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Tips to Help Families Cope with Changes from Alzheimer's

When someone you love is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or another form of dementia, family members may be unsure of how to react. It's not uncommon for family members to become confused, shocked or upset, but it's also likely some may just jump right into being supportive, sympathetic and curious about what will occur as time goes on. No matter what the reactions are, Alzheimer's disease will make some major changes to dynamics, and it's important to be prepared and plan for changes that may occur over time. Some of the most common changes are:

- **Reversal of Roles.** When someone we love is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and you or another family member will be serving as the primary caregiver, it's important to realize that there will be a period of grief and loss. This usually occurs as a result of feeling like you are losing the person you used to know or the relationship you used to share. This can affect caregivers and family members, as well as your loved one, who sees the effect their diagnosis has on everyday life.
- **Increase in Guilt.** Many caregivers and families tend to feel guilty about any number of things. They may feel guilty that they aren't sure what they are doing or that they aren't doing enough. They may simply feel guilty that they are tired and need a break and can't provide the care their loved one needs.
- **A Shift in Priorities.** Because of the changes that Alzheimer's disease causes, priorities will shift from everyday activities and move to your loved one's care. This means that a caregiver potentially may need to give up their full-time job, free time and hobbies.
- **Changes in Emotions.** Caregivers are not the only ones who face difficult feelings. Consider how others are feeling. Are they being kept in the loop enough? Do they know what's going on? Do children and teens understand why their loved one is acting this way? How are they feeling through all of these changes?
- **A Growth in Uncertainty.** As if life wasn't uncertain enough, Alzheimer's steps in to make it worse. You may find that plans you had may have to change and that you won't know what each day will bring, which will make planning in everyday life much more difficult.
- **More Disagreements.** If you and your family members don't quite see eye-to-eye on how to best care for your loved one, it's important to work those disagreements out and try to see each other's point of view. It may be helpful to seek assistance from a professional if you cannot get past certain conflicts.

These feelings are normal and it's important to realize that you are not alone in this. If you need help - ask. Whether that means talking to friends and family, taking a break to do something for yourself or asking family members to do a few things for you, anything

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can help. It's also important to realize that in order to cope with the change in dynamics, it's important to face everything as a family with open communication, understanding and compassion. This battle is different for everyone, so it's important to do what you can to help one another.

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Lions Gate, located in Voorhees, NJ, offers a continuum of lifestyle and care options rooted in Jewish traditions and values. Whether you are in need of [Independent Living](#), [Assisted Living](#), [Memory Care](#), [Skilled Nursing](#) or [Rehabilitation Services](#), Lions Gate has you covered.

Our mission at Lions Gate is to enrich the lives of those we serve through quality and compassionate care consistent with our heritage and values. We strive to provide [programs and services](#) that inspire well-being as well as social, cultural and spiritual independence.

To learn more about Lions Gate's Unparalleled Lifestyle and Community Services, [contact us](#) today!

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