

Discussing Home Care



*Don't Feel Guilty ∞
You Can't Do It All!*

How should families go about convincing aging parents or other loved ones to accept home care? Understandably, loved ones may experience tremendous amounts of fear once they realize that they are not functioning well on their own. They fear losing their freedom or their lifestyle. Respect their feelings and always approach the topic of in-home care with compassion.



Have an open discussion

Successfully caring for a senior at home requires that everyone, senior and family, talk openly and honestly about both the financial and the personal facts as early as possible. If you can, begin discussing home care months or even years before it is needed. By opening the lines of communication early on, words like "home care" or "home health care" begin to lose their sting in future conversations.

Involve the family

Don't just talk to your loved ones one-on-one. If there are siblings, cousins and other relatives who have influence, make them part of the discussions.

Begin slowly

Get your loved one to accept supplemental help before you think they really need it. Give the caretaker a try with basic housekeeping, grocery shopping, or providing transportation to doctor appointments. As the caretaker assists with these smaller tasks, your loved one is more likely to trust them with larger and perhaps more personal duties later. If you wait until you have reached a crisis, it will be much more difficult to get your loved one to accept "an outsider."

Empower your loved one

Perhaps the biggest and most obvious advantage to home care is the sense that independence would be diminished if they were enrolled in an extended care facility. Empower your loved one, and work through the concerns together:

- Ask your loved one what they want and what they need. At what point would they acknowledge that they need help?
- Speak hypothetically – if a caregiver were to help him/her, what would they want help with? What are they adamant about refusing help with? This will help your loved one to feel like he/she is in the driver's seat.
- Identify specific examples from your loved one's daily life that are currently challenging and describe how these challenges would be alleviated by bringing in home care support.
- Polls show that elderly parents don't want to be a burden to their children. Let them know that it would give you peace of mind to know they are being taken care of when you can't be there.
- Emphasize that bringing in a caregiver will not replace visits with family or friends. Be sure to reassure him/her that a caregiver can help with the things that loved ones shouldn't need to and can give you more quality time together.
- Introduce your loved one to a representative if not a caretaker, from your preferred home care agency so they can get a sense for what type of person may assist them.

Need more information?

Boomers-With-Elderly-Parents
www.boomers-with-elderly-parents.com

HelpGuide-Senior Services
helpguide.org/elder/senior_services_living_home