



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
Changing Relationships in Caregiving

If you are helping a friend or older relative who can no longer manage certain tasks, you are a caregiver. Caregiving can vary widely from one situation to another. Some provide minimal assistance such as driving an older person to appointments or running errands. Others are full-time caregivers who provide round-the-clock assistance.

Relationships can change in a caregiving situation, adding extra stress. Often, caregivers find themselves in a role reversal situation. Family members may be caring for aging parents, a spouse, or other relative or friend who spent many years caring for them.

Changing relationships can bring out emotions such as fear, anger, or guilt. This can be especially stressful when the changes are due to dependence or role reversal. It is important for family members to realize these emotions are normal.

It is not easy to deal with these emotions, but there are a few things caregivers can do to respond positively. They may need to adjust their perceptions and expectations of the care receiver, realizing that he or she may no longer be able to respond to them as in the past.

Sharing your emotions with someone who will listen and understand can make it easier to deal with the relationship changes. Holding a family meeting to discuss changes and share feelings may be helpful. During this time, each person's feelings should be acknowledged. Ask questions and seek input from all involved in the relationship.

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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