

Avoiding Isolation

Tips for Caregivers



DE LORO
caregiver resource center

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Have you become isolated?

If you are caring for an older, ill or disabled adult, you may have trouble keeping up with your family, friends or other interests. It is easy to become isolated.

Isolation can affect your health.

- Isolation can add to stress levels.
- Stress can raise your blood pressure and hurt your immune system.
- Isolation can also lead to depression and substance abuse.
- If you are isolated, you may find it more difficult to eat right, get enough sleep or exercise regularly.

These tips can help you to connect with others, protect your health and provide your loved one with good care.



Ask for help, even if it is hard to do.

- ✓ Have someone take over for a couple of hours so you can enjoy some free time.
- ✓ Ask a friend, neighbor or family member to stay with your loved one.
- ✓ Consider taking the person you care for to adult day care.
- ✓ Try to schedule a break at least once a week.



Add balance to your life.

- ✓ Make time for your interests, even if it's only a few hours a week.
- ✓ Find others who enjoy the same activities you do. If you like to read, join a book group; if you garden, find a garden club; if you have a dog, walk at the dog park.
- ✓ Try something new. Sign up for a class – computer, yoga or arts and crafts.

Share your feelings.

- ✓ Find one or two good listeners. Consider a religious leader, a family member or other caregivers.
- ✓ Talking with others can help relieve stress and strengthen friendships.



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Find a caregiving co-op.

- ✓ Get together with other caregivers and their loved ones. This is a good way to socialize.
- ✓ Keep it simple. Meet at a park or take turns hosting one another at home.
- ✓ You can find a caregiving co-op by checking with local senior centers, non-profit groups or religious groups.
- ✓ If you can't find one, consider starting your own.

Join a support group.

- ✓ You will meet others facing similar challenges.
- ✓ You may learn about local resources that you would not have known about otherwise.
- ✓ Regular meetings can help you feel more supported.
- ✓ To find a group, contact your local Area Agency on Aging or social services.



Look online too.

- ✓ Use the Internet to find others dealing with similar issues.
- ✓ You can “meet” people on support boards, social networking sites or blogs.
- ✓ Search for sites using key search words or phrases (for example: cancer caregivers).
- ✓ Explore other interests online too. Try a social networking site to connect with old friends or find others with common interests.



Taking care of a loved one can be rewarding. It can be hard work too. To avoid burnout and illness, take time for yourself and to connect with others.

To find information about support groups and services in your area, consult your local phone book or search online. You can also call the Eldercare Locator at 1-800-677-1116, or visit its website at www.eldercare.gov on the Internet.



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