

Senior Living

EMOTIONAL CHANGES AFTER 65 YOU SHOULDN'T IGNORE



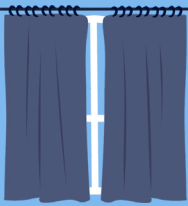
LIFE CHANGES OPEN THE DOOR TO MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Major transitions, including retirement, bereavement, and new medical diagnoses can affect emotional well-being. Changes in mood, behavior, daily routines or functioning deserve closer attention.

START A RESPECTFUL CONVERSATION

Use specific observations and open-ended questions, like:

- “How have you been sleeping?”
- “What activities still feel enjoyable?”
- “What has felt hardest to manage lately?”
- “Who do you talk with when you are having a difficult day?”



WITHDRAWAL FROM PEOPLE OR ACTIVITIES



PERSISTENT WORRY, AGITATION, OR IRRITABILITY



CHANGES IN SLEEP, APPETITE, OR ENERGY



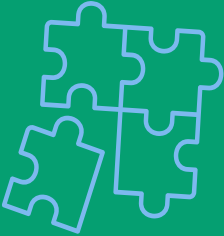
DECLINE IN DAILY FUNCTIONING



STATEMENTS ABOUT HOPELESSNESS, BURDENSOMENESS, OR DEATH

CONSIDER THE PATTERN, DURATION, AND IMPACT

One symptom rarely tells the full story. A useful assessment begins with what has changed, how long it has been present and how it affects daily life.



Depression is a treatable health condition, and age should never be used to explain away persistent symptoms. Its presentation can vary.

Sources:
National Institute on Aging
SAMSHA
CDC

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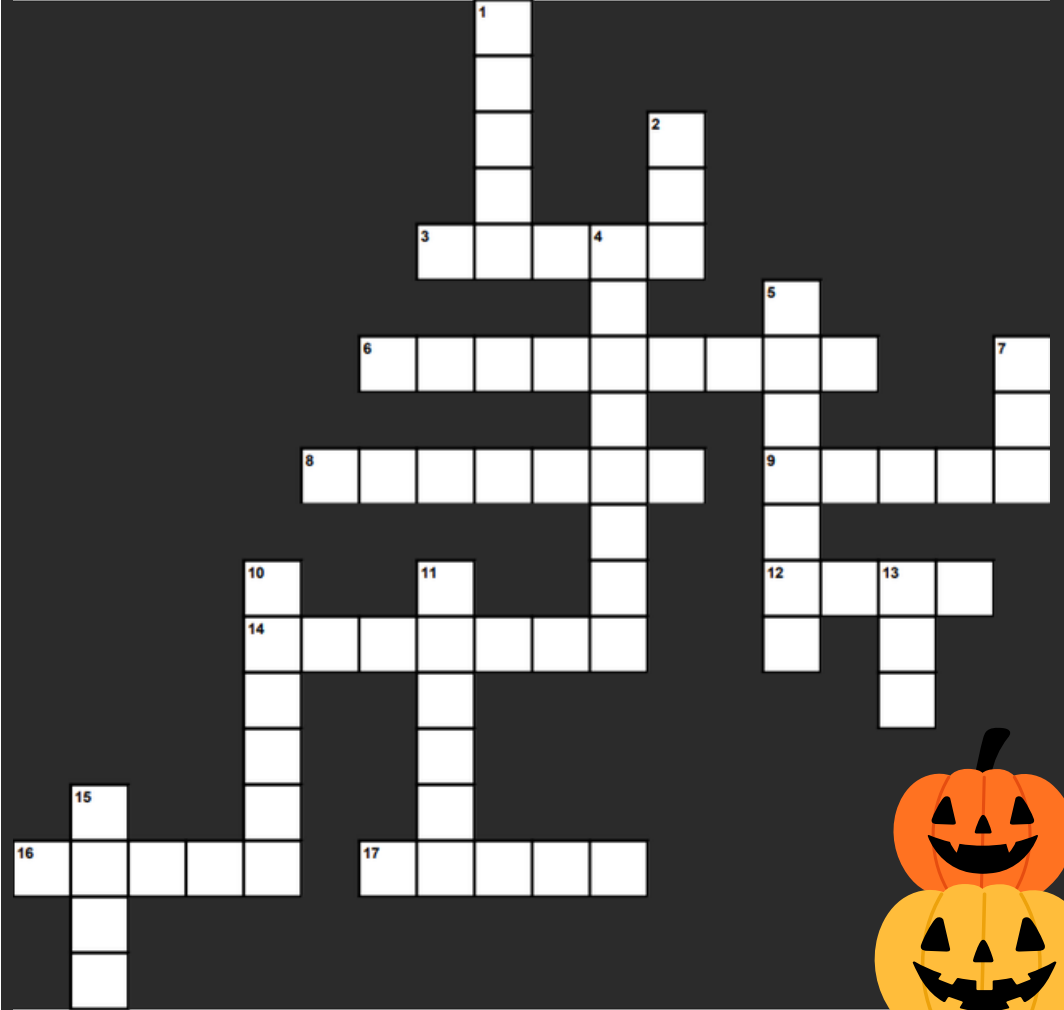
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*You may reach a messaging service on weekends from April 1 through September 30 and holidays. Please leave a message, and your call will be returned the next business day. Essence Healthcare includes HMO and PPO plans with Medicare contracts. Enrollment in Essence Healthcare depends on contract renewal.

Crossword - Halloween Fun





Across

3. Sheet-wearing spirit that says "Boo!"

6. Straw fellow who guards the cornfield

8. Word describing a ghost-filled house

9. What you hope to get when you say "trick or..."

12. It shines full and bright on a spooky night

14. Orange gourd carved into a jack-o'-lantern

16. Sweet treat collected door to door

17. A witch's favorite way to travel

Down

1. She flies around on a broomstick

2. Flying critter that sleeps upside down

4. Bag of bones dressed up for fright night

5. Outfit worn to dress up as someone else

7. A witch's black feline companion

10. Word for anything eerie and fun

11. Eight-legged spinner of webs

13. Wise night bird that hoots

15. Covers your face for the big night

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LIFE AFTER CAREGIVING: REBUILDING IDENTITY AND ROUTINE

Caregiving can shape nearly every part of daily life. When that role ends, life may suddenly feel unfamiliar. Each circumstance is different, yet many former caregivers face a similar question: What comes next?

MAKING ROOM FOR MIXED EMOTIONS

The end of caregiving can bring several emotions at once. You may feel sadness, grief, relief, guilt, anger, loneliness, or uncertainty. You may feel proud of the care you provided while also recognizing how exhausted you became.

Try to approach these emotions with patience. Journaling, talking with a trusted friend, joining a support group, or speaking with a mental health professional may help you understand what you are experiencing.

CREATING A NEW DAILY STRUCTURE

After caregiving ends, open time may feel uncomfortable. A new routine can provide stability. Begin with a few dependable points in the day, such as waking and going to bed at consistent times, eating regular meals, and scheduling one activity outside the home each week.

RECONNECTING WITH OTHER PEOPLE

Caregiving can gradually narrow a person's social world. Consider calling one person, attending a familiar community activity, or accepting a brief invitation. A cup of coffee, a walk, a faith community gathering, a library program, or a local senior center activity can provide an opportunity to reconnect.

RECOGNIZING WHEN ADDITIONAL SUPPORT MAY BE NEEDED

Many former caregivers experience periods of sadness, worry, or uncertainty.

Consider speaking with a health care provider or mental health professional if you are experiencing ongoing isolation, frequent anxiety, irritability, loss of interest, significant changes in sleep or appetite, difficulty completing daily tasks, or a persistent sense of hopelessness. Help is available.

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