan for your own future. Your experience with aging and caregiving issues will make you better prepared to think and plan ahead for your own needs.

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