

# from one carer to another



## Don't be too hard on yourself

You might feel unappreciated and some days will be harder than others, but keep going, you're doing well.

**“Just go with the flow and try not to stress about jobs that don't get done.”** Liz

Caring for a loved one, relative or friend can be challenging physically and emotionally and leave you feeling like no-one understands. But you're not alone. If you are prepared and have all the information and support you need, life can be easier.

We spoke to local older carers and asked them to share their experiences, tips and advice which we hope will help you on your caring journey.

## Find out what professional help is available

Build a good relationship with your GP and other professionals involved and make sure they know you're a carer.

Keep a list of important numbers to hand. You know your loved one the best, so make sure professionals are listening to you. Ask lots of questions and if there's something you don't understand, make sure it's explained to you properly.

**“It's so tiring, I'm getting older and it's a struggle.”** Judy



## Don't try to go it alone

Accept support when it's offered. Friends, neighbours and relatives are often happy and willing to help but aren't sure how, so don't be afraid to ask them.

**“When someone offers help it's such a relief.”** Jack

## Get the practical things in order

It's likely that you will both be entitled to benefits, and the extra money could make a big difference. Some benefits are non-means tested, so you won't need to provide details about your savings or income. Make sure Wills and Powers of Attorney are up to date.

**“I found it helpful to get online, my computer has become a lifeline.”** Susan



## Talking to other carers can really help

It's easier if you identify as a carer to other people, so think about joining in groups and activities.

**“She's in a nursing home and I miss her, particularly on special days. It's lonely.”**

Stephen



## Keep the lines of communication open

Make sure you remain in touch with friends and family who can support you, practically and emotionally, even from a distance

**“Even though my daughter lives away, her support is invaluable. She helps us by contacting our GP to make appointments.”**

George



## Top Tips

Our carers said, being prepared for what is to come is important, but the most consistent tip from them was **don't try to manage by yourself, ask for help.**

## Acknowledge you're a carer

It sounds obvious, but recognising yourself as a carer, telling friends, family and professionals how you feel is a good thing.

## Age UK Gloucestershire is here for you

Our Help Team is here to provide information, advice and reassurance for you about a whole range of issues and support you may need as a carer and we can help you work out your action plan.

We'll check if you qualify for any benefits such as Carers Allowance or Attendance Allowance and if so, we'll help you through the application process. The Team can help you understand the care system, explain jargon and connect you to the specialist support that's best for you. They can talk to you about adaptations to your home, help you get online and provide details about social groups and respite options.



To find out how we can help if you're a carer, call our Help Team on **01452 422660**