

# Still Standing:

Building Strength in The Caregiving Journey

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So glad you can join us.

Each Home Instead® office is an independently owned and operated franchise of Home Instead, Inc., an Honor Company.

# I'm Gina

I'm a lifetime caregiver

I'm community support

I'm a champion of self care as a caregiver



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Home Care Director

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Caring for a loved one is one of the most meaningful things we can do — but it also comes with a weight that's hard to describe unless you've lived it.

We're going to walk through four areas that can help you care not only for the person you love, but for **yourself** too:

**Understanding Stress** —  
what caregiver stress  
really looks like, and why  
it's so common.

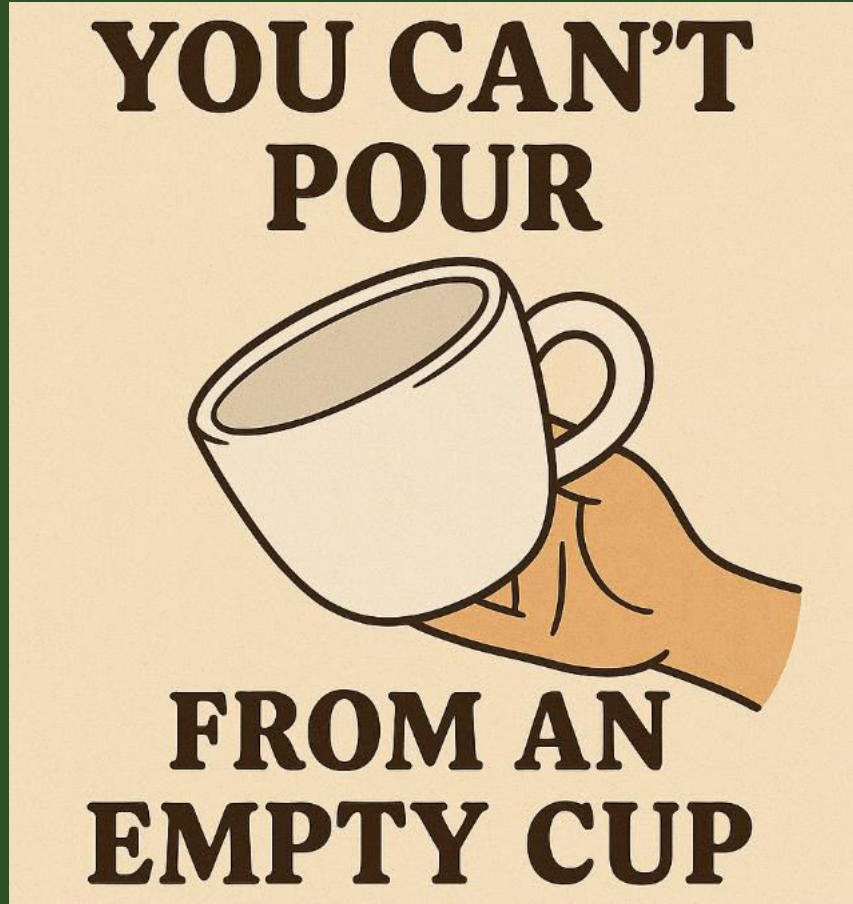
**Building Resilience** — how  
to stay strong emotionally,  
even when things are  
uncertain or  
overwhelming.

**Tactics That Help** —  
practical, doable strategies  
to manage day-to-day  
stress and avoid burnout.

**Support & Resources** —  
ways to get the help you  
need, from local programs  
to emotional support and  
self-care tools.

Whether you're caring for a spouse, a parent, or another loved one, this is a space to breathe, reflect, and hopefully leave with something that lightens your load

# Understanding Caregiver Stress



1

What is caregiver stress?

2

Emotional, physical, and mental symptoms

3

Why family caregivers are especially at risk

# No, You...Are Not Imagining It

## ...Or Exaggerating It

Before we talk about solutions, it's important to pause and acknowledge something many caregivers carry in silence.

Caregiving is often done out of deep love — but it comes with a cost that can be physical, emotional, financial, and invisible to others.

The truth is, **many family caregivers are overwhelmed, isolated, and stretched far beyond their limits.**

They're doing it quietly, while holding down jobs, managing households, and often putting their own needs last. What you'll see in these next few slides aren't just numbers — they're real reflections of what many of you may be feeling right now.

And what you're doing is incredibly hard — and incredibly important.

Family caregivers are more likely to experience **depression and anxiety** than non-caregivers and may have a **63% higher risk of mortality**. — *Schulz &*

*Beach, JAMA*

63%

# The Caregiver Reality



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## Time Lost Energy Spent.

- If you're doing more than 20 hours/week of care, the risk of burnout skyrockets. (Family Caregiver Alliance)
- Many caregivers are providing the equivalent of a part-time job — 24 to 34 hours per week — on top of everything else. (Alzheimer's Association)



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## It Costs More Than Time.

- Half of caregivers say it's hurting them financially, too — cutting back, dipping into savings, or giving up work hours. (NAC)
- 61% of caregivers say caregiving has hurt their job — late arrivals, missed shifts, stalled careers. (AARP)



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## Health Consequences Are Real.

- Caregivers are more likely to suffer depression, anxiety, and even chronic illness. Research shows it can even increase your risk of early death if the stress isn't managed. (JAMA)
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# Unique Challenges for Spouses vs. Adult Children

1 

Spouse caregivers:  
role shift,  
isolation,  
physical  
demands

2 

Adult  
children:  
balancing  
work, guilt,  
and family  
roles

3 

Grief and  
anticipatory  
loss affects  
both





# Impact of Long-Term Stress

- Chronic fatigue and burnout
- Risk of depression, anxiety, health issues
- Effects on relationships and caregiving quality

# Building Resilience

You are not born with resiliency, you learn it.  
Like learning to drive, it takes time and practice to be confident in your resiliency.



**Resilience =  
Bouncing Back,  
Adapting**

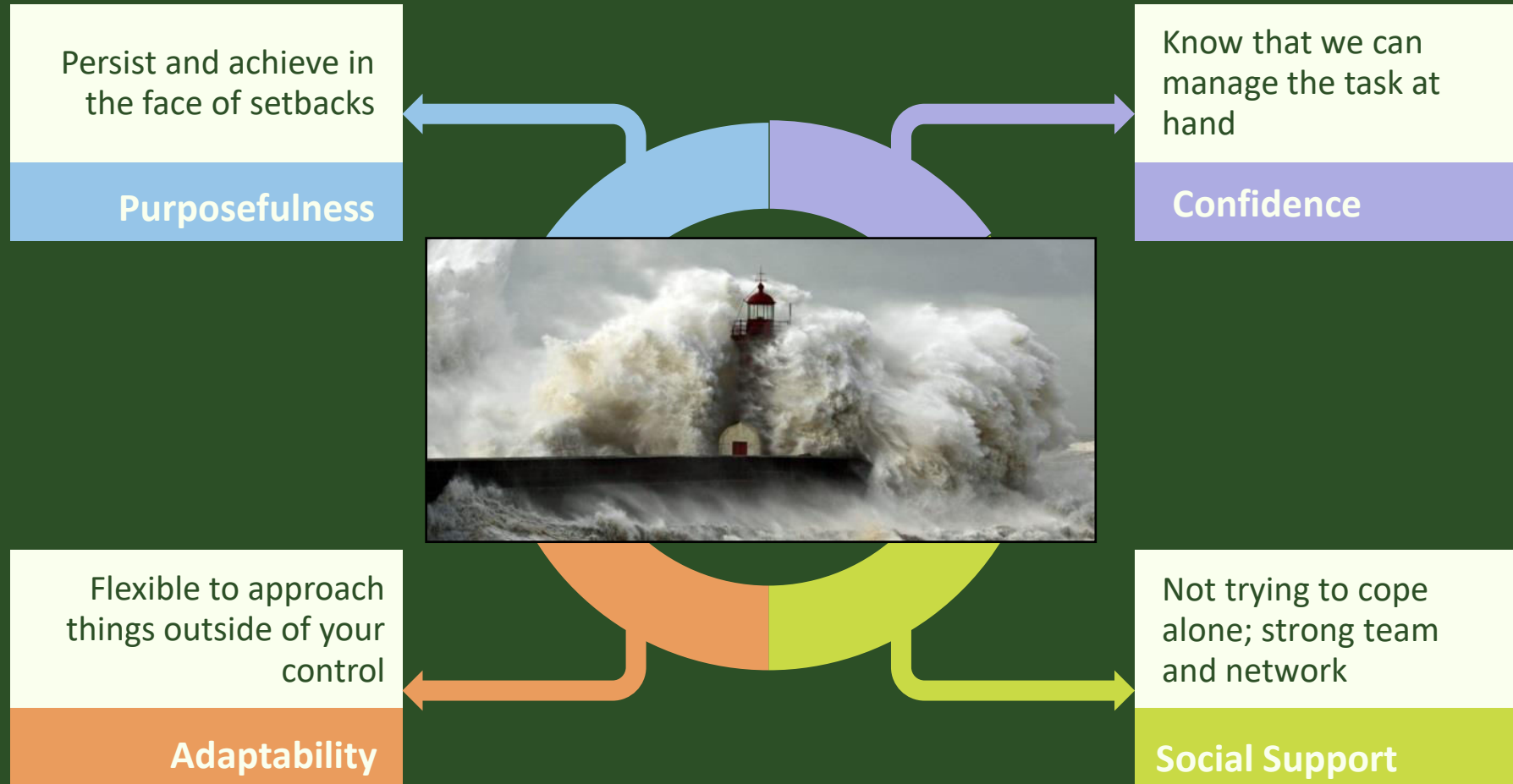


**Not Perfection  
but Flexibility**



**Self Compassion,  
Recognize Your  
Emotions**

# Key Components of Becoming Resilient





Take breaks: short and long



Set boundaries, say 'no'



Use a caregiving schedule/calendar



Focus on what can be controlled

# Tactics To Reduce Stress

# Emotional Self Care Tools



JOURNALING OR  
VOICE NOTES



DEEP BREATHING /  
MINDFULNESS




GRATITUDE PRACTICE



PRAYER, MEDITATION,  
SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

# Staying Connected

- Join caregiver support groups
- Talk to friends—guilt-free
- Ask for and accept help
-  *Tip:* Create a “Care Team” or delegate tasks via apps like Lotsa Helping Hands or CaringBridge.

# The Power of Caregiver Support Groups

- Just **6–8 weeks** of participation in a caregiver support group has shown:
  - **Increased confidence**
  - **Improved sleep**
  - **Decreased use of medications for stress/anxiety**

*Support groups don't remove the weight*

*— they make it feel lighter because you're not carrying it alone.*

## Emotional Well-being

- Regular attendance is linked to a **30–50% improvement in emotional coping skills** over time. — *Family Caregiver Alliance*
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## Social Connection & Validation

- Participants often say support groups are the *only place* they feel “truly understood” by others facing similar challenges.
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## Practical Help & Insight

- Support groups often provide **practical advice, problem-solving tips, and local resource referrals** — not just emotional support.

# Respite Care Works — The Data Shows It

## Mental & Emotional Health

One study found **relief from stress and increased positive mood** after just a **few hours of respite per week**.

— Zarit et al., Penn State University

## Caregiver Longevity & Health

Respite care has been linked to **delayed placement** of loved ones in long-term care — in some studies by **6–12 months**.

— Administration for Community Living

## Sustainability of Caregiving

- Even **2–4 hours a week** of respite has been shown to:
  - Improve caregivers' sense of control
  - Restore patience and perspective
  - Reduce emotional exhaustion

"Taking a break isn't quitting — it's the reason you'll be able to keep going."



# Your Self-Care Plan

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What brings you joy or calm?

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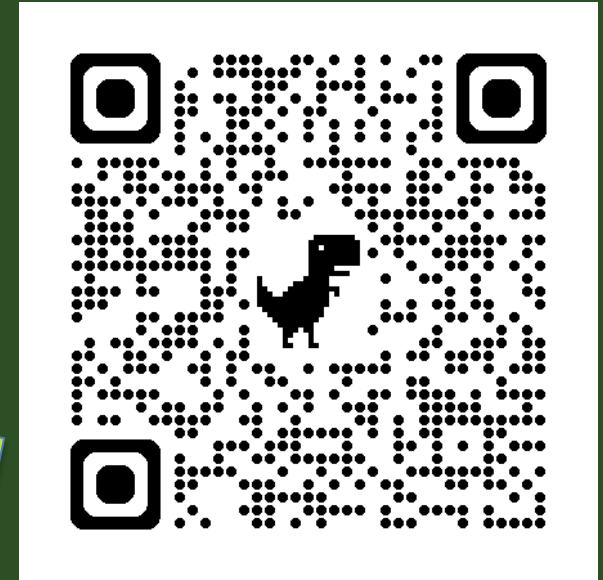
Who can help you?

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One thing to do for yourself this week?

# Recommended Resources

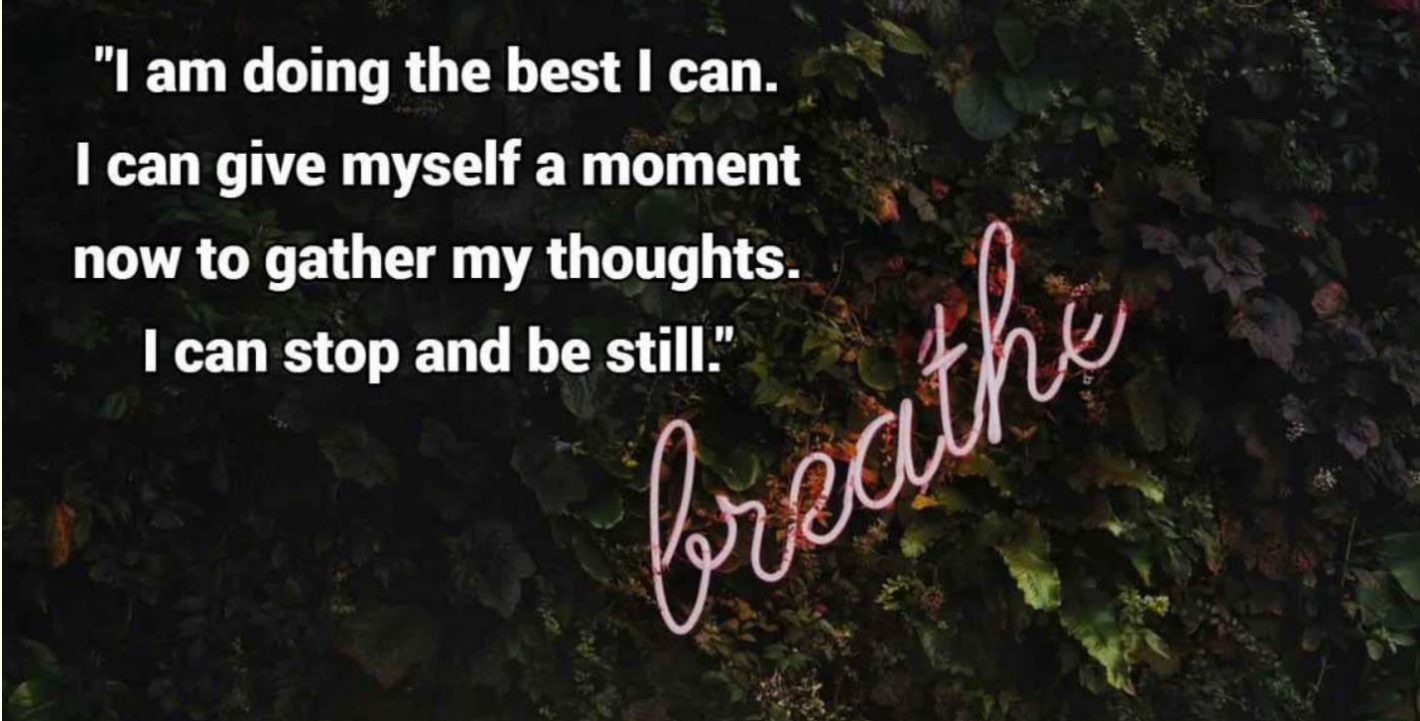
- AZ Caregiver Coalition: [azcaregiver.org](http://azcaregiver.org)
- Family Caregiver Alliance: [caregiver.org](http://caregiver.org)
- Well Spouse Association: [wellspouse.org](http://wellspouse.org)
- Meditation apps: Calm, Insight Timer, Headspace



My favorite local resources,  
books, podcasts and social  
media for caregivers

# You Matter Too

Taking care of yourself is not a luxury—it's part of good caregiving



**"I am doing the best I can.  
I can give myself a moment  
now to gather my thoughts.  
I can stop and be still."**

*breathe*