

# 3 Ways to balance sandwich generation stress

The sandwich generation—middle-aged adults who are ‘sandwiched’ between caring for aging parents while supporting their own children—comprise nearly half (47%) of adults in their 40s and 50s.<sup>1</sup> This family dynamic can foster closer family bonds between the generations and give caregivers a sense of giving back to someone who has cared for them. However, the constant multitasking can be exhausting for multigenerational caregivers and result in high levels of stress, and many often see a negative impact on their careers and finances as well.

## Common stressors:

- How should I split my time between my family (children/spouse) and my elder loved one?
- How can I balance my time so everyone is satisfied?
- How do I keep the generational peace between my kids and my elder loved one?
- How do I find time to nurture my marriage?
- How do I find the time to take care of myself?
- How do I find resources to help me and my loved one?
- How do I combat my feelings of isolation and frustration?

## How to relieve stress:

**Meet with your family**—Discuss the situation and workload and ask family members to help with the caregiving. It doesn’t have to be a one-person show; everyone working together can be very rewarding.

**Locate community resources**—Lighten your load. There are a variety of community resources available including an online eldercare locator (eldercare.gov), senior centers, adult day care, home care, chore & transportation services, churches and volunteer programs.

**Take time for yourself**—When you’re trying to juggle home, work and caregiving it’s easy to lose yourself in the mix. Studies have shown that continual stress has negative effects on the body, weakens the immune system and can cause depression and other ailments. Consider finding a support group and finding time to do the things you love. Self-care is not selfish; your physical and mental health is vital to keeping up on everything else you are doing.

1. Pew Research Center, *The Sandwich Generation, Rising Financial Burdens for Middle-Aged Americans*, January 30, 2013.

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