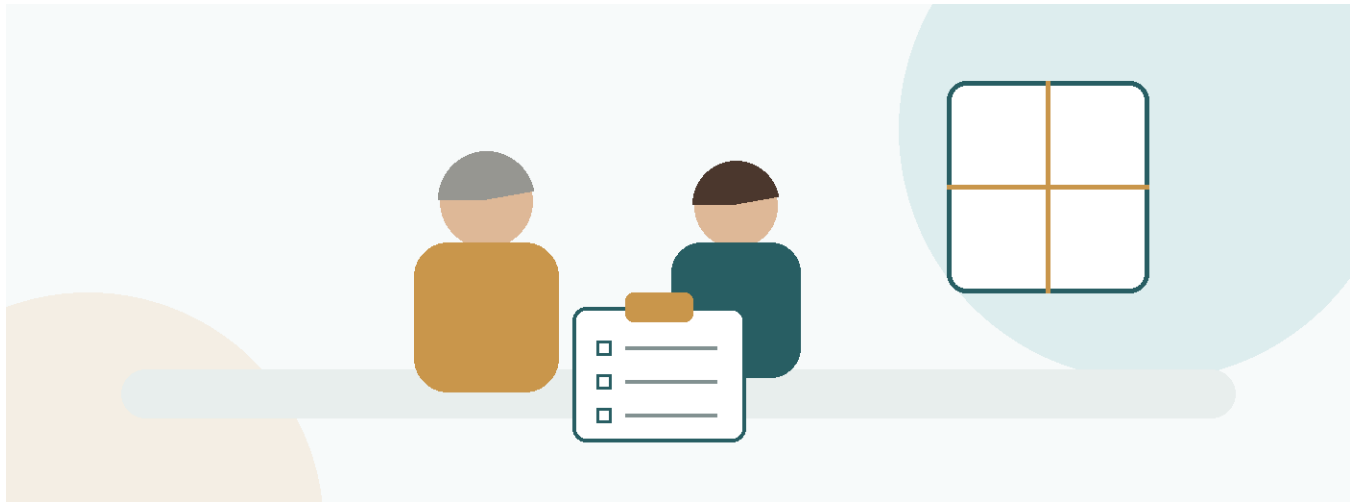


Understand What Actually Needs Help

Turning a general worry into specific, solvable needs

GUIDE 4

Warm, practical guidance
for adult children & families



A warm, practical guide for adult children and families

“Mom needs help” is only the beginning

A family may know something is wrong but still not know what kind of help is needed. Before searching for a caregiver, facility, or service, break the situation into specific needs.

Create a simple needs snapshot

DAILY LIFE — meals, shopping, laundry, personal routines, household tasks.

HEALTH COORDINATION — appointments, transportation to care, medication organization, communication with providers when authorized.

MOBILITY & SAFETY — getting around the home, stairs, falls, accessibility concerns, emergency planning.

HOME — cleaning, repairs, yard work, utilities, reliable service providers.

TRANSPORTATION — driving alternatives, errands, appointments, social activities.

SOCIAL CONNECTION — friends, activities, senior programs, regular check-ins.

ADMINISTRATIVE — mail, forms, insurance questions, organizing important information.

FAMILY SUPPORT — who is available, who lives nearby, who can coordinate, and who needs updates.

Ask what your parent can still do well

A needs assessment should not become a list of everything your parent cannot do. Identify strengths and routines that are working. The goal is to support the areas that are becoming difficult while preserving independence elsewhere.

Separate the need from the solution

If Mom misses appointments, the answer is not automatically “she needs full-time care.” The actual need may be transportation, reminders, scheduling help, or someone accompanying her.

If Dad's home is deteriorating, the need may be reliable home maintenance rather than personal care.

Defining the problem clearly helps families avoid buying more help than they need—or the wrong kind of help.

Write down the top needs

Choose the three areas causing the most difficulty right now. For each, write: What is happening? How often? What would make it easier? Who might be able to help?

This becomes the beginning of a practical support plan.

ROLAND'S TAKEAWAY

“Do not start by asking, “What service should we buy?” Start by asking, “What exactly has become difficult?” The clearer the need, the easier it is to find the right kind of support.”

A NOTE FROM ANCHOR

This guide is educational and is intended to help families organize their thinking and prepare for conversations. It is not medical, legal, financial, mental-health, or professional care-management advice. For health, safety, legal, financial, or other professional concerns, contact an appropriately qualified professional.

TRUSTED RESOURCES & FURTHER READING

Anchor developed this guide as original educational guidance informed by established caregiving resources. We encourage families to visit these organizations directly for additional information.

- **National Institute on Aging — Does an Older Adult in Your Life Need Help?**
<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/caregiving/does-older-adult-your-life-need-help>
- **National Institute on Aging — Getting Started With Caregiving**
<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/caregiving/getting-started-caregiving>
- **National Institute on Aging — Services for Older Adults Living at Home**
<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/caregiving/services-older-adults-living-home>
- **National Institute on Aging — Sharing Caregiving Responsibilities**
<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/caregiving/sharing-caregiving-responsibilities>
- **AARP — New to Family Caregiving? 10 Tips on How to Get Started**
<https://www.aarp.org/caregiving/basics/how-to-be-a-caregiver.html>

- Family Caregiver Alliance — Caregiving 101: On Being a Caregiver

<https://www.caregiver.org/resource/caregiving-101-being-caregiver/>