

CAREGIVING TOGETHER / AT EVERY STAGE

The Caregiving Companion

A guide and organizer for caregivers and the people who support them.



Care changes. You deserve support through it.

For the appointments, the “what ifs,” and the days when there is always something. Practical tools for caregivers and their circles of support, across diagnoses and stages of care.

Inside: appointment and refill tools, care-team contacts, expense tracking, planning questions, a six-page backup care packet, ways to ask for help, and space for reflection. Use the bookmarks or choose your path on page 3.

Type or print: use a compatible PDF reader to fill the boxes and save a new copy. Phone and browser support varies. Print or duplicate the pages you need for your own care circle. Keep completed pages private. Personal use; please do not resell or publicly post the guide.

Created by Sarah Aguilar. Inspired by Momma Frida.

This companion shares lived experience and organization tools. It has not received independent clinical, legal, or benefits review and does not replace individual professional advice. Confirm care instructions, coverage, and legal questions with the appropriate professionals. For an urgent concern, contact the care team or appropriate emergency service.

03 / BRING YOUR QUESTIONS

My appointment page

Print or duplicate this page for each visit.

Appointment / clinician

Date, time & arrival instructions

My person's priorities and our three most important questions:

What the team explained / instructions we received:

What changes should we watch for? When and whom should we contact? Ask the treating team.

Next step / who is responsible

Due date / follow-up contact

Before leaving: ask for written instructions, clarify anything unfamiliar, and confirm whom to contact after hours. Ask about an interpreter if language support would help.

16 / BACKUP CARE: DAILY RHYTHM

A day in their life

Use actual times and routines. Refer to the verified medication page for medicine details.

Write what is usual for this person, including what they do independently and what support they want. Do not replace prescribed instructions with a general routine. Duplicate this page for another day or schedule.

Usual wake-up / bedtime

Appointments or time-sensitive tasks

Morning - time / meals / activity / rest

Assistance needed / person responsible

Midday - time / meals / activity / rest

Assistance needed / person responsible

Afternoon - time / meals / activity / rest

Assistance needed / person responsible

Evening / overnight - time / meals / activity / rest

Assistance needed / person responsible

What can be flexible, and what must follow the care team's instructions?

Include bathroom routines, supervision needs, and activities only as appropriate to this person. Ask about safe overnight coverage; sleeping in the home does not automatically provide the level of supervision someone needs.

For the friend who wants to help

You do not have to be the main caregiver to make a meaningful difference.

If you love someone who is caregiving, you belong in this guide, too. You may not know what to say or worry about getting it wrong. Start by listening, then offer one specific thing you can reliably do.

Offer something they can say yes or no to

"I can drop dinner off Tuesday. Would that help?"

"Could I pick up the groceries on your list this weekend?"

"Would you like company at home instead of going out?"

"I can help with laundry Thursday. Is that useful?"

Make room for the person, too

Ask about the caregiver's life beyond care. Remember their appointments, interests, and milestones. Invite without pressure, accept a no, and keep checking in as the months and years pass. Ask before sharing updates or photos about their person.

Listen without making them explain everything

You can say, "That sounds like a lot. Do you want me to listen, help think it through, or take a task?" Avoid promising it will get easier or telling them to rest without considering what needs covering. Offer company without expecting them to host you.

Follow through, and be honest about your limits

Agree on timing, food needs, and expenses rather than making assumptions. If offering care coverage, review the backup packet on pages 17-22 first. Practical errands and companionship help, too; you do not need to take on hands-on care you are not equipped to provide.

My specific offer, when I will follow through, and what I need to ask before helping: