

News For Caregivers

Family Caregivers Don't Have To Feel Alone

By Emma Dickison, Certified Senior Adviser

(NAPSA)—If you are or expect to become a family caregiver, you should know that you're not alone.

Not only are there about 34 million Americans in a similar situation, according to the AARP, there are organizations that have been created to help you all. These groups and companies can assist with such things as:

- planning for the future
- taking into account each individual's wants, needs and hopes
- determining how each person involved can contribute.

The Problem

Often, a lack of communication can lead to misunderstanding and, ultimately, choices that aren't as good for anybody. It's important to respect the contributions each member of the caregiver team can make.

The People

Here are a few of the more common caregiving roles:

- The Planner
- The Camp Director
- The Doer
- The Dreamer
- The Rescuer.

None of them is more important than the others. You may find yourself playing multiple roles or your family may divide responsibilities and roles a little differently.

The Planner

The Planner gravitates toward tasks that will come up sooner or later and prepares for them; things like knowing where the life insurance policies are, and making sure the wills and other documents are up-to-date.

The Planner has a plan and any deviations from it should be communicated clearly to this person.

The Camp Director

This person is like the project manager for the team. He or she needs a clear understanding of what is possible and—who is doing what and which tasks have been checked off.

The Doer

This is the one who's there day to day, who handles the routine errands and helps with the household tasks.

The Doer can feel isolated from the rest and it's important that teammates respect and recognize his or her contributions. This is also the person with the most frequent contact with your loved one, so communication is particularly important.

The Dreamer

He or she is too often dismissed



Caring for an aged or ill loved one can mean playing many roles.

as a denier. This is the person who may, in the early going, appear to think that everything will just work itself out and go back to something close to the old "normal."

But the Dreamer has an important point of view as this person is often the advocate for the most important hopes and desires of your older loved one. They HOPE Mom can go back to caring for herself without any additional resources because they KNOW that's what Mom wants.

The Rescuer

With families more spread out these days, there's often a member of the family who really can't be involved day to day, but emotionally is still part of the caregiving team. The Rescuer comes into the picture when the plan has gone off the rails or some unexpected event occurs. The fresh perspective he or she provides can be very helpful, and often, this is the role most likely to first recognize a need because the person is not around every day.

Whichever role or roles you gave, you can get further help and advice from the experts at Home Helpers Home Care, a company that aims to give caregivers and their loved ones the resources and support they need.

Learn More

For further facts on how to care for your family, go to www.homehelpershomecare.com. You can even arrange for a no-cost—and no-obligation—in-home assessment. It's free, and it might help you identify some solutions and some work-arounds you hadn't thought of before.

• Ms. Dickison is president of Home Helpers.