Help Wanted

What happens when ill or aged parents need care?

December 4, 2013 By Kate Ferguson

When Georgia's mother, Janice, began showing signs of memory loss at the age of 75, three of her children took turns living with her and attending to her needs. Like the majority of caregivers, they were employed women faced with caring for a parent under difficult circumstances.

During this time, Georgia's mom slowly lost her ability to talk in complete sentences to let people know her needs. "This was one of the scariest stages of her decline," Georgia told the Alzheimer's Association, the organization the sisters turned to for support.

As the American population ages, it's estimated that the number of caregivers will also rise. These women, men and children in caregiver roles can expect to face a multitude of challenges. "Family caregivers experience considerable burden, stress and disruption of their own well-being and social activities," according to the American Psychological Association (APA), adding that "research shows they are at risk for emotional and physical health problems."

But there is help for besieged caregivers. For details, visit the APA's state and national resources locator on the agency's website.

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