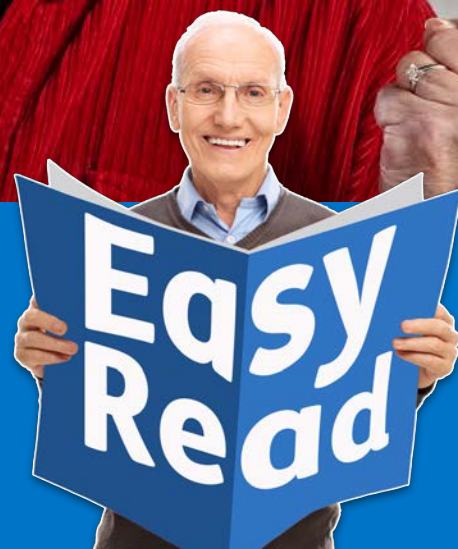


I'm a carer and I'm stressed out



MindEd
for Families

online advice and support you can trust

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Carers



A carer is anyone who cares for someone who cannot cope without their support.

Anyone could be a carer. It might be:

- A 15-year-old girl looking after a parent with an alcohol problem
- A 40-year-old man caring for his partner who has terminal cancer
- An 80-year-old woman looking after her husband who has Alzheimer's disease



Caring can take up all of your time.



Many carers feel lonely because they have no time for other friends.

Carers are in danger of getting mental health problems.



Some of the causes of mental health problems are:

- Discrimination



- Not being able to do things you want to do



- Poor relationships



- Poor physical health



- No money

Feeling good about yourself



Feeling good about yourself will help you.



Caring is hard. Some carers:

- Blame themselves for things that are not their fault.



- Criticise themselves, which makes them feel low.



- Do too much. This can make the person who they are caring for feel resentful.



- Are always trying to do more and more and getting more tired.



- Accuse the person they are caring for of trying to get too much attention.



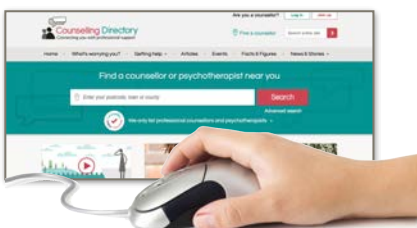
- Think that they are the only one who could care for the person. They don't trust anyone else.

Counselling for carers

It can be useful to talk through some of these feelings.



Most Carers Centres can help you to find someone to talk to.



The Counselling Directory explains counselling for carers. Go to:
www.counselling-directory.org.uk

Stress



You may be feeling stress if you are:

- Short tempered or irritable



- Not sleeping well



- Feeling more tired



- Losing your appetite or eating too much



- Not wanting to do things or go out



- Feeling depressed, anxious or hopeless



- Feeling angry towards the person you are caring for



- Feeling guilty



If you feel any of these things it's probably time to ask for help.

Tips for staying calm



- Focus on what is happening now, not on what might happen.



- Make time for yourself to take some exercise.



- Avoid arguments. Take some time out and give the person some personal space.



- Arrange for someone else to come and share some of your caring work. You could talk to your local social services about **homecare** or **respite care**.



Homecare is where someone comes and helps with going out and about and also with personal care.



Respite care is where you can have a short break.

Look after yourself



It is important that carers look after their own health and wellbeing.

Here are some things that might help:



- Do something that helps you to be calm and relaxed - like:
 - Aromatherapy - This uses oils that smell good to improve your wellbeing.



- Massage - this helps you to relax and is good for your body.



- Mindfulness - this is a way of meditating that helps to calm your mind. Find out more at www.bemindful.co.uk



- Be social. Keep in touch with friends



- Get creative. Try arts and crafts. Visit art galleries. Do some cooking



- Be spiritual. Get back in touch with your local place of worship



- Get active. Go for a walk. Do a sport you love



- Do something that gets your brain working - go to the library, do crosswords or games

For more information



This resource is part of the MindEd online learning site.

For more information please contact:-



Web: www.mindedforfamilies.org.uk

Email: minded@rcpsych.ac.uk



Twitter: @MindEdUK