Tips for Sandwich Generation Caregivers

Despite its many challenges, it is possible for sandwich generation caregivers to manage their responsibilities effectively while maintaining their overall health and well-being. The Alzheimer’s Association offers these tips:

Take Care of Yourself – It can be easy to neglect your health while caring for others, but making sure you are healthy can help you be a better caregiver to others. Try to eat well, exercise and get plenty of rest. Carving out just 30 minutes a day for yourself to do something you enjoy (exercise, reading or watching TV) can go a long way to reducing caregiver stress. The Alzheimer’s Association offers these specific tips for recognizing and relieving caregiver stress.

Maintain Good Communication – A major stressor for sandwich generation caregivers are feelings of guilt when caregiving tasks detract from time spent with family. Help your spouse/partner and children understand the demands you’re facing and enlist their help and support. A 2017 Alzheimer’s Association survey found that 91 percent of Americans believe it “takes a village” to care for a person living with Alzheimer’s, but many caregivers fail to ask for help.

Seek Support – Contact the Alzheimer’s Association or use our online Community Resource Finder to locate dementia care resources in your area. Adult day programs, in-home assistance, companions and meal delivery are just some of the services that can help you manage daily tasks. Visit the Alzheimer’s and Dementia Caregiver Center to learn more and access care training resources, including free online workshops.

Talk to Your Employer – A 2015 AARP report found that 53 percent of employed caregivers indicate their employers offered flexible work schedules. Some companies allow telecommuting. Discuss potential accommodations that can be made that will allow you to remain productive at work while balancing caregiver responsibilities at home.

Know You’re Doing Your Best – Remember that the care you provide makes a difference and that you are doing the best you can. You may feel guilty because you can’t do more, but you are only one person. Identify priorities and focus on those tasks most essential. Delegate lesser responsibilities to others. For support and encouragement, join ALZConnected, our online caregiver community.