



# NAVIGATING THE JOURNEY AS A CAREGIVER

Your **loved one** has a diagnosis of **Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)**.

## *What's next?*

### **Behaviors and Challenges You May Recognize**

GAD is characterized by ongoing, intense worry that lasts at least six months. People with GAD may find it challenging to navigate life events due to overwhelming worry about what-if situations. GAD can manifest as:

- Thinking in extremes and anticipating disaster
- Fatigue, body tension and body pain
- Difficulty sleeping or relaxing
- Trouble focusing or difficulty with memory
- Worry preoccupying everyday tasks, causing delays in completion
- Avoiding new opportunities out of worry about the outcome
- Relying on frequent reassurance from loved ones
- Extreme difficulty living with uncertainty
- Elaborate planning or controlling methods to cope with ambiguity

This journey of navigating your loved one's GAD 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 GAD.*

**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.**

# NAVIGATING THE JOURNEY AS A CAREGIVER

Your loved one has a diagnosis of **Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)**.

*What's next?*

## Resources for You and Your Loved One

- The **National Institute of Mental Health** on anxiety disorders - <http://bit.ly/NIMHanxiety>
- The **National Alliance on Mental Illness** on anxiety disorders - <http://bit.ly/anxietyNAMI>
- The **Anxiety & Depression Association of America** on GAD - <http://bit.ly/adaaGAD>
- **Mental Health America** (MHA) information on anxiety - <http://bit.ly/MHAanxiety>
- Info on anxiety in youth (includes adults link) - <http://bit.ly/anxietyinyouth>
- Tips to soothe trauma-related anxiety and panic flares - <http://bit.ly/traumacoping>
- Calm body, calm mind YouTube video - <http://bit.ly/calmbodyvideo>
- Social anxiety self-help guide for mild to moderate anxiety - <http://bit.ly/socialselfhelp>
- Anxiety therapy methods overview & search engine - <http://bit.ly/anxietytherapyoptions>
- **PixelThoughts**: 60 second meditation tool to ease worries - <http://bit.ly/calmingpixels>
- **QuietKit**: guided meditation for beginners - <http://bit.ly/quietkit>
- **Wysa**: private self-help app with therapeutic ChatBot feature - <http://bit.ly/WYSAapp>
- Free, comprehensive meditation app called **Insight Timer** - <http://bit.ly/calmin insight>
- Anxiety relaxation handbook (PDF) by the **University of Michigan** - <http://bit.ly/relaxationPDF>
- 134 self-care activities for a relaxed routine by **GoodTherapy** - <http://bit.ly/134activities>
- **Meditation Oasis**: free podcasts for a calm mind - <http://bit.ly/oasiscalm>
- Alternative to mindfulness and relaxation: distraction tools from a PTSD resource
  - <http://bit.ly/distractiontools>

## 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](#).

**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.**