



Supporting a Caregiver-Worker

DAY 4



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WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

It may be difficult knowing what to say to a fellow friend or coworker who is a caregiver. Despite being well-intentioned, sometimes our comments can be more hurtful than helpful. Here are some ways we can better construct our words to encourage the caregivers around us.

SAY THIS...

INSTEAD OF THIS ...

"You should make time for yourself."

"I can imagine it's difficult to find time for yourself. Would you be open to me suggesting some resources that helped me with my self-care?"

All caregivers know they should make some time to take care of themselves. But the reality is that that's easier said than done. Instead, ask if they are interested in resources regarding self-care that they can access when time permits.

"They are so blessed to have you."

"What you are doing matters and makes a difference."

Even though this is meant as a compliment, we can't know how the care recipient responds to being taken care of. Maybe they appreciate it, but maybe they don't. In that case, suggesting the care recipient feels blessed may be a negative trigger for the caregiver.

"You look really tired."

"You've worked so hard. How are you doing?"

Caregivers tend to sacrifice their self-care. They are aware that they are tired, because they spend all their times taking care of their loved ones. There is no need to have it pointed out. Instead, recognize the contribution they are making by giving care.

"I couldn't do what you're doing, I'm just too busy."

"It must be very challenging at times, but you keep forging ahead, and I admire you for that."

In most cases, caregiving happens unexpectedly and abruptly. Often caregivers step up when someone in their life needs help. Show understanding in how caregivers have made changes in their lives and rearranged their priorities in order to care.

"Let me know if you need any help."

"What can I do to help? Would it be helpful if I did X, Y or Z?"

Of course it is kind to offer your help, but it can be hard for a caregiver to think of specific requests. And often, they may not have the energy to reach out when they can use the support the most. Therefore, be concrete in what you can offer. For example, getting the groceries, helping with cleaning or walking the dog.