

# enABLE's Tips for Helping Aging Loved Ones

enABLE strives to help, however we can. Collectively, our team has over 100 years of experience in the aging field. We pulled all of that experience together and asked, "if we could tell families helping an aging loved one 10 things, what would we tell them?" It is our honor to share these with you, and we hope they help make life a little brighter for you and your loved ones!

## Dynamics

- A parent or older relative will often not hear something when coming from a child or younger relative due to simple relationship dynamics. It's not easy to be told what to do by the person usually being told what to do! ***It's often helpful to get someone outside of the family to help carry a message.***
- ***Meet the person where they are.*** Sometime's people are not ready to make a decision or move in the later parts of their lives. Even if it's clear what needs to happen, if they are not ready, strategies and what is being said may have to pivot so the person can hear it based on where they are in the process.
- ***Let go of what is thought to be known about the person.*** People can and do change, especially as they age and conditions worsen. Don't assume, *just listen and take them at their word* on what is needed or wanted now.

## Medical

- Medical conditions, diseases and treatments change a person, sometimes completely. ***Be mindful that what has happened to this person could be medical, traumatic, etc.*** Be open to understanding that the person (personality, beliefs, values) previously known may not be here anymore. Accept and embrace that. It's worth exploring and acknowledging that it's possible to be grieving for someone who is not here anymore even though they are physically standing there.
- ***Become familiar with medical history, conditions, physicians and medications.*** Advocating for someone in the medical arena means having all of the ducks in a row for that person and understanding their goals. *Write it down, or get access to medical portals or records, with proper permission of course!*



## Organization

- **Get organized.** Do you have a copy of all of the bills? Who is the insurance broker? Where is the deed to the house? What insurance do they have? What are their end of life wishes? Do they have a financial planner? Do they have a fiduciary? Do you have copies of all of their important cards and documents? *Get copies of things and write things down in one organized location that is easily accessed when the time comes. It's difficult to mobilize quickly on someone's behalf if you can't find the information needed!*
- **Make a list of all the things that are currently being done for the person, all the things that need to be done for that person, and all the things that might come.** Who will do those things? **Get it on paper** and start identifying how/who can tackle these things, and where help is needed.

## Legal

- **Do they have an attorney?** Who is it and are they still practicing?
- **Is there a trust?** Who is the trustee? Are they aware they are trustee?
- **Are Power of Attorney documents in place?** Read them for details. *Make sure whomever is listed is aware and they understand the responsibility associated with that role.*

## Financial

- **Understand the cost of care and how to pay for it.**  
**Questions to think about:**
  - Have assets been discussed?
  - How are they going to pay for care?
  - Get familiar with how much care currently costs. What are the different options of care based on their goals?
  - Are they aware of the different ways there are to pay for care? And are they open to exploring them?

## Final Tip

***There's help, you do not have to do it all alone.***

If there is one thing that is not working, get support in that one thing.