



Caregiver Coach Training Program

*As **Caregiver Coaches** our focus remains on the client in all his/her complexity and not on the actual manifestation of his/her caregiving roles and responsibilities.*

***Our strength and added value** are in our ability to understand the complexity and challenge caregiving creates in our client's life without losing sight of the client.*

***Our calling** is to help our clients thrive beyond the circumstances of caregiving.*

Lesson 1 - Meet the caregiver

One of the first things one notices when exploring the professional literature on caregivers and caregiving is that the term Caregiver is a general term for anyone who provides care for a person who needs extra help. This could mean a home caregiver, a medical caregiver, a primary caregiver, or a family caregiver to name a few. They can be paid or unpaid. They can be professional or not. They can be formal or informal. Many different types of helpers are caregivers and often it needs to be said what kind of caregiver is being talked about. Sometimes called carer, care manager, care provider, or guardian.

The terminology, definitions, and distinctions we offer in this training are commonly acceptable and create a good foundation to understand the complexity of this field.

- **Caregiver** - anyone, including children and adults, who looks after a family member, partner or friend who needs help because of his/her illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without the support of another. A caregiver is someone who takes on this role for at least a year, usually for an unlimited and unknown amount of time.
A caregiver provides unpaid care and support to a person who needs this assistance because of a disease, a disability, mental illness, or ageing. Anyone can be a caregiver, regardless of your age, sex, sexuality, profession, or cultural background. You may be a family member, friend, or neighbor. You might not even see yourself as a caregiver, rather that you are simply helping a person in need or that you are providing care as a natural part of your relationship. Every caregiver is different. For some, becoming a caregiver can be sudden; for others, it is a gradual process.

- **Professional Caregiver** - individual who has chosen caregiving as a vocation. Professional caregivers receive professional training in their specific field of caring and are paid for their services.
- **Care receiver** - recipient of the caring and care-giving behaviors.
- **Caretaker** – individual who takes care of inanimate places, objects, or situations (like a park, cemetery, school).

Single Configuration Caregivers:

- Spouse – caregiver for his/her marital spouse / life partner with a chronic illness, injury, disability, mental health illness, geriatric illness, and end of life condition.
- Parent – caregiver for one or more children with a chronic illness, injury, disability, mental health illness, autism, genetic disorder, developmental disorder, learning disability, ADHD, and end of life condition.
- Grandparent - caregiver for one or more grandchildren with a chronic illness, injury, disability, mental health illness, autism, genetic disorder, developmental disorder, learning disability, ADHD, and end of life condition.
- Adult child – caregiver for a parent with a chronic illness, injury, disability, mental health illness, geriatric illness, and end of life condition.
- Adult grandchild - caregiver for a grandparent with a chronic illness, injury, disability, mental health illness, geriatric illness, and end of life condition.
- Adult sibling - caregiver for a brother and/or sister with a chronic illness, injury, disability, mental health illness, autism, genetic disorder, developmental disorder, geriatric illness, and end of life condition.
- Adult friend - caregiver for a close person with a chronic illness, injury, disability, mental health illness, geriatric illness, and end of life condition.
- Family caregiver – caregiver for a family member (no specified connection) with a chronic illness, injury, disability, mental health illness, geriatric illness, autism, genetic disorder, developmental disorder, learning disability, ADHD, and end of life condition.

Double Configuration Caregivers:

A person caring for more than one person in more than one configuration.

Examples:

- Person caring for a spouse and one or more children
- Person caring for an aging parent (or parents) and one or more children (sandwich generation)
- Person caring for a parent (or parents) and grandparent (or grandparents)
- Person caring for a parent (or parents) and a friend
- Person caring for a spouse and a sibling (or siblings)
- Person caring for a sibling (or siblings) and one or more children

The variations continue in many shapes and forms.

"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

What is involved?

Caregivers provide care to care receivers in the following ways:

- Coordination of care given by professional caregivers
- Supervision of professional caregivers
- Transportation
- Accompaniment to medical appointments
- Assistance and support during medical appointments
- Communicating with health professionals
- Purchasing and/or organizing medications
- Monitoring the medical condition and side effects
- Monitoring adherence to medication
- Administration of medication and/or medical care
- Advocating with providers or agencies
- Advocating with national health system
- Advocating with private health system
- Assistance with getting in and out of beds or chairs
- Assistance with getting dressed
- Diaper change

- Bathing or showering
- Assistance with bathroom
- Preparing meals
- Feeding
- Groceries and/or other shopping
- Household management and housework
- Managing finances
- Emotional support
- Managing medical problems and issues at home
- Keeping family and friends informed and up to date

And many, many more assignments.

As Caregiver Coaches, we hold the space for the Doing as well as the Being aspects of caregiving. While addressing the Being aspects invite us to a deep coaching exploration, addressing the Doing aspects require that we be both coaches and mentors.

When addressing the Doing, we recognize and address these Five Aspects of the Caregiving “Doing”:

- Functional Caring – caring for the care receiver’s daily physical and functional needs
- Emotional Caring – caring for the care receiver’s emotional needs
- Advocational Caring– caring for the care receiver’s medical needs from the health system and healthcare practitioners
- Administrative Caring – caring for the care receiver’s financial and administrative needs
- Relational Caring – caring for the care receiver’s needs with all that he/she is in relationship with.

As we hold place for these five aspects in the coaching space, we remember the following:

1. People are not born to be caregivers and those called to care for others, will need to learn how and when to do these tasks.
2. The physical, financial, and emotional life of the caregiver is affected.
3. The life of the caregiver is centered around the care recipient – at least that part of the caregiver’s life.

When addressing the Being, we hold our clients to be naturally creative, resourceful, and whole as we unpack the subjective narratives of what it means to be a caregiver.

No Man is an Island – John Donne

*“No man is an island entire of itself;
every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main;
if a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were,
as well as any manner of thy friends or of thine own were;
any man's death diminishes me,
because I am involved in mankind.
And therefore never send to know for whom
the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”*

Everyone is a part of the caregiving community