

FEELINGS OFTEN EXPRESSED BY CAREGIVERS/CARE RECEIVERS

CAREGIVER

Anger

- For being trapped
- That others in the family do not carry their share
- At the impaired person's demands and behaviors

Depression

- Because of an emotionally and physically draining experience

Embarrassment

- At the impaired person's behavior
- At the thoughtlessness of others

Fear

- That they may be next in line; particularly with inherited conditions
- Of not being able to handle the situation
- Of what other people are saying about how the situation is being handled

Grief

- For the way the care receiver used to be
- For the way things used to be

Guilt

- For wanting out of the caregiver role
- For wishing the care receiver would die
- For not having done enough – and not being able to do more even when you do all you can

Helplessness

- The situation is too great and there is no way to control it

Shame

- Of the parent or spouse for their failings for what they were or are now
- Of self for being ashamed

Worry

- That they may later feel they did not give enough

CARE RECEIVER

Anger

- For being treated like a child
- For being confined or limited

Fear

- Of what is happening
- Of what the future may hold
- Of loss of control:
 - Familiar role is gone
 - Power & influence are gone
 - Mental stability failing
 - Loss of independence

Confusion & Depression

Embarrassment

- Because of need for personal care
- Because of disabilities

Guilt

- For spoiling the caregiver's life

Shame

- For behaviors which he or she cannot control
- For being a burden

Danger Signals that say.....

WARNING: Caregiver needs help!!

When is it OK to cry “Uncle?” To say, “I can’t give any more unless I get some help?”

Many caregivers would rather trudge on under unbearable conditions than to admit such “failure.” What happens though is their own health suffers more and more, and eventually they themselves need care. Others simply don’t realize they’re taking on too much until it’s too late.

If you notice any of the following danger signals, you are probably approaching role overload and should seek assistance from a local support group or self-help agency:

- Your relative’s condition is worsening despite your best efforts.
- No matter what you do, it isn’t enough.
- You feel you’re the only person in the world enduring this.
- You no longer have any time or place to be alone for even a brief respite.
- Things you used to do occasionally to help out are now part of your daily routine.
- Family relationships are breaking down because of the caregiving pressures.
- Your caregiving duties are interfering with your work and social life to an unacceptable degree.
- You’re going on in a no-win situation just to avoid admitting failure.
- You realize you’re all alone – and doing it all – because you’ve shut out everyone who’s offered help.
- You refuse to think of yourself because “that would be selfish” (even though you’re unselfish 99 percent of the time).
- Your coping methods have become destructive. You’re”
 - Overeating/under-eating
 - Abusing drugs/alcohol
 - Taking it out on your relative

There are no more happy times, loving and caring have given way to exhaustion and resentment, and you no longer feel good about yourself or taking pride in what you’re doing.