



Tips for Caregivers Navigating the Hospice Journey

Caring for an ill loved one is a difficult thing, and is made that much harder when you're coping with your own grief knowing your loved one will not recover. There are many things you can do to make sure you are helping your family member to receive the best care, and to ensure you can be grateful at the end of the hospice journey and know that you had quality time with the person you love.

Here are some tips to consider:

- Work with your loved one's doctor and the hospice team to be sure you understand their plan of care. Don't be afraid to ask questions so you can feel confident that you understand what's happening.
- Help your loved one to stay as independent as possible and encourage them to be an active participant in the life they have remaining.
- Seek out the support of other caregivers who understand what you're going through. The Family Caregiver Support Network at VNA Community Healthcare & Hospice is a great place to start.
- Consider attending support groups and lean on the spiritual counseling provided as part of the hospice program to help your loved one receive the support they need.
- Ask about respite care if you need a break. Make sure you know your own limits and are able to take a break when necessary.
- Continue to do things you enjoy, and try and do things with your loved one for which the two of you share an affinity. Work on legacy projects together such as scrapbooks or storytelling which can provide great fulfillment during this phase.
- Keep a journal as a means to process your feelings, and seek professional help if you feel depressed, anxious or overwhelmed by what's happening.

To learn more about our Family Caregiver Support Network, call 866.862.0888.