



I am learning to be a Caregiver

I am a budding caregiver for my aged parents. I am fortunate that they have been relatively healthy and independent, but as they aged, they have increasing needs which require attention from me and my sibling. Thus far, I don't find the caregiving overly challenging. However, I do find myself worrying if I have been doing enough, about their evolving needs and my ability to support them. As I care for them, I would sometimes also ponder about how it would be for me when I eventually require care in my twilight years.

However, as with all experience, caregiving journey has brought useful learnings. I am humbly reminded that I am a human being and I can only do my best (and no more). I have learnt that I can go grow beyond my limitations – in perspective taking, listening and communicating my feelings – and through the process uncovered some of my inner strength as well as vulnerabilities. Gradually, I have also come to recognise that caregiving is less about what I do for my aged parents but more about supporting them as abled and contributing individuals and members of the family. Caregiving is a bittersweet experience but it has brought about new awareness and understanding of myself as a person and my relationships with others. I will continue to learn in this caregiving journey. It will not be a bed of roses but I believe that if I choose to accept both the ups and the downs, then I should be alright and grow to be a better person.

Chong Yuen
Counsellor of Hua Mei Centre for Successful Ageing, Tsao Foundation