

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

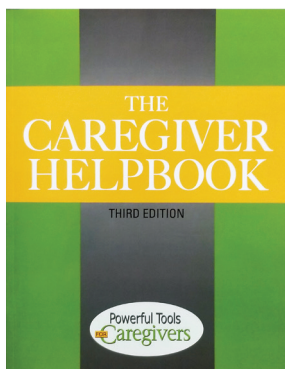
One in six Americans provide unpaid caregiving, usually for a relative.

In this free six-week class, family caregivers learn how to care for themselves while caring for others. Whatever your age or caregiving circumstances, this class can benefit you.

Learn how to

- Lower your stress.
- Care for yourself.
- Reduce guilt, anger, and depression.
- Set goals and problem-solve.
- Make tough decisions.
- Find community resources.
- Communicate effectively with other family members, doctors, and paid help.

While you're caring for them, who's caring for you?



Get a how-to book on topics such as

- Hiring in-home help.
- Helping memory-impaired elders.
- Making legal and financial decisions.
- Making decisions about care-facility placement.
- Understanding depression.
- Making decisions about driving.

Classes are offered both virtually and in person at a variety of Miami Valley locations. Please call **(937) 558-3988** or email molly.hallock@ketteringhealth.org for more information.





Finding Hope in Powerful Tools for Caregivers

Martha admits she was struggling with the emotional and physical demands of caring for her husband Bill.* Both in their 80s, Martha and Bill still live in their Dayton-area home. To make that possible, Martha takes the role of caregiver for Bill, who suffers from memory and hearing loss, arthritis, and depression.

While she's passionate about caring for her husband, Martha feels her extended family members don't understand how hard it is to care for Bill's needs—and how taxing it is on her.

"They really just can't know what it's like," Martha says. "I think people who don't see the day-in, day-out life of a caregiver have a hard time understanding how important it is for the caregiver to get away and even talk about the situation without having to hear suggestions and/or criticism. And talking about it is not 'complaining.' Perhaps it's a cry for help."

She struggled with emotions, such as guilt, for wanting help—though she didn't know how to ask for it. Then Martha learned about Powerful Tools for Caregivers, a free class offered through Kettering Health. She completed the six-week class in the fall of 2017.

"I signed up to adjust my attitude and to get professional help as well as feedback from others in caregiving situations," she says.

Martha says the class and provided reading material were great. "I learned I am not alone in my feelings," she says. "I was able to see how important it is not to try to change the other person. Changing my own attitude makes a happier environment."

She says the most valuable thing she learned in the class is how critical it is for caregivers to get breaks so they can recharge. "Being a caregiver 24/7 drains your energy," she says.

Martha also learned to ask for help from family members and about the importance of maintaining a sense of humor.

**Local caregiver credits
the experience for
happier life at home.**

Martha treasured her fellow caregivers' willingness to share. "I also enjoyed the laughter, support, and even applause when someone took a giant (or even small) step toward success," she says. "I also felt the loving presence of God in the group."

Through the experience, Martha has found connection with others and a greater connection with her own perspective. "I learned to appreciate others in caregiving situations. I also learned to be grateful."

* The couple's names have been changed to protect their privacy.