



Me Time Monday™ Tip Sheet for Caregivers in support of the Healthy Monday Campaign

How to Have the “C-A-R-E Conversation”

When it comes to caregiving, we are often responding in a crisis. A loved one is sick or hospitalized and all of a sudden you need to “have the conversation” about their long term care. Unfortunately emotions and fears can be running high and this is when caregiver stress and anxiety can start to build.

If you can plan ahead, being prepared will help you in the long run. So, how do you start the caregiving conversation? We call it the C-A-R-E Plan.

- **C = Create a conversation around caregiving.** Start with either a personal story or recent news that relates to long-term care. This will spark dialogue on a less personal level and allow your loved one to give their opinion about their own long term care.
- **A = Acknowledge your loved one’s wishes.** There is a great document called “The Five Wishes” from [Aging With Dignity](#) which helps seniors and caregivers start the conversation about what they want to have happen as their physical and mental capacities may fade.
- **R = Review what is already planned.** Ask your loved one if they have a long-term-care (LTC) policy, legal documentation such as Powers of Attorney or Health Care Directives already set up, Wills, etc. Make sure you know what is covered, and more importantly, *what may not be covered*.
- **E = Engage the whole family.** While you might be the one to take the initiative of starting the caregiving conversation, especially if you feel you will become the primary caregiver, you want to ensure you include any siblings, your other parent, or even your own family (spouse and older children), in the caregiving plan around your loved one. This helps everyone prepare for their role and will help ensure the primary caregiver does not become burned out or bankrupt when they take on caregiving.

Caregiving is something we all face. Having the C-A-R-E conversation can help you and your loved one plan ahead and will ultimately give you more peace of mind which in turn will help alleviate your stress and give you more power over your own health and wellness while caregiving.

For more Me Time Monday tips from the Caregiving Club, visit: www.caregivingclub.com

For more information about the Healthy Mondays campaigns, visit: www.mondaycampaigns.org