



You Can!

Honor Caregivers during National Family Caregivers Month



Caregiving can be a rewarding experience but the role isn't easy, and for some it can be a thankless task. Here are some great ways to express gratitude to the caregivers in your life:

- ♥ **Tell them.** Caregivers often report feeling isolated and undervalued. Set aside some time for a conversation or to write a letter expressing appreciation for all they do.
- ♥ **Listen.** Caregiving has its rewards but can also be exhausting and frustrating at times. *"Listening is a gift of spiritual significance that you can learn to give to others. When you listen, you give one a sense of importance, hope and love that he or she may not receive any other way."* — H. Norman Wright
- ♥ **Offer respite.** Most caregivers have a wish list when it comes to balancing the demands of caregiving and attending to their own needs, but it can be hard to ask for help. Offer to take a regular shift with your loved one or, if you live at a distance, visit more often. If your loved one can travel, set up visits at your place.
- ♥ **Enlist everyone.** Get-togethers can be a good time to have a family meeting. Invite the caregiver to share information about your loved one's needs and brainstorm ideas to share the caregiving load.
- ♥ **Hire in-home care.** Setting up home care services can be a great way to lighten the caregiver's workload while providing peace of mind. Sharing the cost of these services among family members can be an affordable solution.
- ♥ **Indulge the caregiver in a day of relaxation.** Find an alternate caregiver and give the gift of a day at a spa to help them feel restored and refreshed.
- ♥ **Help create a backup plan.** Caregivers often worry what will happen if something unexpected occurs and they are unable to provide care. Creating an emergency backup plan gives peace of mind - perhaps friends and family can help; home care agencies can provide paid caregivers; and many assisted living residences offer respite care.

Adapted from: Columbia Theological Seminary
www.ctsnet.edu/a-time-to-celebrate-and-honor-caregivers/

The Massachusetts Family Caregiver Support Program at Minuteman Senior Services provides education, strategies, resources, and support groups to those caring for older adults and people with disabilities. For information, call (888) 222-6171 or email elderinfo@minutemansenior.org

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