



NAVIGATING THE JOURNEY AS A CAREGIVER

Your **loved one** has a diagnosis of **Schizophrenia**.

What's next?

Behaviors and Challenges You May Recognize

Schizophrenia is a mental disorder characterized by psychosis (distorted reality), personality changes, and disorganized speech, thoughts, and behaviors. The symptoms of schizophrenia may change how your loved one perceives their surroundings, relates to others, and performs on short or long-term tasks. It is almost certainly difficult for your loved one to go about life as normal.

They may be experiencing:

- Challenges staying motivated or focused
- Hearing voices or seeing things others can't see
- Persistent beliefs based on different reality
- Difficulty speaking clearly and coherently
- Fearful thoughts about being watched, followed, or worked against
- Withdrawal from relationships and social activities
- Feelings of isolation and panic due to their new symptoms
- Awareness that they are alone in their experiences of reality
- Challenges communicating feelings due to monotone expression

This journey of navigating your loved one's schizophrenia diagnosis may look daunting at first. Yet, it can help to shift that compass and look at this journey as an opportunity for GROWTH. On this journey, you can NURTURE your relationship with your loved one AND yourself.

Supporting Your Loved One

You and your loved one are embarking on a growth journey and will navigate their diagnosis TOGETHER. Be PATIENT with your loved one AND yourself as you learn which coping strategies are most helpful.

The greatest gift we can give our loved ones is ACCEPTANCE of what they are going through in the moment. To help them you can also practice boundary-setting, utilize outside help, and take care of YOU! It will empower you BOTH on this journey for you to give yourself love and rest. YOU will be more able to give the care they need and THEY will witness your self-care example.

You can also provide your loved with resources. *See the next page for ways to help manage schizophrenia.*

If you are currently experiencing a crisis, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741-741.

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Resources for You and Your Loved One

- [The National Institute of Mental Health](#) on Schizophrenia
- Schizophrenia info by the [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)
- [Mental Health America](#) (MHA) on Schizophrenia
- Mental health screener psychosis test also from [MHA](#)
- [The Center for Technology and Behavioral Health](#) reviews FOCUS, the schizophrenia app
- Info on caregiving for schizophrenia from [VeryWellMind](#)
- [HeretoHelp](#) on being a sibling of a person with schizophrenia
- [Students with Psychosis](#), a support organization for young people
- Online community by the [Schizophrenia and Psychosis Action Alliance](#)
- Support forums as part of [Schizophrenia.com](#)
- [The Schizophrenia and Psychosis Action Alliance](#)'s information helpline for patients and families
- An overview of DNA testing for treatment choices by [Psychology Today](#)
- A handbook PDF for schizophrenia patients by the [Queensland Centre of Mental Health Learning and the Mental Health Clinical Collaborative](#)
- Information for families from the [Mind Matters Institute](#)
- How to support voice-hearing loved ones by [Understanding Voices](#)
- Online community support for persons hearing voices by [Intervoice](#)

Preventing Caregiver Burnout

We give our BEST care when we are also taking care of ourselves! Make time to recharge, even with a short moment that's just for YOU. Connecting with other caregivers is another powerful form of self-care. Learn more about our One-to-One Caregiver Peer Support program on [our website](#).

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