



— *The Caregiving* —

ROLE AUDIT

Understand Your Caregiving Role Before You Decide What to Do

- Assess your current caregiving role
 - Identify what's working - and what's not
 - Gain clarity before making your next decision
-

Understand your role in eldercare, before you overextend yourself.

A Self-Assessment
to help you navigate your best next step.



AMY FRIESEN

The Caregiving Role Audit

Should You Step In, Step Back, or Step Away?

A structured way to understand your role in eldercare - before you overextend yourself

You're not the only one trying to figure this out.

At some point, many adult children find themselves in a role they didn't fully choose. You start noticing changes.

You feel the pressure to step in - or you're already involved, wondering how much is too much.

This audit is designed to help you pause and see your situation more clearly.

Not just what needs to be done, but what makes sense for you.

Because for a lot of people, this isn't just a practical situation.

It's a complicated one.

And when it's complicated, the answer isn't always to do more.

Sometimes it's to understand your role first.



This isn't just a caregiving situation.

It's a relationship decision.



The Caregiving Role Audit

Caregiving Decisions Aren't Just Practical

You might be experiencing:

- Feeling pulled between what you should do and what you can actually handle
- Guilt when you think about stepping back
- Pressure to show up—regardless of the relationship
- Being asked to care for someone who never repaired things with you
- Worry about being judged if you don't step in

And none of that makes you wrong.

It makes this *a decision—not a default*.

Here's what most people don't talk about: *Caregiving decisions aren't just practical.*

Which is why doing more doesn't always make things better.

Decisions are shaped by:

- Family dynamics
- Expectations
- Emotional pressure
- Your personal capacity

Not every situation gives you the same level of access. And access changes what actually makes sense for you. Which means doing more isn't always the answer.

This isn't about getting it “right.”

It's about understanding where you are, so you can start making decisions that actually work for your life.

Where Are You Right **Now**?

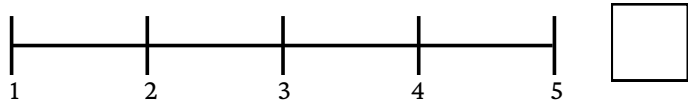
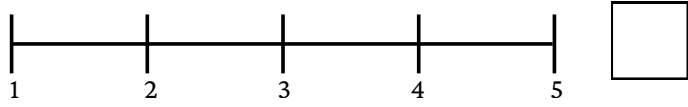
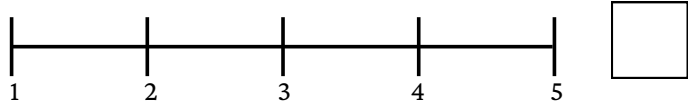
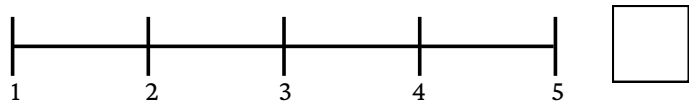
Before you decide what to do next, it helps to understand where you currently stand. There's no right or wrong place to be - answer honestly based on your current situation.

Which of these feel true for you? (Check all that apply)

- I'm not actively caregiving yet, but I feel like it may be coming
- I help occasionally (checking in, errands, support)
- I'm involved in decisions or responsibilities
- I feel stretched, overwhelmed, or unsure how much more I can take on
- I've started pulling back or questioning my level of involvement
- I've been avoiding conversations or decisions I know need to happen

Caregiving Clarity Check

For each statement below, rate how true it feels for you right now:

| | |
|--|--|
| 1. I feel clear about what is expected of me in caregiving | <p>Not at all Slightly Moderately Mostly Fully</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>  |
| 2. I have the capacity (time, energy, emotional space) to take caregiving on | <p>Not at all Slightly Moderately Mostly Fully</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>  |
| 3. I feel confident making decisions about my involvement | <p>Not at all Slightly Moderately Mostly Fully</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>  |
| 4. I've considered what my limits and boundaries are in caregiving | <p>Not at all Slightly Moderately Mostly Fully</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>  |

If this feels unclear or heavy, it's not because you're doing it wrong.

It's because you've been trying to think your way through a decision that needs structure.

Caregiving **Isn't** Straightforward

Most people think caregiving is simple:

- You either step in... or you don't.

But in reality, it's much more nuanced than that.

Most people aren't choosing their role intentionally. They're reacting to what's happening.

Reacting looks like:

- Saying yes before you've thought it through
- Taking on more because no one else is
- Trying to fix something that isn't changing

Choosing looks like:

- Stepping back to assess your actual capacity
- Deciding your role based on reality—not pressure
- Acting in a way you can sustain

This is where things start to shift.

Many adult children move between different roles over time, sometimes without even realizing it. And when those roles aren't chosen intentionally, it can lead to overwhelm, resentment, or feeling stuck.

There are three common ways people respond in caregiving situations

***These roles aren't just based on willingness—
They're shaped by your level of access, influence, and capacity.***

And most people never pause long enough to make that shift.

The **Three** Ways People Show Up in Caregiving

Step In

Becoming more actively involved

This might look like:

- Helping coordinate care
- Attending appointments
- Taking on day-to-day support

When it works:

- There is openness to support
- Your capacity allows for it
- There is mutual respect

Step Back

Adjusting your level of involvement

This might look like:

- Doing less, even if you've been doing more
- Creating space to protect your capacity
- Letting others take more responsibility

When it's needed:

- Conversations aren't moving forward
- Your efforts aren't changing the outcome
- You feel drained, frustrated, or stuck

Step Away

Creating distance or firmer boundaries

This might look like:

- Limiting involvement
- Removing emotional/relational exposure
- Choosing not to engage

When it may be appropriate:

- Your well-being is consistently impacted
- The situation feels harmful
- Estrangement has been necessary

You might recognize yourself in more than one.

That's normal.

But staying in a role without choosing it is where people start to feel stuck.

How to Start Making Your Decision

You've probably been trying to figure this out on your own.

Because you've always been the one who handles things.

*You learned to handle everything on your own—
which is exactly why this decision feels so heavy now.*

*But this isn't just something to figure out—it's something you have to **decide**.
And most people don't know how to do that without second-guessing themselves.*

Understanding your role isn't about reacting in the moment.

It's about slowing down and asking:

- What do I realistically have the capacity for?
- And what is sustainable for me over time?

Start noticing which direction feels more aligned.

Stepping In ...

What would that realistically require from you?

• Time:

• Energy:

• Emotional Involvement:

Does this feel sustainable for you right now?

YES

NO

I DON'T KNOW

Stepping Back...

Where might creating space actually help?

What could you do less of?

What might you stop taking responsibility for?

Stepping Away...

Where is distance already needed? (Where are you already pulling/pulled back?)

What feels unsustainable if you continue as things are, or if you had to step back in?

What drains you, even when you've had space to rest?

What boundary has been set - but not respected or held?

What would protecting your well-being actually require?

Pause and Notice:

As you reflect on each of these, what feels most aligned right now?

- Stepping In
- Stepping Back
- Stepping Away / Continue to be removed
- Still Unsure



You're Closer Than You Think

You've already done something most people avoid.

You paused.

You questioned it.

You started to look at what's actually happening - not just what's expected of you.

And now you're starting to see it:

Not every caregiving situation allows you to show up the same way.

And not every relationship gives you the same level of access.

Different access requires different decisions.

But this is where it gets harder:

Most people keep trying to show up the same way anyway—

even when the situation no longer allows it, and it's costing them more than it's helping.

Even when:

- Access is limited
- Influence is low
- or the situation isn't stable or safe

So they stay stuck between:

"I should do more," and "I can't keep doing this."

And clarity alone doesn't solve that.

Because once you see it clearly... you still have to decide:

- Do I step in differently?
- Do I step back further?
- Or do I stay stepped away?

WATCH THIS NEXT



I've put together a short session that walks you through:

- What your level of access actually means
- Why doing more isn't always the right move
- How to make a clear caregiving decision — without losing yourself in the process

If you're somewhere between:

"I can't keep doing this the same way."

and

"I don't know what to do instead."

Start here.

Watch the Session →

amyfriesen.com/redefining-caregiving



*Not every situation gets to keep full access to you.
And you get to decide **what that looks like.***