

Adjusting to a New Caregiver

Hiring a new caregiver is a significant life change, and as such, there's often a period of transition and adjustment required.

A senior who was reluctant to the idea of having help at home may be inclined to expect the worst, and from the outset may verbalize feelings of discontent, whether through specific complaints, or simply a generic, "I just don't like my caregiver."

When this happens, it's important to keep the following in mind:

- **RELATIONSHIP BUILDING TAKES TIME.** At **At Home Independent Living**, we go to great lengths to carefully pair each senior and caregiver based on similar likes, dislikes, hobbies/interests, and personality type. Yet even with the most perfect match, there's always a "getting to know you" phase – as there is with any new relationship. Encourage your loved one to allow a little time for a bond to develop.
- **FIND WAYS TO CONNECT.** Uncover the commonalities between your loved one and his/her caregiver, and help direct conversations and activities accordingly. If there's a shared love of cats, for instance, they can swap pictures and stories of their feline companions. If both love a particular genre of music, put together a playlist for a sing-along. Or perhaps they're both avid bakers, and can spend an afternoon trying each other's favorite recipes.
- **COMMUNICATE CONCERNS.** It may be that your loved one is accustomed to having things done a certain way – such as always emptying the dishwasher as soon as it stops running, tucking bedsheets in with hospital corners, or ironing towels and linens before putting them away. Resolving any issues may be as simple as sharing how the senior likes things to be done. The caregiver's role is never to take over and change the senior's life, but to adapt to his or her preferences and routines.

Know that **At Home Independent Living** has a full team of trained, experienced, and highly qualified caregivers on hand, and that we're committed to ensuring the very best client/caregiver match. We are happy to provide a replacement caregiver at your loved one's request.

Yet in most instances, a once-reluctant senior who allows time for adjustment to a new caregiver discovers very quickly the joy and many benefits that come from the caregiving relationship.

To learn more about our meticulous senior/caregiver matching process and how a perfect caregiver match leads to an enhanced quality of life for seniors, contact **At Home Independent Living** at (315) 579-HOME (4663).

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