

Caregiver Matters



Basics 1: Am I a Caregiver?

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an initiative by Nursing Department,
Tan Tock Seng Hospital.

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Project Carer Matters is an initiative to build a training and support network for family caregivers of older adults.

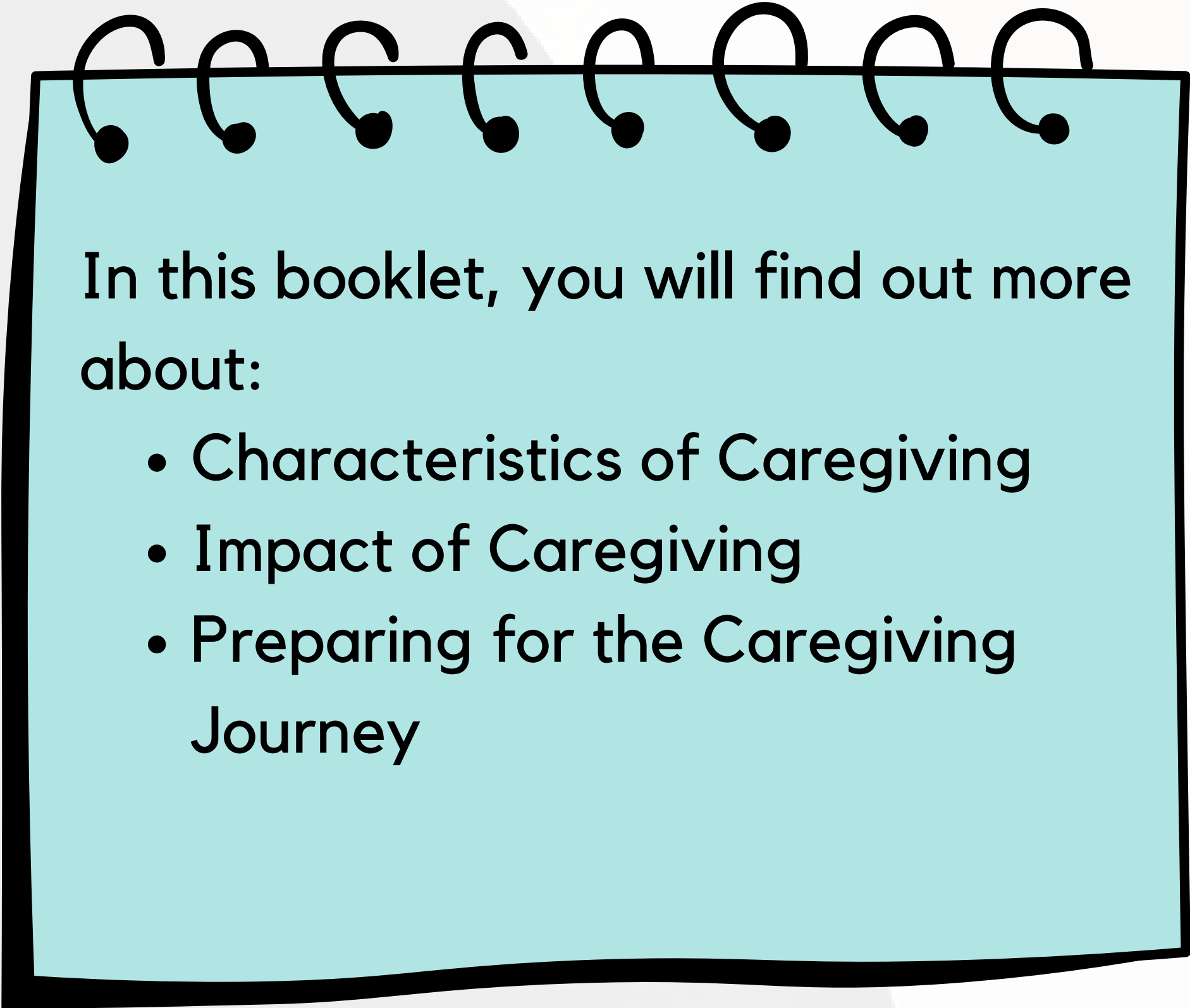
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"There are only four kinds of people in the world: those who have been caregivers, those who are currently caregivers, those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers."

Rosalynn Carter



In this booklet, you will find out more about:

- Characteristics of Caregiving
- Impact of Caregiving
- Preparing for the Caregiving Journey

Source:

Carter, R. (2011, May 26). *Family Caregiving Issues and the National Family Caregiver Support Program*. The Carter Center.

https://www.cartercenter.org/news/editorials_speeches/rosalynn-carter-committee-on-aging-testimony.html

A Caregiver

A caregiver is someone who is responsible for the care of another person. You are a caregiver if you are assisting another person in any of the following activities:

Caregiving Activities



Basic activities of daily living:

Feeding, Bathing, Walking

**Shopping,
Housekeeping,
Food preparation**



**Ensuring physical
and mental well-being**

**Managing
medical condition(s)**



Managing finances

Decision making



Advocacy needs

**Coordination of
care needs**



A Caregiver

Your caregiving journey can be either:

- **Short-term:** Caring for someone with conditions that last a short time
(E.g. a person recovering from surgery)
- **Long-term:** Caring for someone with conditions that require lifelong care
(E.g. a person with Alzheimer's disease)



As a caregiver, you might be:

- A **family** member, **friend**, or **neighbour**
- Someone who **lives in the same**, or **different household** from the care recipient
- Taking care of the recipient **part-time** or **full-time**



Caregiving can be both a rewarding and challenging journey. It is important that you remember *you are not alone.*

Watch this video to understand the responsibilities of a caregiver:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B3g0oxMqUbo>

Physical Impacts of Caregiving

You can often be absorbed in the care of your care recipient that you might not notice the effects of caregiving on your health.

You may experience:

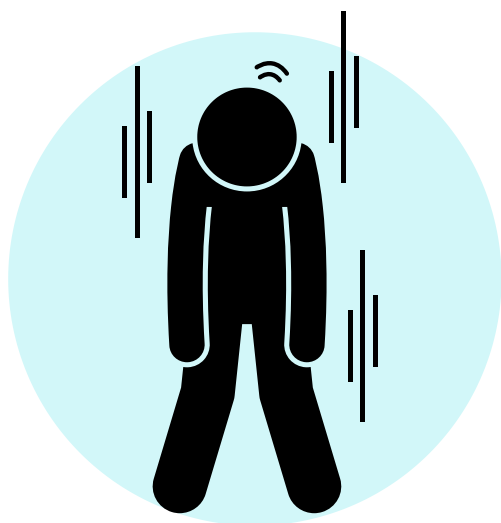
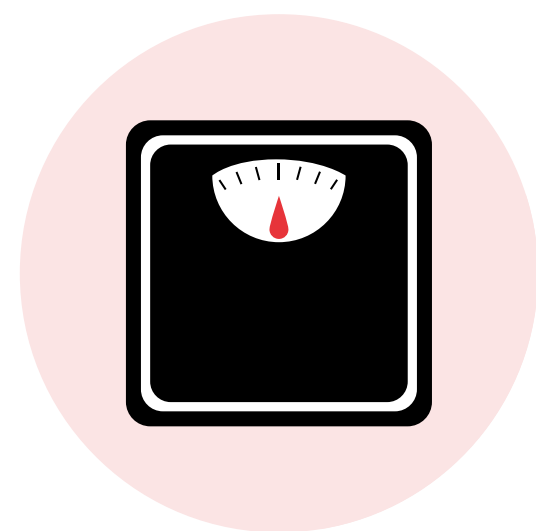


Back pain and muscle aches

Resulting from poor transferring techniques, improper posture or lack of assistance

Weight loss or gain

From changes in eating habits



Fatigue

From having to juggle multiple roles

Poor sleep

From interrupted rest



Headache

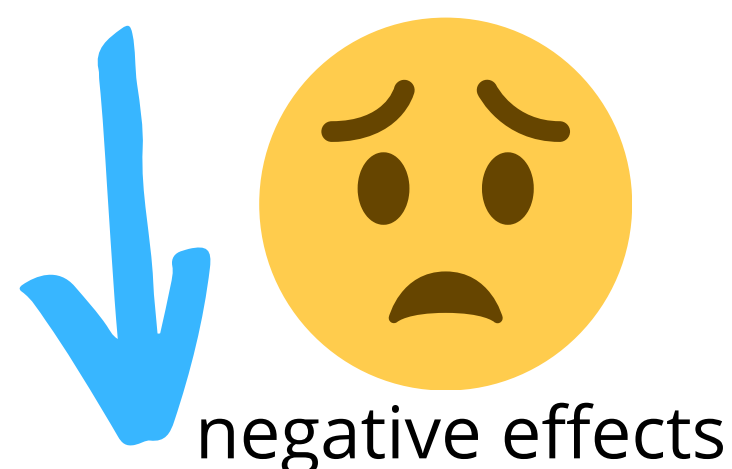
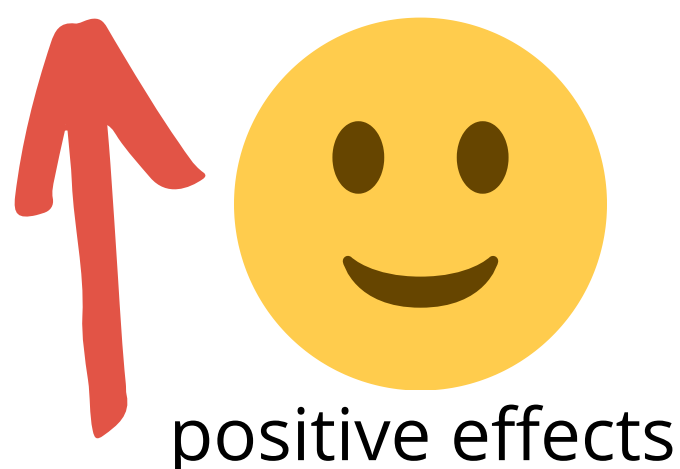
From insufficient rest

Practise self-care.

Train yourself in proper handling techniques of your care recipient and ensure that you take proper care of yourself to reduce these physical effects. It is important to look after yourself while taking care of your care recipient.

Psychological Impacts of Caregiving

You may experience positive and negative effects of caregiving. As you give care, focus on



Positive Psychological Effects of Caregiving



You may experience:

- Satisfaction from caregiving
- A sense of confidence and accomplishment
- Greater self-confidence and self-esteem
- Greater appreciation of life

Negative Psychological Effects of Caregiving



You may experience:

- Guilt
- Depression
- Anger
- Irritability
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Feelings of loss

**It is normal to have negative emotions during caregiving.
There are ways to overcome them.
Always remember that you are not alone.**

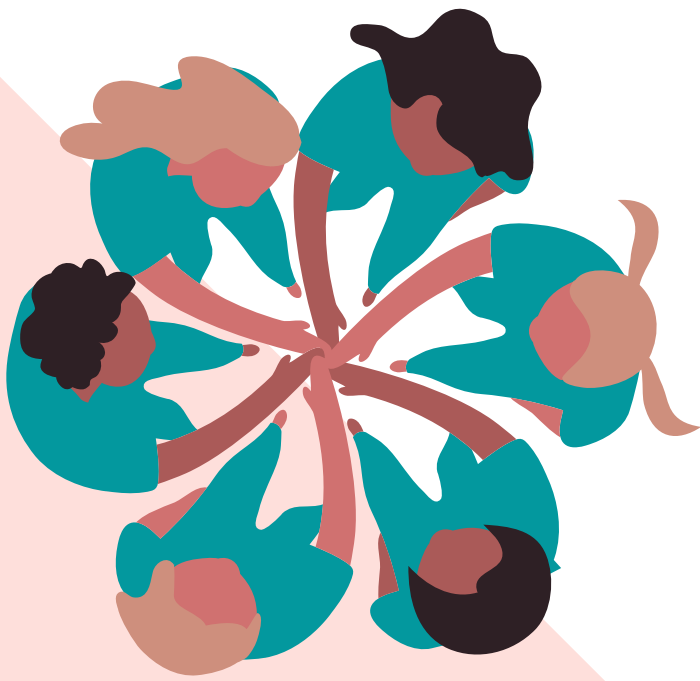
Social Impacts of Caregiving

Caring for your care recipient can be time consuming and you may face changes in your social relationships with others.

However, your caregiving experience can lead to positive social effects when you effectively engage others to assist you.

You may form:

Closer bonds with care recipient and family members



New friendships with caregivers through support groups

You may experience:



A sense of **loss** due to a changed relationship with care recipient

A sense of **isolation** as there is less time for social activities



Family conflict due to disagreements in care decisions

Economic Impacts of Caregiving

As your caregiving responsibilities increase, you might also experience negative economic effects such as:

- Increasing costs for maintaining care of your care recipient
- Reduced or loss of income due to increasing caregiving needs

You can seek financial subsidies and assistance from the government.



Preparing for the Caregiving Journey

Adequate preparation for your caregiving journey can help you:

- Identify the best way to deliver care to your care recipient
- Anticipate future caregiving needs
- Realise that there is help to get through challenges
- Effectively identify the best way to care for your care recipient
- Identify and access the needed resources

You may want to read more on the following topics to better equip yourself for your caregiving journey:

	Knowledge and Skills of Caregiving	What caregiver knowledge and skills do I need? Where can I find them?
	Strategies to Cope with Caregiving	How can I cope with the challenges and demanding nature of caregiving?
	Supporting Yourself	How can I care for myself?
	System Navigation	What are the available community resources? Where can I find them?

References:

AIC. (2019). Caring for the Elderly 101.

<https://www.aic.sg/resources/Documents/Brochures/Caregiving%20Support/Caregiver%20101%20Eng.pdf>

Asian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA). (2010). Caregiving... the journey starts with you! https://www.awwa.org.sg/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/AWWACaregiverService_CaregiversHandbook_English_V1.pdf

Committee on Family Caregiving for Older Adults; Board on Health Care Services; Health and Medicine Division; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2016). Families Caring for an Aging America: Family Caregiving Roles and Impacts (R. Schulz & J. Eden J, Ed.). National Academies Press (US).

Project Carer Matters also conducts fully subsidised caregiver programmes.

Click [here](#) to find out more or contact us at:

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