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Ensuring Care for a Loved One

One of the biggest challenges for caregivers that support a family member or a loved one while managing their own lives is finding balance. It can be difficult finding time for themselves between working full-time, ensuring their loved one is safe while they're working, and then making time to care for that person outside of work.

However difficult that may be, caregivers can find solace in knowing that their loved ones are being taken care of, and there are ways for them to relax and enjoy themselves despite a hectic schedule. For Katie Magill, who is her mother's primary caregiver, friendships have helped ease the stress of her demanding schedule.

Katie is a marketing manager with the Navy Federal Credit Union where she focuses mostly on copy writing and annual reports, but she also enjoys creative writing. Her mother, Margaret Cockrell, has been living with her since she moved home and her father passed away. Katie decided to buy a duplex for Margaret and herself at Heritage Hunt, a 55+ retirement community in Gainesville, Va.

"I had a friend who moved there and I would go see her and found it very pleasant," she said. "I liked the way the neighborhood looked. It's very well cared for."

Since she commutes to her job in Vienna and works full-time, finding someone to care for her mother while she was away was essential. Her mother became more dependent in the last four years because she can no longer walk. Fortunately, she qualified for Medicaid which has allowed her to have in-home caregivers courtesy of Lifeline Home Care, Inc., located in Centreville, Va.

"The main thing that helps is that my mother had no assets so she qualified for Medicaid," Katie said. "They give you time so you can have a break away from things...I get almost every Saturday off and a week or two here or there."

Katie described her mother as a career woman who worked part-time and full-time as a nurse until she retired. Though it can be difficult to get her mother around sometimes, she takes her out on the weekends for drives and she installed a lift in the garage to help her get in and out of the house. She added that Heritage Hunt is "a better physical environment in that the home was accommodating to someone with disabilities."

Her friends and the people around her have helped Katie manage her time and remain focused. "It's my support system," she said. "Relationships between mothers and daughters are packed with emotion. I focus on making sure she's cared for."

And thanks to Lifeline, Katie can feel secure that her mother is in good hands.