

What Is Caregiving?

- **Caregiving** provides emotional and physical support to someone unable to live independently.
- **Caregiving** makes a choice with the heart and mind to give needed support to a dependent person.
- **Christian caregiving** is offered in the spirit of love, compassion, and relationship.

“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”
(Galatians 6:2)

Levels of Caregiving

Both the extent and duration in the levels of caregiving are dependent on various factors, such as the following:

- **Infant and child care**—meets the needs of otherwise healthy infants and children until they outgrow the need for care.
- **Acute care**—fills a temporary need for sudden illness or injury until healing and recovery is achieved.
- **Respite care**—temporary care allows a time of relief/rest for a regular, permanent caregiver.
- **Special needs care**—can be temporary or permanent, depending on the nature of the disability.
- **Chronic illness care**—may be minimal or extensive, according to the needs of the patient and the level and progression of a particular disease.
- **Elder care**—extent of care typically grows over time as the care receiver’s needs increase.
- **Memory care**—generally care becomes more intense as cognitive memory problems begin to impact physical health.
- **Hospice care**—care is palliative ... to relieve stress, pain, and manage symptoms of terminal illness.

Types of Caregiving

- The **primary caregiver** is often the eldest or most responsible family member who meets needs on a regular basis (fills the major role of caregiving).

- The **periodic caregiver** is a reliable family member or friend who provides faithful support for the primary caregiver (initiates help and is usually available when needed).
- The **peripheral caregiver** provides marginal assistance according to personal convenience (occasional visits or outings).
- The **passive caregiver** denies or seems unaware of the needs and cannot be relied on to give assistance (often lacks follow-through even when called on).
- The **professional caregiver** is a paid care provider who may be, but is not necessarily, formally educated or trained.

“He ordered the centurion to keep Paul under guard but to give him some freedom and permit his friends to take care of his needs.”
(Acts 24:23)

God’s Heart on Caregiving

- God **knows** your situation. (Hosea 13:5)
- God **understands** how you feel. (Deuteronomy 32:10)
- God **provides** for your needs. (Psalm 95:7)

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”
(Proverbs 3:5–6)

Caregiving Tasks

Personal Assistance/Daily Activities

- Personal hygiene
- Dressing, bathing
- Cooking, feeding assistance
- Transportation

Companionship

- Sitting, talking, and simply being together
- Reading to the care receiver, talking about what was read
- Playing games, cards, and any form of physical exercise
- Listening to music, watching meaningful TV programs, videos, movies

General Housekeeping

- Housecleaning
- Laundry
- Personal shopping, errands
- Pet care
- Home maintenance, yard work

Medical Assistance

- Track vital signs
- Dispense medication
- Wound care
- Physical therapy

Financial Assistance

- Write checks, pay bills
- Balance checkbook

“For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

(Ephesians 2:10)

Caregiver Burnout

Emotional Symptoms

- Anger
- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Depression

Physical Symptoms

- Headaches
- Insomnia
- Stress
- Susceptibility to illness

Social Signs

- Withdrawal from the patient
- Distracted attention span
- Less interaction with family
- Increased isolation from friends

“When hard pressed, I cried to the LORD; he brought me into a spacious place.”

(Psalm 118:5)

What Causes Codependency in Caregiving?

- Your **excessive care** causes you to compromise your convictions.
- Your **excessive loyalty** leaves you without healthy boundaries.
- Your **excessive “love”** leads you to say *yes* when you should say *no*.

“In their hearts humans plan their course, but the LORD establishes their steps.”

(Proverbs 16:9)

Key Verse to Memorize

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper timewe will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

(Galatians 6:9)

Key Passage to Read

Luke 10:25–37

Practical Ways Friends Can Give Care

- Send cards and handwritten notes.
- Make visits.
- Bring a bouquet of flowers.
- Bring helpful books, videos, and booklets.
- Keep a record of remembrances—put together a scrapbook of pictures.
- Provide food and occasionally an entire meal.
- Volunteer to provide transportation.
- Reach out to the children or other family members.
- Shop for needed items—call and ask for a list.
- Bring the gift of music—inspirational music CDs.
- Set aside time for regular reading aloud.
- Take walks and do other outdoor activities.
- Offer to do housework, yard work, laundry, or repairs.
- Be a willing and attentive listener.
- Provide financial assistance.
- Become a prayer warrior.

“God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.”

(Hebrews 6:10)

Caregiving—a Privilege, Not a Prison

Pray to have a servant's heart. (Ephesians 6:7)

Realize that God has chosen you for a special assignment.
(Romans 8:28)

Identify attitudes that may be blocking your ability to respond to
God. (Psalm 51:10)

Value this opportunity, for it is only temporary.
(1 Peter 1:6)

Invest your life in the life of another. (1 John 4:12)

Learn to live one day at a time. (Psalm 118:24)

Exchange your weakness for Christ's strength. (Philippians 4:13)

Give up expectations. (Proverbs 12:25)

Experience a deeper intimacy with God.
(Psalm 139:7–10)

10 Ways to Be a Healthier Caregiver

1. Understand what's happening to your loved one as early as possible.
2. Know what community resources are available.
3. Become an educated caregiver.
4. Get help.
5. Take care of yourself.
6. Manage your level of stress.
7. Accept changes as they occur.
8. Make legal and financial plans.
9. Give yourself credit, not guilt.
10. Visit your doctor regularly.

HOPE FOR THE HEART's *Biblical Counseling Library* contains our *Biblical Counseling Keys*, providing *God's Truth for Today's Problems* on 100+ topics.

The *Quick Reference Guides* contain excerpts from our *Biblical Counseling Keys* and offer immediate, concise answers with *biblical hope and practical help*. For more comprehensive help and additional resources, refer to our *Biblical Counseling Keys* on **Caregiving**.

Related Topics ...

- Aging Well
- Chronic Illness/Disabilities
- Ethics & Integrity
- Euthanasia
- Purpose in Life
- Stress
- Terminal Illness

If you would like more information,
biblical counsel, or prayer support, contact:
1-800-488-HOPE (4673)
www.HopeForTheHeart.org

The information in this resource is intended
as guidelines for healthy living.
Please consult qualified medical, legal, pastoral, and
psychological professionals regarding individual concerns.

THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV®
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™
Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.



*Together ... Changing Minds.
Changing Hearts. Changing Lives.*

P.O. Box 7, Dallas, TX 75221