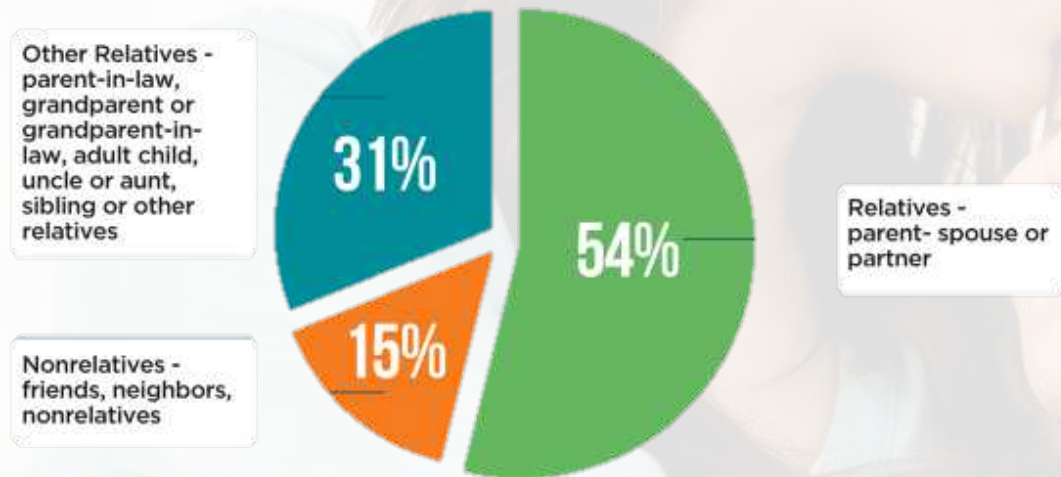


Tip 8 - Understand Why Your Loved One May Withhold Information

Caregiving in the US, 2015



Some elders do not feel comfortable sharing personal information with their adult children. Parents also may not want to burden their children, making it challenging for you to develop a full picture of your loved one's unmet needs. Some elders fear losing their independence or would like to avoid from becoming reliant on adult children.

Tip 9 - Do Not Make Your Loved One Feel Ambushed

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The Conversation: A Step-by-Step Guide

Opening Statements

Begin by asking your loved one, "What is most important to you at this time?" and/or "What is your greatest fear?"

It is important to start with your loved one, as he/she is the center of the conversation. Even if he/she is not able to fully express his/her concerns at the start of the conversation, directing this question to your loved one sets the tone of the conversation and reminds the family why you have all come together.

Next, move on to each family member and ask him/her to share his/her greatest fear, concern or burden. For example, "I know you care deeply about Mom. What is weighing most heavily in your heart?" You also might ask each family member to share what is most important to him/her at this time.

Be sure to describe your understanding of what is occurring with your loved one, for example, "Dad, it might be frustrating to have experienced such a change in the way you are feeling day to day. I understand that you really want to stay at home. Our goal is to get you the support you need so your quality of life is improved and you are able to remain in your home. What are your thoughts about how we can best accomplish the goal?"

Or

"Dad has always been independent. He is a proud man and does not feel he needs anyone coming in and taking over. He is not ready to let go of his independence. What might we do to make sure he is safe?"

The Conversation

Take time to clarify any misconceptions by repeating what the family member said back to him/her. For example, "If I am hearing you correctly, you said _____. " Also, validate your loved one's feelings. For example, "I see, I did not understand that was how you were feeling."

State your requests or concerns in clear terms. Remind your loved one and the family that it is OK to ask questions.

Present recommendations using a conversational and informational approach to shape the plan moving forward. Remember that your loved one may not be pleased with all of the suggestions being made throughout the conversation.

Should you have a sibling who attempts to divert the conversation, return to the common goal. For example, "Let's remember that the goal is to keep Dad in the home safely. Can we all agree?"

Throughout this phase in the discussion, keep in mind the goals and values that are important to your loved one.

If there is more than one solution, try ranking them in terms of viability. Later, each option can be fully explored. Remember that shared decision making is important, so use this approach when possible.

What is most important to you at this time?

What is your greatest fear?

Resistance During the Conversation

If you encounter resistance, it is OK to silently disagree and then patiently continue the conversation as appropriate.

If resistance persists, the goal should be to negotiate a compromise so no one—especially your loved one in need—feels marginalized. Identify options that are of mutual benefit. Try to use support strategies that have worked in the past.

Throughout the conversation, continue to acknowledge the difficulty of the situation and the decisions being made. Keep in mind that the decisions being made should be in your loved one's best interest.

Wrapping Up the Conversation

Should anyone be overcome with emotion, a moment of silence is OK; crying and comforting one another is equally important, as is acknowledging your feelings throughout the meeting.

Keep in mind that another meeting may be required to achieve the desired results (this is the perfect time for everyone to do his/her homework, for example, identifying additional resources).

Summarize the meeting by stating what has been discussed and then outline the next steps.

End the meeting on a high note, when possible. You might share a funny family memory or reflect on the fact that you are able to come together as a family. For example, you might say, "Before we close, please tell me something funny or special about _____."

Your final remarks might include a statement like, "We love you, Mom/Dad."

Don't forget to thank your family for being at the meeting and for helping make such difficult decisions.

Your family may not allow you to follow what is outlined in this guide. Therefore, it is important to adapt your communication plan accordingly and to develop an approach that is authentic for you.

Summary

Communication is one of the most important elements in caring for your elderly or disabled loved one. If you begin with clear expectations and keep the lines of communication open, your chances for a successful relationship are greatly enhanced. Remember that caring for your loved one means having ongoing conversations on the subject.

Appendix

RightConversations® Communication Planner:

The RightConversations® Communication Planner assists you with gathering pertinent documentation prior to and after the conversation with your loved one.

RightConversations® Family Action Planner:

The RightConversations® Family Action Planner documents the actions each family member will take so you can better support your loved one. It also contains an area for entering contact information of those who assist in the care of your loved one.

RightConversations® Information Journal:

The RightConversations® Information Journal assists you in gathering the important information you will need as you prepare to care for your loved one.

Tip 10 - What to Do if Your Loved One Says “No”

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Avoid becoming discouraged.



Consider your loved one was unprepared.



Maintain focus on what you have achieved.



Consider taking a step back.



Focus on the goal and not barriers.



Celebrate successes along the way.





When to Reach Out and Collaborate With a Mediator

[Caregiver Wellness: When Siblings Disagree](http://mycaregiversupportservices.blogspot.com/2016/10/caregiver-wellness-). Retrieved from
<http://mycaregiversupportservices.blogspot.com/2016/10/caregiver-wellness->

A photograph of three people, two women and one man, gathered around a table. The woman on the left, with curly dark hair and wearing a teal shirt, is pointing at a document. The man in the center, with grey hair and a mustache, is looking down at the document. The woman on the right, with long brown hair and wearing a white shirt, is also looking at the document. The text "Let's Practice" is overlaid in the center of the image.

Let's Practice



Identify your Caregiver-Related Strengths

Family Action Planner

Needs Assistance With	Description of the Task to Be Performed	Primary Person	Back-up Contact
Lawn Work Lawn work can include lawn care during the summer and winter months. If you are not able to perform this task yourself, perhaps you could locate resources to assist in this area.		Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____	Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____
Financial Management Financial management can include balancing the household budget and making sure there are enough funds to cover expenses. If you are not able to perform this task yourself, perhaps you could locate resources to assist in this area.		Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____	Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____
Meal Preparation Meal preparation can include cooking meals and taking a dietitian about the nutritional needs of your loved one. If you are not able to perform this task yourself, perhaps you could locate resources to assist in this area.		Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____	Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____
Housekeeping Housekeeping can include assisting with household chores or cleaning and assisting with organizing the home. If you are not able to perform this task yourself, perhaps you could locate resources to assist in this area.		Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____	Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____
Medications Assisting with medications can include organizing and keeping records of medications for your loved one. If you are not able to perform this task yourself, perhaps you could locate resources to assist in this area.		Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____	Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____
Personal Care Personal care may mean that you assist with bathing, dressing and grooming, everything involved in getting your loved one ready for the day. If you are not able to perform this task yourself, perhaps you could locate resources to assist in this area.		Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____	Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____
Emergency Management This person would be responsible for emergency care or crisis management during times when action is required to manage caregiving related crisis situations.		Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____	Name: _____ Address: _____ City, State, ZIP Code: _____ Phone: () _____

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Next Steps:
From
Conversation
to Action



Resources





ANY QUESTION ?



THANK YOU !