



## **10 Things to Consider as a Caregiver**

- 1. Learn more about the illness/condition of your loved one.**
- 2. Explore the available options**
  - What does your loved one need?
    - Bathing, meals, transportation, etc.
    - How will these needs be met?
  - List of deal-breakers
    - Which Activity(ies) of Daily Living will be more than you can handle?
- 3. Community Resources**
  - VPAS
  - DARS
  - Veterans Affairs
  - Social Security Office
- 4. What is the plan for immediate care?**
  - What does the loved one prefer?
    - In-home, assisted living facility, nursing home, etc.
  - Adapt the living environment
    - Wheelchair ramp, widen doorways, taller toilets, handles not doorknobs, bathroom rails
  - Credit reports, protection, and updates
- 5. Get help from others**
  - You will struggle to do this alone. Don't be afraid to ask for help.
- 6. Organize important information**
  - Write down names and addresses of doctors
  - Keep note of medications and frequency of use
  - Make copies of SS cards, driver's licenses, and insurance cards
- 7. Have a contingency plan**
  - What happens if something happens to you?
- 8. Plan for the future**
  - Understand the long-term prognosis of your loved on
  - Legal aid
    - Health care POA and Financial POA

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#### **9. Get Support**

- Friends, family, and/or counselor
- Find a support group

#### **10. Care for yourself**

- Seek out a mental health professional
- Continue your hobbies
- Take breaks from caregiving
- Eat health, exercise, and sleep
- It is impossible to take care of others if you are not taking care of yourself