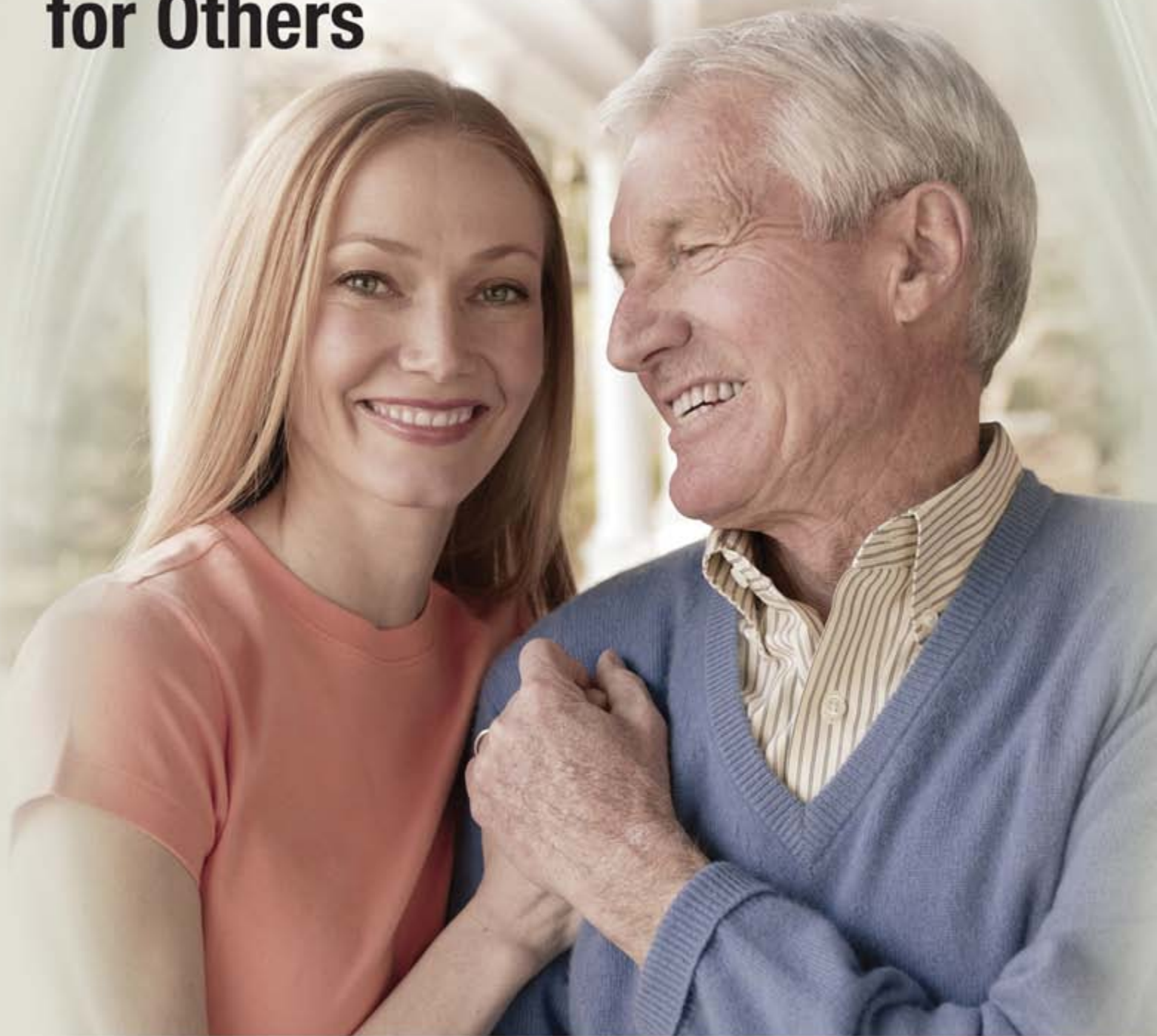


Self-Care for Those Who Care for Others



**Caring for a loved one? You need care too.
The Powerful Tools for Caregivers program can help.**

University of Pittsburgh
INSTITUTE ON AGING
in partnership with UPMC

UPMC *for Life*
UPMC Health Plan Medicare Program

Taking Care of YOU — Managing Self-Care

Caregiving is also about managing your own self-care. That means taking responsibility for your own personal well-being to make sure your wants and needs are met. One difficulty caregivers often experience is trying to do it all and doing it alone.

Here are some of the questions asked in the Caregiver Helpbook. Check your answers to see if you are taking care of yourself.

- Do you ever find yourself trying to do it all?
- Do you ever say to yourself “I should be able to” or “I can never” or similar statements?
- Do you ever ignore your feelings or find they are overwhelming?

- Do you ever get frustrated because of something you can’t change or someone who won’t change?
- Do you resist seeking, asking for, or accepting help?
- Do you feel that your family just doesn’t understand what you are going through as a caregiver?

If you answered yes to any of the questions above, the Powerful Tools for Caregivers program can help you to manage your own self-care as well as care for others.



The Powerful Tools for Caregivers Program Could Change Your Life

This program consists of six weekly sessions of two-and-a-half hours each, and it is important that enrollees attend all six sessions. Locations and class times will vary throughout the year.

If you are interested in learning more or signing up, please call our Member Services Department or your Health Care Concierge at 1-877-539-3080, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.,* seven days a week. TTY/TDD users should call 1-800-361-2629.

Remember, UPMC *for Life* members may enroll in the program **at no cost.**

**From March 2 through November 14, you may receive a message service on weekends and holidays. Please leave a message and your call will be returned the next business day.*

Take Care of Yourself While Taking Care of Others

UPMC *for Life*, in partnership with the Institute on Aging, is offering the Powerful Tools for Caregivers program. In this program, specially trained and experienced class leaders teach caregivers how to take care of themselves while caring for a relative or friend.

UPMC *for Life* members can sign up for this empowering program at no additional cost. For more information, call our Member Services Department or your Health Care Concierge at 1-877-539-3080, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.,* seven days a week. TTY/TDD users should call 1-800-361-2629.



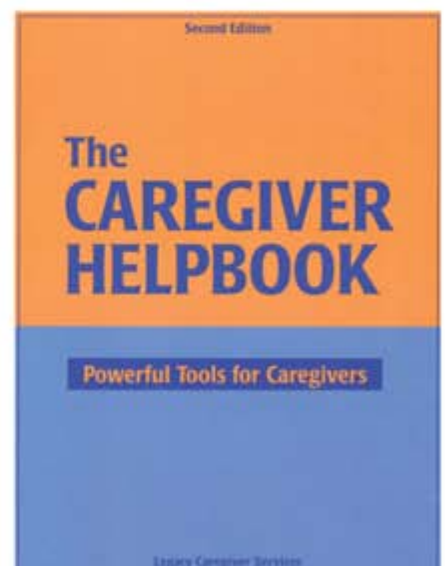
In just six weekly sessions, you'll learn to use tools that can help you:


- Reduce personal stress
- Communicate your feelings and needs to others, including other family members and your doctor
- Take care of yourself
- Reduce guilt, anger, and depression
- Relax your mind and body
- Make difficult decisions
- Set goals and solve problems
- Get rid of negative self-talk

These tools can help you maintain a positive and optimistic attitude, which is one of the most important qualities a caregiver can have.

The Caregiver Helpbook you receive as part of the program has important information on:

- Hiring in-home help
- Making legal and financial decisions
- Deciding if someone should continue to drive



A woman with curly brown hair, wearing a light pink jacket over an orange top, is standing in a grocery store. She is looking down at a clear plastic bag she is holding, which contains some produce. She is surrounded by large bins of fresh produce, including a large bin of red and yellow apples in the foreground. In the background, there are more produce bins and price tags, such as one for 'Honey Crisp' and another for 'Sweet Victoria'.

Is this program right for me? How do I determine if I am a “family caregiver”?

Do you help relatives, friends, or a spouse with things they can no longer do for themselves because they have a chronic medical condition with disabling effects?

Chronic medical conditions include Alzheimer’s, stroke, Parkinson’s disease, heart disease, arthritis, cancer, and many more ...

Caregivers are spouses, children, partners, friends, and neighbors. A caregiver helps with grocery shopping, paying bills, and rides to doctor appointments or with other activities of daily living, such as eating and bathing.

What UPMC *for Life* members have to say about their experience with the Powerful Tools for Caregivers program

At 92, **Bob Williams** learned an important lesson: You're never too old to learn.

Bob already knew that the time he spent taking care of his wife was extremely important. What he didn't know was how important it was for both of them that he take care of himself.

Bob's wife lives in a special therapy unit designed for residents with Alzheimer's disease, and he has served as her main support for many years. Understandably, he felt guilty about not being able to be with her all the time or to accomplish what he wanted to with her.

But Bob found some help in a special Powerful Tools for Caregivers class through UPMC Health Plan. He found he could "unload and relax" because he could talk freely about his situation with people who were facing similar problems. He also learned not to take it personally when his wife's condition did not improve.

"From talking with the people in my class, I learned that in order to keep my sanity, I needed to continue my normal activities. That was equally as important as caring for my wife. The biggest thing I learned was to reaffirm the fact that, if you're a caregiver, you must take care of yourself as well as the person you're caring for.

"I would recommend this class to anyone because it gives people a chance to share their problems with people who understand, and it can help lessen the guilt you feel about not being able to do more."

Pat Houpt's husband, Richard, has congestive heart failure, and she cares for him in their Greenville residence. Pat says she learned a lot from the Powerful Tools for Caregivers course.

"I learned that I'm not alone. There are many other people in similar kinds of situations.

"I found it was easy for me to talk with the people in the class, even though I did not know any of them before the class started. That was because we were all dealing with the same thing.

"I always felt guilty about yearning to get away for lunch or to go shopping. From this class I learned that's a normal feeling. I also learned we have to take care of ourselves. We have to take time for our own physical and mental health.

"I have benefited a lot from this course. It was very helpful. It's a very good thing."



Quotes from Prior Program Participants — Nationwide

“After taking this class I am a more confident caregiver! Having tools to resolve problems is a definite advantage in becoming a better caregiver and a happier, wiser, healthier me ... and a healthier us!”

“There was a common bond. We were all dealing with some of the same issues. We shared our stories and learned ways to cope. I learned that it is important to take care of me.”

“During this course, I received a list of places to look for help when needed. I hadn't been aware of all the organizations and people available to help caregivers find answers and solutions to many of their problems.”

The Serenity Prayer

... grant me the Serenity to accept the things
I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can, and
Wisdom to know the difference.

- Reinhold Niebuhr, 1934

Life is not the way it's supposed to be.
It's the way it is. The way you cope with it is what makes the
difference ... I think if I have one message, one thing before
I die that most of the world would know, it would be that the
event does not determine how to respond to the event. That
is a purely personal matter. The way in which we respond
will direct and influence the event more than the event itself.

- Virginia Satir, *Psychologist and Educator*

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