

Caregiving Over the Holidays

Caregiving During the Holidays is Extra Stressful!

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA,
UNITED STATES, December 20, 2018
/EINPresswire.com/ -- +



The holidays can be challenging [for caregivers](#). Difficult or insensitive

family members are especially hard to deal with when you're already juggling caregiving, work, grief over past losses, and holiday prep. You want to balance everything out, but it just will not work. It is important to let family members know that you will need help during Christmas because you will be busy with addressing greeting cards, grocery shopping for the family gathering as well as attending friends' get-togethers and last-minute runs to the grocery store. The bottom line is that caregiving is a stressful job, more so on a holiday.

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It's incredibly stressful being a caregiver, especially during the holidays. Luckily, we are here to help!”

Michele Berman, Owner

To help you manage the family issues that are likely to come up during this time, we share tips and suggestions from 6 top articles. Find out how to reduce stress and anxiety by minimizing surprises, preparing responses to criticism, and planning for difficult conversations.

1) How to Prepare Family Before Their Holiday Visit with Seniors

Many families only get together a couple of times a year for big celebrations. You see your older adult all the time, so the way they appear and behave is normal to you.

But for others, it can be a shock – especially if they've declined since the last get-together. Being surprised could make family members irrationally angry, ignore your older adult, or insist on making unwise changes to their life. It's so easy to become depressed during the holidays or run ourselves ragged trying to have the perfect holiday. The holiday decorations, holiday activities, and even family traditions may not be enough to put your elderly loved one in the holiday spirit. And this time of year, seasonal affective disorder affects many people – old and young – to complicate matters more.

Find out how preparing family before their visit helps you and your older adult and get a sample email letter that you can customize.

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2) Caregiving Holiday Tips: 3 Useful Tips for Dealing with Difficult Family

Are you struggling with family members who don't invite you or your older adult to their holiday gatherings?

Or, perhaps they extend an invitation but don't consider your older adult's needs and realistic

capabilities. And maybe they get offended when you explain that your older adult can no longer participate in certain family traditions. They need to get a better understanding of caregiver responsibilities, and how difficult it is for you to carve out time some for self-care. You can easily be caught in the middle of the family issues surrounding healthcare family dynamics. And dealing with your immediate family issues puts a greater strain on you, which prevents you from enjoying your holiday experience.

Worst of all: they might blame YOU for being difficult or overprotective. This is a common reaction since they haven't experienced one of your older adult's dementia or Alzheimer's disease episodes. Get 3 tips that help you deal with insensitive people and minimize your stress.

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3) Three Effective Ways to Respond to Caregiver Criticism

Getting criticized is unpleasant, especially from family or friends who don't lift a finger to help care for your older adult. This is when you need to join a support group (if you haven't already) to give you a place to vent and seek solutions.

If you get a hurtful comment, first take a deep breath and try to stay as calm as possible. You should schedule additional respite care to take your mind off the holiday stress. This time can be spent doing anything, from putting up holiday decorations and purchasing holiday gifts (get an extra one for you!) to taking part in holiday activities and creating new family traditions. You can even make time in your holiday schedule for a spa day or a trip to the mall. Taking the time to care for your well-being is of vital importance, no matter the holiday. If you don't, you will become burned out and even become depressed. This can lead to health dangers, such as over-eating, having more than one drink a day or having more than one cigarette than usual.

Then, try one of our 3 suggested responses to change the tone of the conversation and reduce future criticism.

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4) Three Ways to Deal with Family in Denial About Seniors Needing Help

You might be frustrated by relatives who are in denial about your older adult's declining health and increasing care needs.

Whether it's about Alzheimer's fall risk, a post-stroke recovery or another health condition, their denial can make you feel angry, stressed out, sad and frustrated. They don't want any helpful tips on how to deal with their denial, even if approached carefully. They should also know about your elderly parent's particular care needs.

For some people, denial is a subconscious way to ignore the fact that their parent is declining. For others, it's a way to avoid taking on caregiving responsibilities. Get 3 ways to break through their denial.

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5) Four Caregiving Tips for Getting Siblings to Help with Parents

When you're taking care of your parents, the last thing you need is more stress or resentment because of issues with your siblings.

But getting siblings to help can bring up old family arguments, cause sibling rivalries to flare up, and generally add to your burden. These arguments can stem from placing your older adult in a

nursing home as opposed to home care or even why you chose to be the caregiver. To ease the tension, it may help to include your siblings in preparing the holiday meal or creating holiday goodies. Or, you could ask them to research caregiving tips to make everyone's lives easier. This could be their way of helping out.

Try these 4 helpful tips to resolve common issues when caregiving with your siblings.
Read More

6) Overcome Three Excuses from Relatives Who Avoid Caregiving

Caring for an older adult by yourself is exhausting and can negatively impact your health. But getting family to help is often a challenge, especially holiday caregiving.

Getting a better understanding of why family members aren't doing their part helps you find ways to get them to participate in caregiving. If they know all of the daily living activities, maybe they could handle the "fun" tasks, such as selecting large print books with your elderly parent at the library or a walk in the park. It's important to show how rewarding being a family caregiver can be, as well as to be in the present moment.

We share 3 top reasons why family members don't help with caregiving and suggest ways to overcome their excuses, so they'll give you the help you need and deserve.

[Expert Care for Seniors](#) in Philadelphia

For nearly twenty years, we have provided quality home care to seniors in Philadelphia county. During the holiday season, we know stress levels are higher for caregivers and their families. And we all wish we could get the gift of time – to have more quality time with our elderly loved ones. What our Comfort Keepers can give you is peace of mind that your older adult is being well taken care of while you are at work or at an event. We offer a range of services from companionship to dementia care. We also provide light housekeeping, grooming assistance, meal preparation and transportation. Contact us today!

About Comfort Keepers Philadelphia:

Owners Michele Berman and her brother, Marc Reisman, took over Huntington Valley Comfort Keepers in 2000, when their father, Richard Reisman, was diagnosed with lung cancer and became increasingly ill. They experienced firsthand the care and comfort provided by Comfort Keepers. In fact, Richard Reisman originally started the business when his mother was diagnosed with Alzheimer's. At that time, there weren't many options for those in need of additional support and quality care. Today, the owners are proud to carry on the legacy of their father, but they are even more proud of the difference Comfort Keepers is making to those who need their help the most.

To find out more about Comfort Keepers' commitment to excellence, please call 215.885.9140.

This release was drafted by [Results Driven Marketing, LLC](#): a full-service digital marketing, public relations, advertising and content marketing firm located in Philadelphia, PA.

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Michele Berman, Owner

Comfort Keepers

215-600-3540

[email us here](#)

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