



# Caregiver Corner

## **Tips for Caregiving**

by Diana Wood

Many people play a big role in providing care for family members or friends with a long-term condition. In a 2018 study, 7.8 million Canadians aged 15 and older were caregivers. Yikes, this is 25% of the population and of these caregivers, almost 1.5 million were aged 65 and older.

Here are some things to consider if you find yourself in this role.

It is a good idea to call a meeting of family and friends as well as the care recipient to discuss the role of each person. Including the care

recipient allows them to feel like part of the team and makes them feel less like they are losing control of their life. Discuss things like financial planning (who is paying for what), where is the will, do we need a Power of Attorney, and what about end-of-life care? These are all important considerations that should be discussed sooner rather than later.

Consider family dynamics. It can be hard enough to deal with siblings under normal conditions and then throw in care of an aging parent and things can get ugly really fast. Communication is key so don't just assume that everyone is

on the same page. Regular family meetings is probably a good idea.

Taking time for yourself is extremely important but it sounds kinda selfish, right? But here's the thing.....you can't pour from an empty cup. Self-care makes you healthier, gives you more energy, strength and a stronger immune system. So don't feel guilty. Go to the spa, take a nap, curl up with a good book, or any number of other things that provide that feel good feeling. You are doing an amazing job of caregiving so pamper yourself regularly. You are worth it.

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**Terrace Hospice Society**      <http://caregiversofthenorthwest.org>

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