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Adult day care another good option for caregivers

Adult day programs and care consultations can be extremely valuable to families.

The National Adult Day Association can also provide good information about what a day program can provide persons with a dementia such as Alzheimer's and their care partner. The National Institute of Adult Day Care describes adult day care as a program of individualized services and therapeutic activities in a group setting for adults who are cognitively impaired, physically impaired, socially isolated, frail elderly, in need of assistance with activities of daily living and in need of supervision.

In addition to providing programming and social engagement for persons with dementia, caregivers receive a temporary break from the demands of caregiving - without respite caregivers are more susceptible to the effects of caregiver stress, such as depression, exhaustion and other health problems. Adult day services are worth checking out in your community.

In addition, many of the Alzheimer's Association chapters offer as part of their core services care consultations. It's a grouping of services to assist the person with Alzheimer's or related dementias and/or their family care partners in planning for, and dealing with, all aspects of the illness experience. Individuals with dementia and their care partners receive one-on-one assistance that will enable them to better manage care and make more informed decisions regarding services and treatments. To request a consultation, call the Alzheimer's Association helpline at 1-800-272-3900.

I know many of us feel guilty about asking friends or family for help, hiring help, or taking a break, but keep these points in mind:

You do many things in your life very well.

You are entitled to have a life of your own.

Your thoughts and feelings are normal.

Taking care of yourself is a gift to your loved one.

You can't meet every demand. Remember, we feel guilty because we love.

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