

## Are You Part of the Sandwich Generation?

*In addition to managing stress, it's also important to watch for signs of depression and anxiety.*

*Some signs to look for include:*

- Feelings of hopelessness
- Constant fatigue
- Change in weight or appetite
- Sleep problems
- Difficulty concentrating

*This is a group of adults who are raising children and taking care of their parents while managing careers, marriages, and other responsibilities.*

The number of Americans who are taking care of elderly family members has tripled within the last ten years, and balancing the demands of caring for an elderly relative with your own family and career may cause increased stress, anxiety and depression. Caregivers may spend as many hours each week caring for their elderly relatives as they do at their job.

The physical and emotional demands can

- ▲ lower caregiving effectiveness,
- ▲ decrease job satisfaction,
- ▲ and have a negative impact on family life.

Since your time and energy is limited consider setting priorities even when you know they may change from time to time. Invest in things that will help you manage tasks, for example, a computer or housekeeper. Last, acknowledge and accept limitations. It is impossible to do everything and its okay to ask for help. Think about joining a support group for caregivers and ask other family members for their assistance.

Resources for further information:

Caring for Yourself While Caring for Your Aging Parents: How to Help, How to Survive by Claire Berman and Henry Holt

National Alliance for Caregiving- [www.caregiving.org](http://www.caregiving.org)

Children of Aging Parents- [www.careguide.com](http://www.careguide.com)

Also, most states and cities have a department on aging that can provide additional information.

Here are some ways to ease the stress during this time:

- Set clear boundaries by talking about your responsibilities and your understanding of your elderly relative's expectations. You are likely to have this conversation many times as the situation changes over time. Learning to say "No" can help you maintain balance and sanity.
- Keep communication open and address your needs and concerns early on to keep the relationship running smoothly.
- Learn to delegate chores in your own house and ask for help with your caregiving responsibilities. And learn to accept less-than-perfection from your helpers.
- Become familiar with resources that are available in your community. Check for resources offered by the local senior center, place of worship, hospital and Employee Assistance Program.
- Remember that taking care of YOU is not a luxury, it is vital to your health and well-being.

If you are part of the 'sandwich' generation, you are not alone. Workplace Solutions can assist you with the unique needs of your family, for this and other concerns, please call for a free confidential consultation.

For free, confidential assistance with this and other health and wellness related concerns call Workplace Solutions at 800-327-5071.