



**CAREGIVING**  
**RELATIONSHIPS**  
For People Who Care For Adults

*A* Program Implemented by the Wisconsin Alliance  
for Family Caregiving with Community Partners  
<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp/caregiving/>

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**Mixed Emotions are Common When Caregiving**

Finding yourself in the role of caregiver for a dependent adult is seldom something you anticipate. Often you are least prepared for the mixed emotions that accompany the new role. Caregivers typically report a variety of feelings including anger, frustration, guilt and fear. These feelings often exist alongside of feelings of love, affection, and pride in the care being provided.

When considering the mixed emotions that accompany caregiving, it's important to begin by recognizing the emotional rewards that can come with caregiving. These include an opportunity to grow closer to the care-receiver and an enhanced feeling of self-worth for the caregiver. In addition, caregivers must also learn to acknowledge the demands of caregiving and the negative feelings that can result.

Learning to recognize and identify feelings of frustration, anger, resentment, embarrassment and the guilt that often results is important to the caregiver. Accepting these normal feelings and coping and managing them rather than ignoring them is key to making the caregiving experience a more positive one. For example, caregivers plagued by guilt can lessen the effects by recognizing that they are doing the best they can with the skills and knowledge they have. Looking at mistakes as opportunities to learn is also helpful.

Caregivers should also adjust their thinking about the caregiving situation, talk about their feelings with a trusted friend, and take time for themselves. Finally, caregivers who have allowed their negative emotions to get the best of them should try to understand and forgive themselves, make amends to the care-receiver, and learn ways to prevent negative emotions leading to negative consequences in the future.

The Wisconsin Alliance for Family Caregiving is introducing the curriculum, *Caregiving Relationships*. For more information on this program, contact (local contact with contact information).

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