



## Common feelings for family caregivers and how to cope with them

Some of the common feelings caregivers experience are listed below. These feelings can come and go and experiencing more than one at a time is normal.

- Feelings of guilt that you should be doing a better job or that you shouldn't resent your caregiving duties
- Feeling that life isn't fair
- Tearfulness
- Mood swings
- Anger
- Depression
- Emotional numbness
- Anxiety or fear about things that are happening now or that are going to happen
- Loneliness
- Fatigue, exhaustion
- Feeling "keyed up" or restless
- Wanting this time to be over

### Helpful Tips

The good news is there are steps that can be helpful to you in your role as caregiver. Consider these suggestions:

- Try to acknowledge that your feelings are real.
- Try not to judge yourself harshly for your feelings.
- Be gentle in setting expectations of yourself and others; ask for help.

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### Helpful Tips (continued)

- Talk to someone ... a friend, family member, clergy or counselor – including a Helios Care counselor.
- As needed, try to keep busy. Do some yard work. Taking a short walk or other exercise can help release intense emotions and help you feel more in control.
- Make changes only as needed and put off major decisions when possible.
- Do the things you want to do now. Forget the chores that you can do later so that you have more energy to do those things you want to do.
- Arrange time for things you enjoy by asking for help from your family, friends or a Helios Hospice Care volunteer.
- Plan something simple and pleasant to look forward to ... a phone call to a friend, a hot cup of coffee, a quiet bath, a lunch date.
- Hang on to your sense of humor. Laughter can be a lifeline.
- Write about your feelings and thoughts in a journal.
- Nurture your spirit – read inspiring books, pray, meditate, spend time with others who share your beliefs.

You might notice that the person you care for is experiencing many of the same feelings. Understanding where these feelings come from can help you care for and support each other. Remember that everyone copes in different ways.



Helios Care is committed to helping you make the most of this time as you care for someone else. We hope that you will see our team as a source of strength and guidance. Share your questions and concerns with us. We know it can be difficult to talk about such personal feelings. Please be assured that our team will respect your privacy. Call us at 607.432.5525 or visit [HeliosCare.org](https://HeliosCare.org) to sign up for a Caregiver Support Group.