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Family Caregiving: Family Fact Sheet #1

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FAMILY CAREGIVING FAMILY FACT SHEET #1

Family Caregiving Defined

Family caregivers are the immediate family, relatives and life partners who provide care directly or manage the care of older individuals who are ill or disabled. They may also be older individuals caring for ill or disabled children or grandchildren.

Who are family caregivers?

We are a diverse group of individuals who are traveling a complex journey. Some caregivers thrive, some simply survive and others suffer severe consequences.

For whom do we care?

48% care for spouses or life partners, 24% care for a parent and 19% care for a child or grandchild.

Most caregivers are female and the average age is 46. In one in four American households one individual is caring for a family member 50 and older.

Close to two in three caregivers are working, 52% full time and 12% part time. Nearly half of family caregivers spend in excess of 40 hours a week caregiving tasks.

The caregiver journey has demanded that individuals shift roles. Caregivers have moved from spouse/life partner to caregiver, from son and daughter to caregiver, and perhaps dramatically altering their life style along the way.

Caregivers are daughters and sons, who have stretched from the child of their parents to the caretakers of their parents. Most often they have extensive other family and life responsibilities.

Caregivers are parents and grandparents who thought they had long relinquished the responsibility of parenting and suddenly, due to life alterations, they find themselves, once again, in the parenting role.

FAMILY CAREGIVING TIP:

The caregiving journey is often mediated by a sense of humor, laughter, tears and support. Support includes family members, friends, community professionals and moments of respite. Caregiving is a journey not to be traveled alone. We are here to help.