

Conversations About In-Home Care

Everyone handles change differently – especially when it comes to inviting someone into the home to provide care. Talking about it can be difficult for them – and you. These tips, including our “Try This, Not That” chart, will guide you through those conversations.

It’s smart to start exploring your loved one’s wishes about home care before it becomes an urgent need. This can happen through normal conversations with your loved one, as well as talking with family members who should be involved with these decisions.

Tips for Overcoming Resistance

Your mom, dad or other loved one may view accepting help as giving up privacy or control over their lives. For decades they’ve been your parents and have supported you. It may be hard for them to accept that their children are now looking out for them.

Some people also feel that receiving help is a sign of weakness. Or they may be experiencing a lot of emotions such as fear, vulnerability, anger and guilt. Having empathy can help you better understand and find a solution they can agree to. Here are three approaches to consider:

1. Empower your loved one:

- Show them you’re on their team and support their desire to live independently.
- Suggest that accepting help would allow them to remain self-sufficient longer.

2. Express that you’ll always need them:

- Point out that the experience of caring for an aging parent gives an adult child the opportunity to grow.
- Emphasize that you (and their grandchildren) still need them, which is why you want them to enjoy life.

3. Describe how this is part of an evolving relationship:

- Since many older adults don’t want to “take” from others, reframe the concept from “give and take” to “give and receive” – and remind them that they deserve to receive.
- Explain how much it would mean to you if they would accept your help – and the help of a caregiver you recommend.



It’s also important to consult with professionals such as:

- Physician or medical providers
- Therapist
- Religious leader
- Financial planner or accountant
- Long-term care insurance agent
- Attorney
- Social worker

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Starting the Conversation: Try This. Not That.

Try This:	Not That:
Remember that this is about them, their health and their happiness.	Avoid projecting your feelings and preferences onto them.
Include a few key family members.	Don't invite the whole family or bring a crowd thinking there is strength in numbers.
Ask if you can take notes or record your chat to supplement your memory.	Avoid looking at your phone or getting distracted.
Begin having conversations about their health sooner rather than later.	Don't put it off. If they have any memory loss or risk of falling, delaying the conversation may make it more difficult for them.
Prepare questions to ask and points you want to get across in advance.	Don't tackle the conversation on the spur of the moment, but don't treat it like a business meeting either.
Have the conversation in person. Sit facing them or next to them, and look them in the eyes.	Don't have this important conversation over the phone, text, video chat or email.
Listen with your full attention and without preconceived notions.	Don't interrupt or talk over them. Help them feel listened to by beginning a sentence with, "I heard you say..." and then repeat what they said.
Consider approaching the conversation by bringing up people they know in similar situations and the solutions their families found.	Don't forget to ask questions, e.g., How would you feel if that happened to you? Do you think you could benefit from something like that?
Ask questions. What do they still enjoy? What do they perceive as the most difficult things about their days? What concerns do they have?	Avoid answering questions for them. Give them time to reflect.
If things aren't going well, suggest that they "just try it for a week." Or offer to talk again a day or so later.	Don't be inflexible or impatient. Understand that they don't want to lose control of making their own decisions in life.



Interested in more information about talking with your loved one about home care services? Scan the QR code or visit brightstarcare.com/home-care-guide for additional insights.