

What stage of caregiving am I in?

Stage of Caregiving Checklist Caregiving is a journey with a series of different stages along the way. As a caregiver, what you do and how you feel changes over time. Where are you on the caregiving path? Directions: Review each of the stages. Check the stage that best describes your current caregiving experience.		
—	Stage 1: Preparing Myself Approaching the path Caring for my loved one is in my future.	Typical Stage 1 experiences: Observing growing needs in your loved one Thinking they may soon need your help Feeling: Surprise, concern about changes you see Wondering: What lies ahead? Where can I turn for information?
—	Stage 2: Getting Started Entering onto the path I am starting to care for my loved one.	Typical Stage 2 experiences: Offering various types of help Seeing how caregiving fits with your other roles Learning about the condition, helpful resources Feeling: Denial, fear, confusion, sadness, hopefulness Wondering: What is happening? Why?
—	Stage 3: Actively Helping Walking the path I am offering care to my loved one.	Typical Stage 3 experiences: Helping regularly, for a number of months or years Assuring your loved one's growing needs are met Coordinating with others to offer help Feeling: Ambivalence, satisfaction, frustration, fatigue, sadness Wondering: What needs to be done? How will we do it?
—	Stage 4: Struggling Along Staggering along the path My caregiving continues and it's hard.	Typical Stage 4 experiences: Providing increasingly heavy level of care Adjusting to your loved one's change/decline Needing support to continue helping Feeling: Resentment, guilt, anger, exhaustion, overwhelmed Wondering: How long can this go on? How long can I go on?
—	Stage 5: Letting Go Nearing the end of the path Caregiving as I know it is ending.	Typical Stage 5 experiences: Preparing to change your role as caregiver Facing loved one's end-of-life or "new normal" Considering quality of life vs. longevity Forgiving yourself and others Feeling: Loss, release, powerlessness, introspective Wondering: Is this really happening?
—	Stage 6: Moving On Leaving the path I am no longer a caregiver.	Typical Stage 6 experiences: Mourning Reflecting on the lessons and meaning of caregiving Sharing your wisdom Considering your future Feeling: Grief, pride, relief, regret, return of energy Wondering: What does the future hold for me?