

What is care-giving?

Who are caregivers?

Care-giving means caring for others—whether relatives or friends. A caregiver may be a single parent caring for children or someone who provides daily support for a loved one with physical or health disabilities. Caregivers can be those caring for aging parents.

Facts about care-giving

Federal government studies provide the following insights:

- Approximately one out of every four American families is caring for an older family member, an adult child with disabilities, or a friend.
- According to recent surveys, there are over 7 million informal caregivers to older adults.
- More than half of caregivers are women. However, care receivers are about evenly divided, approximately half women and half men.
- On average, caregivers spend about 20 hours per week providing care.
- Caring for a person with disabilities can be physically demanding, especially for older caregivers.

Caregiver Stress

Caregiver stress is a daily fact of life for many caregivers. Caregivers often need to balance caregiving with their other

responsibilities such as jobs and caring for additional family. Constant stress can lead to burnout and health problems for the caregiver. Feelings of anxiety, sadness, isolation and exhaustion are common. Caregivers may also feel guilty, frustrated and/or angry.

In caring for a loved one, whether a child, an elderly family member or a friend - caregivers often sacrifice their own emotional and physical needs. They may find themselves overwhelmed by trying to manage the constant demands and responsibilities of being a caregiver.

Research has shown that care giving can increase the risk for depression and illness. Caregiver depression often goes unnoticed as caregivers struggle with the consuming nature of their roles. Lack of sleep and foregoing their own medical care can contribute to depression and even cause caregivers to suffer physical illness.

Depression is not a weakness. But if these feelings persist, they may be a sign you need help to cope with the strain of caring for a friend or family member.

When you're feeling isolated, a call to The Samaritans can help you know you're not alone. Often, talking to a Samaritan volunteer is the first step to being able to talk to a trusted family member, friend, licensed physician or licensed counselor. We can also point you in the direction of help.

Need to talk about the stress of being a caregiver? Call a friend at The Samaritans. Please remember, at The Samaritans we are here to listen—and you are never a bother. We care and we want to help.

To give respite means to provide rest or relief. After a full day of responsibilities, sometime you're just too tired to listen to the loved ones around you – especially those who may have a chronic condition such as a physical or mental illness, or an aging parent, or a friend or family member who only turns to you for support. When you are too tired to listen, suggest your family member or friend call a volunteer at The Samaritans.

Need a 10 minute break from being the caregiver? Have your loved one call The Samaritans. Let us provide you a brief respite. It's our free gift to you!

A 10 minute call to The Samaritans – giving your loved one an opportunity to talk to a caring nonjudgmental listener – can provide you with 10 minutes of rest to enjoy your dinner, look at the paper, read to your child or go for a short walk. It just might be the daily break you need to feel rested and ready to take on the next challenge.

**The Samaritans:
We listen... We care... We help...**

Did you know most of our callers are not suicidal?

More than 80% of our calls are from daily supported callers. People of all ages call to talk about many different personal issues, including when they are hopeless, alone or have suicidal feelings. Some call only once, while others may call often or even daily. Sometimes, they call just to let us know how their day went or to say goodnight. Samaritans volunteers are there to listen as often as needed.

It's important to remember – no one needs to be suicidal to call a friend at The Samaritans.

We enhance and support professional care.

The Samaritans does not replace professional medical, mental health, pastoral or social service care. We can, however, shore up such supportive services between appointments or when family and friends are not available.

Our hotline/listening line support is also available when professional care services are no longer an option.

Befriending Works!

Befriending uses caring, nonjudgmental, listening skills. Believing that people can be helped through befriending, The Samaritans founder, Chad Varah, opened the first branch in London in 1953. Today, befriending centers provide a world-wide network of support with more than 31,000 volunteers in more than 40 countries.

The Samaritans of Rhode Island opened in 1977, and has since received more than a half million calls and helped countless others through its programs and services.

To learn more about coping with the stress of care giving, visit our website at www.samaritansri.org and go to the section titled "Help for Everyone".

The Samaritans 24 Hour Hotline/Listening Line – The gateway to care and a lifetime of support.*

***Need to talk?
Call a friend at The Samaritans.
(401) 272-4044
or state-wide at
1-800- 365-4044.***

***If someone is at immediate risk of suicide, please call 911 directly.**

(*The Samaritans Hotline/Listening Line is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year depending on the availability of volunteers within a 24 hour period.)

Are you a caregiver?

We can help you!



We listen... We care...

***Free and Confidential
Crisis Hotline/Listening Line:
(401) 272-4044 or
(1-800) 365-4044***

***Please visit our website @
www.samaritansri.org***