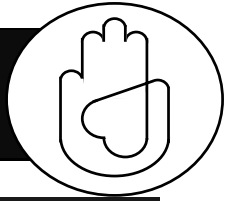


# ELDERCARE UPDATE



*Partnership for Eldercare: Partnering with Con Edison to help you with the needs of your aging loved ones.*  
SUMMER 2006

## CHANGING ROLES for the Parent & the Adult Child

One of the most difficult things to deal with as an adult child caring for an aging parent is that gradually your roles will be different. You will assume new roles—perhaps as financial, legal or household manager. No longer is the parent the one with all the answers, the one who knows everything, the one who will take care of you if things go wrong.

This does not mean that your parent is not still your parent. It does mean, however, that as a caregiver, you must make decisions for or with your parent. With this responsibility comes a whole host of emotions—some negative, some positive. All of this is a normal response to the dramatic shift in your relationship.

### ***Reactions of the Adult Child***

As your parent ages and your roles begin to change, you will be experiencing many emotions. These may include:

- Anger
- Depression
- Peace
- Resentment
- Frustration
- Guilt
- Loneliness
- Competency

### ***Reactions of the Disabled Parent***

Your parent, too, will be experiencing many new and sometimes overwhelming emotions. Some may include:

- Shame
- Worthlessness
- Denial
- Anger
- Fear
- Gratitude

## ***Choices***

One of the most important things to do, as an adult child, is to realize that you have the ability to make choices. Try to let go of the emotional baggage from the past and to shape a new sense of self in relation to your aging parent.

If you are the primary caregiver, understand that you can make choices about how you will do this. Will you hire help? Will your parent remain at home, move in with you, or live in a nursing home or assisted living facility?

To the degree that your parent is willing and able, involve them in the decision making process. These are some of the most complicated—and important—choices that either of you will ever make. Try and take your older relative's feelings into consideration. What would he or she enjoy or appreciate? What preferences did he or she have prior to his or her illness?

## ***Tips for Adult Children***

Here are some tips that can help ease the transition into new roles for both you and your parent.

- **Get help early.** Caregiving assistance, financial and legal advice, support groups and more helpful resources are available. ***Partnership for Eldercare*** can help you locate this help in your relative's community.
- **Involve all family members** in the caregiving process.
- **Educate yourself** about aging and disease. For example, attend a ***Partnership for Eldercare*** seminar at your workplace.

- **Respect** the dignity of your parent and/or older relative.
- **Recognize your own emotions**, and those of your parents.
- **Acknowledge your need** to care for yourself and your own family first.
- **Forgive your parent** for not being perfect—and for not being in control.
- **Forgive yourself** for your perceived inadequacies or emotions.
- **Accept** the changing roles and circumstances.
- **Communicate with your parent** first, then with siblings, doctors, friends.
- **Allow** as much independence as possible.



As you care for your aging parent, please remember that help is just a phone call away. Contact an eldercare counselor at **1.800.94.ELDER** (outside NYC) or **212.442.3113** for a confidential consultation.

**Partnership for Eldercare** can help you and your family with the advice, information and support you need as you face the challenges and opportunities of caring for a parent or older relative.

## Partnership for Eldercare

**A resource and referral service provided to employees of your company...**

*Our experienced counselors can help you with:*

Home Care  
 Assisted Living Facilities  
 Senior Housing  
 Nursing Homes  
 Advance Directives  
 Elder Law Referrals  
 Long Distance Caregiving  
 Medicaid  
 Medicare  
 Medigap Insurance  
 Alzheimer's Disease  
 Meals on Wheels  
 Transportation Services  
 Hospice  
 Mental Health Services  
 Home Modification Resources  
 Long Term Care Insurance  
 Adult Day Care  
 Caregiver Stress  
 Emergency Response Systems  
 And More!!

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**Please call us for a confidential telephone consultation.**

**☎ 1.800.94.ELDER**

**212.442.3113** [in NYC]

Or visit us on the web at:  
[www.partnershipforeldercare.org](http://www.partnershipforeldercare.org)