



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM

## Asking for Help

September 2019

### Senior Management Services

There is a common misconception around the idea of asking for help. Many caregivers are reticent to ask for assistance because they view it as a sign of weakness or inadequacy. That idea could not be further from the truth. Asking for help demonstrates not only the acceptance of one's limitations, but it also brings to light the possession of admirable traits – including the following:

- **Honesty:** Asking for help demonstrates the ability to be honest with both yourself and the person you are caring for. This honesty helps sustain and can possibly even improve your relationship.
- **Responsibility:** Taking the time to figure out how much you can take on and what jobs are better left to the professionals requires a great deal of responsibility. As a family caregiver, the quality of another person's life is in your hands. It is your responsibility to ensure your loved one gets care suited to their needs.
- **Humbleness:** Accepting help shows the ability to remain humble. Family caregivers need breaks just like anyone else.
- **Courage:** Having the courage to ask for help when you need it indicates you are willing to do what is right regardless of your personal feelings.

Many times, family caregivers refuse help or fail to seek out help because they possess an unfavorable attitude towards help, especially paid help. Because of their strong "family takes care of family" mentality, they refuse to recognize outside help as an option. That may have been acceptable when women were defined by society as caretakers, but times have changed, and it is usually unrealistic to have someone provide 24/7 care.

It's important to know when to ask for help. The best time to reach out is before you feel too stressed, a feeling known as caregiver stress. If you are a new family caregiver, you may not be able to realize when you are approaching this point, but as time goes on you will be able to tell when you are reaching your limit. If you miss it, the second-best time to reach out for help is as soon as you start experiencing the symptoms associated with caregiver stress.

#### **10 common symptoms of caregiver stress indicating it may be time to call for backup include:**

- |                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Depression            | 6. Exhaustion             |
| 2. Withdrawal            | 7. Anxiety                |
| 3. Insomnia              | 8. Drinking               |
| 4. Trouble concentrating | 9. Smoking                |
| 5. Anger                 | 10. Altered eating habits |

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<https://amadasseniorcare.com/blog/2019/01/family-caregivers-finding-the-courage-to-ask-for-help-when-you-need-it/>

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