The Caregiving Years Tip Sheet

Your Six Stages

1. THE EXPECTANT CAREGIVER
   Your Keyword: Ask
   Your Purpose: To prepare.
   Ask questions of your caree.
   Ask questions of health care professionals.
   Ask questions of lawyers and financial planners.

2. THE FRESHMAN CAREGIVER
   Your Keyword: Find
   Your Purpose: To experiment, to get your feet wet and see what works.
   Find services that help.
   Find support that comforts.
   Find ways to enjoy your hobbies and interests.

3. THE ENTRENCHED CAREGIVER
   Your Keyword: Receive
   Your Purpose: To develop a routine, create a familiar schedule for both yourself and your caree.
   Receive help—whenever you can.
   Receive breaks from caregiving.
   Receive support.

4. THE PRAGMATIC CAREGIVER
   Your Keyword: Welcome
   Your Purpose: To gain a better understanding of yourself and your caree.
   Welcome joys of your relationship.
   Welcome forgiveness.
   Welcome shared activities.

5. THE TRANSITIONING CAREGIVER
   Your Keyword: Allow
   Your Purpose: To walk with your caree during his last months and weeks.
   Allow the power of being.
   Allow time to mourn and grief.
   Allow remembrances and reflections of your experience.

6. THE GODSPEED CAREGIVER
   Your Keyword: Treasure
   Your Purpose: To implement and share your lessons learned from your role as caregiver.
   Treasure your dreams.
   Treasure your opportunities to share lessons learned.
   Treasure memories of your caree.

   Your caregiving journey is first about your caree, then about you and your caree, then just about you. And, when it's just about you--you decide, you choose, you become.

   Become your dream.

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