

Case No. 27

How Much Support Should Children Owe Their Parents in Need?

Legally speaking, children owe their parents support in later life. But you won't be found guilty if you refuse to take care of them. Still, it's not emotionally easy to leave them all by themselves. Recently, the number of early retirement is increasing. People in their thirties or forties quit their job in order to look after their parents.

Feeling Obligated to Take Care of Elderly Parents

Ms. Kimura, a Tokyo resident in her forties, has been living with her mother for ten years. Her mother has been having symptoms of dementia for couple of years, and seeing a doctor regularly. Although she is eligible to receive public nursing service, she is too proud to be helped by care workers. She has become forgetful lately. One day, she went for a walk, but couldn't find her way back home alone. After this incident, Ms. Kimura mulled over for long time and decided to quit her job, because she couldn't leave her mother unattended all day.

Ms. Kimura came to Kakekomidera not to complain about this, but to share her story. And here are some pieces of advice for those who are facing the similar problem. Quitting your job should be the last choice to make.

The Importance of Supportive Third Party

Unlike childcare, nursing care for the seniors could last long. As a caregiver, you need to have a plan first to avoid being consumed by the task. What if you become sick or you are hospitalized? You should know your own needs and limitations, and don't try to do it all by yourself. Don't feel guilty about leaving your parents in the hands of care workers.

It's very important to find the support services so that you can lessen your burden. You shouldn't be afraid to ask for help. Recently, the government-funded support services cover various conditions. The support service not only gives you a physical and mental break, but it also provides safe and comfortable environment for your parents.

The Balance among Public, Community and Family Support

Caring for the seniors is no easy job. To stay physically and mentally healthy, you will need to find both government-funded and community support services along with family care. If you have brothers or sisters, you may need to ask for financial support while you provide nursing care at home. As long as you have time to socialize with your colleagues and friends, you won't feel isolated at home, so you had better stay working.

You need to prepare in advance; talk to your parents about future nursing care, know what options are available in your residential area, and make it clear what you can and cannot do for your parents.

Tips from Gen

It's difficult to know what you are capable of. You need to know your limitations to get a better understanding of yourself. I recommend you to write down anything about yourself on the list. Start from list of 10, then keep adding as it comes to you. This list lets you look at yourself objectively. Once you accept your own weaknesses, you know what you can and cannot do. This will help you make better decision.