

# For Caregivers:

## Caring for Others and Yourself!



**“Whoever saves a life, it is considered as if they saved an entire world.”**

**– Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5**

Caring for someone over time is both sacred and challenging. Chronic illness, cognitive decline, or emotional stress can cause prolonged grief, anxiety, or feelings of helplessness. These responses are natural—seeking support is essential to sustain both your well-being and your caregiving.

### Crisis Supports

Support is available 24/7 — you are not alone, and help is only a call away.

- National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
  - Call or text 988
- The Friendship Line – Institute on Aging
  - 1-800-971-0016
- Jewish Community Helpline (Shalom Task Force)
  - 1-888-883-2323
- Veterans Crisis Line
  - Call 988 and press 1, or text 838255.

### Support Groups

You can't pour from an empty cup. Support groups connect you with peers for guidance, encouragement, understanding, and a needed break.

- Family Service of Champaign County
  - famservcc.org
- Circle of Friends Adult Day Center
  - circleoffriendsadulthood.com
- NAMI Family Support Group
  - <https://www.nami.org/>

## Navigating Healthcare Systems

Caregiving often involves managing appointments, medications, and communication with multiple providers.

### Tips:

- Keep a notebook or digital file with key contacts, medications, and care plans.
  - Vial of Life: helps compile all necessary files
  - <https://www.vialoflife.com/>
- Ask providers to repeat or clarify information—it is your right to understand.
- Use social workers, patient advocates, and care coordinators for guidance.

## Financial and Legal Supports

Caregiving may have hidden costs and legal responsibilities.

### Tips:

- Explore caregiver stipends, local grants, and tax benefits.
  - Plan legal matters such as powers of attorney, healthcare directives, and guardianship.
- Area Agency on Aging (East Central Illinois AAA) provides caregiver support and financial guidance
  - [eciaaaa.org](http://eciaaaa.org)
- Check out the Illinois Department of Aging Resource website for more opportunities.
  - [ilaging.illinois.gov](http://ilaging.illinois.gov)

## **“The highest form of wisdom is kindness.” – Pirkei Avot 2:13**

Caring for others is an act of chesed (loving-kindness) and tikkun olam (repairing the world). Extending kindness to yourself lets you continue giving and honors both you and your loved one.