

When the Going Gets Tough: Coping for Caregivers

When the Going Gets Tough: Coping for Caregivers

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Levels of Response to Problem Behaviors

1. Irritating but no real consequences
2. Negative consequences over time
3. Negative consequences NOW
4. Imminent DANGER NOW

LEVEL 1:

Consequences: Irritating

- * Repetitive behavior
- * Rituals
- * Too much sleeping/TV
- * No help in house
- * No response to your needs/feelings
- * Demands for _____
- * Refusals to _____

LEVEL 1 Responses

- * Distract and Redirect
- * Humor
- * Can I live with this?
- * A battle I want to fight?
- * A battle I can win?
- * Can I look the other way?

LEVEL 2:

Consequences over time

- * Eating too much/wrong foods
- * Refusal to see others
- * Refusal to do activities
- * Refusal of grooming/hygiene
- * Irrational spending
- * Lack of sensitivity to friends/family
- * Hoarding

LEVEL 2 Responses

- * Distract & Redirect
- * Encourage, repeat in a few minutes/hours
- * Don't ask, rather tell matter-of-factly
- * Intervene, offer matter-of-fact reason
- * Environmental changes
 - move objects to different location
 - remove possible cues
- * Explain to others privately

LEVEL 3: Consequences NOW

- * Refusing medications
- * Driving when shouldn't
- * Drinking too much
- * Verbally aggressive
- * Provoking others to anger
- * Up all night
- * Agitated for extended periods
- * Demanding to do something unsafe

LEVEL 3 Responses

- * Distract & Redirect
- * Ask person for “help”
- * Talk to your doctor
- * Consider medications
- * Solicit help from family members/friends
- * Consider in-home caregiver or placement

LEVEL 4:

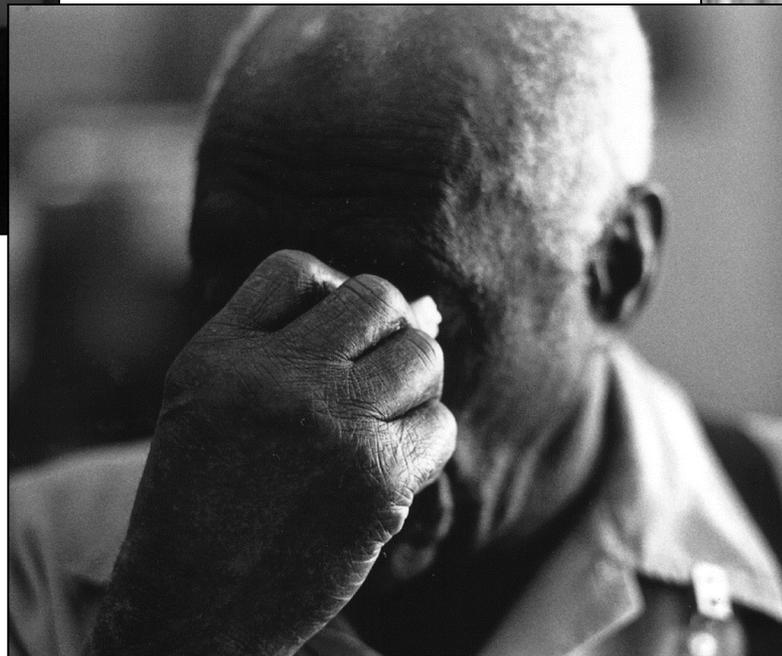
Consequences: Danger NOW

- * Physically threatening/aggressive
- * Demanding to do something unsafe
- * Extreme confusion

LEVEL 4 Responses

- Consider a plan BEFORE there is a crisis
- Leave the house
- Call for help - friends/family/neighbors
- Call the police - explain the situation
- Consider placement or hospitalization

Elder abuse



Caregiver Emotional Reactions

- Anger
- Embarrassment
- Frustration
- Fear
- Depression
- Grief
- Fatigue
- Gratitude
- Peace
- Enjoyment
- Satisfaction
- Resolution

Caregiving is rewarding, yet challenging

- * Unrealistic expectations of yourself
- * Physical exhaustion
- * Neglecting your own health care
- * Frustration/irritability
- * Social isolation
- * Guilt/depression

YOU WILL NEED:

☐ CURIOSITY

☐ KINDNESS

☐ STAMINA

☐ WILLINGNESS
TO LOOK
STUPID.

Unresolved Issues

- * Parents - How can they still push your buttons?
- * They installed them!
- * Spouses/partners – decades of memories, including resentments, hurt
- * Any emotional pains that are unresolved will likely resurface

Knowing how you're feeling...



Three Components of a Healthy Lifestyle

- * Physical Wellbeing
- * Cognitive/Intellectual challenge
- * Social Connectedness

Closing Thoughts:

- * Plan ahead to avoid crisis, but...
 - Live in the here and now
- * Find SOMETHING to be grateful for every day
- * Take time to recognize when something goes well
- * Notice the aspects of your loved one that are NOT effected by the disease

For more information...

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Please visit us at:

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