



# NAVIGATING THE JOURNEY AS A CAREGIVER

let's talk about

## ACCEPTANCE *and* Letting Go

### Acceptance as a Form of Caregiving

On our caregiver journey, we often want to assert control over situations in order to show love or support. Sometimes the best way to provide care to our loved ones is to practice **radical acceptance** and **letting things go**.

- Allowing our loved ones to **fail** can be a type of **succeeding**
- It can be inspiring for our loved ones to model that we **can't control everything**
- Accepting that we **need not fix or change symptoms** can sometimes lessen them
- **Letting go of resentment** with our loved ones can strengthen our bonds
- Resisting helicopter caregiving **reduces tension** and **nurtures independence**
- Loved ones may benefit from the feeling that they are **not being controlled**
- Accepting our loved ones for where they are in the moment **can be very healing**.

### Acceptance as Form of Self-Care

Acceptance is **not just for your loved one**. It can also help YOU take care of YOU.

- Relying on faith, mindfulness, or a sense that it will all work out **builds courage**
- Acceptance of a situation is also a **resolution not to stress** about it
- When we let others design their own destinies, **we carry less weight** with us
- Time not spent worrying about others frees us to **work on ourselves**
- Taking time to **make peace with the past** makes the present more comfortable
- Radical acceptance can be use to make peace with **ourselves**
- When we **let go** of "what-if's," we understand that whatever happens, we will manage.

### Accepting a Diagnosis

Sometimes as caregivers we find ourselves **grieving** our loved one's diagnosis. We may experience all five stages of the Kübler-Ross Stages of Grief, repeatedly or in any order. When learning acceptance of a loved one's diagnosis, remember the seven C's:

- I didn't **CAUSE** it
- I can't **CURE** it
- I can't **CONTROL** it
- I can't **CHANGE** it
- I **CAN** take better **CARE** of myself
- By **COMMUNICATING** my feelings
- Making healthy **CHOICES** and
- **CELEBRATING** me!

*Turn the page for more resources on acceptance!*

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 Alliance on Mental Illness's** blog on accepting mental illness <https://bit.ly/3x91xr1>
- **Griffin Occupational Therapy** on the stages of grief and loss when your child receives a diagnosis <https://bit.ly/3iSItIr>
- A **Medium.com** blog for anyone who struggles with "Letting Go" <https://bit.ly/3i4LTsC>
- A radical acceptance practice worksheet from **Mental Health America** <https://bit.ly/2UMybSt>
- A practical meditation on letting go from **Sage-ing** <https://bit.ly/3f4KCjb>
- An explanation of "surrendering to win" from **Anaheim Lighthouse** <https://bit.ly/3zGM6YL>
- **Psychology Today's** blog feature on radical acceptance <https://bit.ly/3BXO4If>
- 5 Things Everyone Should Know About Acceptance from **MindBodyGreen Mindfulness** <https://bit.ly/3721oez>
- **HelpGuide** on coping with grief and loss <https://bit.ly/3iXmQ9U>
- Distress tolerance/radical acceptance worksheet from **Therapist Aid** <https://bit.ly/3iRohXz>
- Info from **Positive Psychology** on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) for letting go <https://bit.ly/3iWvXrs>
- More info on ACT from **Psychology Today** <https://bit.ly/3laH2rw>
- **The Skillful Podcast** with an episode on radical acceptance <https://bit.ly/3BLbQff>
- Distress tolerance as a mental illness caregiver superpower from **Families Empowered and Supporting Treatment for Eating Disorders (F.E.A.S.T)** <https://bit.ly/3zHipH3>
- **Psychology Today** on harm reduction, an acceptance-based response to substance use disorders <https://bit.ly/371VNVs>
- **Medium.com** on how to both accept yourself and change yourself <https://bit.ly/3i3sbNL>
- Free, comprehensive meditation app called **Insight Timer** <http://bit.ly/calminsight>

### 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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