

Caregiving in 2023: Addressing Challenges Through Evidence-Based Mindfulness

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There are four kinds of people in the world
Those who have been caregivers,
those who currently are caregivers;
those who will be caregivers,
and those who will need caregivers.

Rosalynn Carter, Former First Lady

Introduction

The evolving caregiving landscape in 2023 has resulted in millions of Americans grappling with increasing challenges like burnout, depression, and compassion fatigue. Recognizing the essential role of caregivers, research has shifted to exploring the potential advantages of mindfulness-based practices to alleviate these difficulties.

As more studies emphasize the positive effects of mindfulness on caregiver well-being, incorporating mindfulness into caregiving presents a large opportunity.

MindfulText™, a solution that prioritizes human-centered care, offers an accessible and scalable method to promote resilience and emotional health through daily text message reminders and training modules. We are particularly interested in addressing the mindfulness needs of family, community, and clinical caregivers who provide health care services to the aging, the physically vulnerable, and the psychologically vulnerable. We will also focus on improving the reach of mindfulness in underserved communities.

By focusing on caregivers' emotional well-being, we can support healthier caregiving environments and improve overall healthcare systems.

The State of Caregiving in 2023

In 2023, caregiving is a crucial aspect of life for millions of Americans. Around 38 million adults (11.5% of the adult population) are actively involved in caregiving. The United States' caregiving costs amount to \$600 billion, with caregivers providing approximately 36 billion hours of care yearly.¹

Caregivers in 2023 face significant challenges, including burnout, compassion fatigue, and depression. Up to 70% of caregivers exhibit clinically relevant symptoms of depression. Furthermore, 33% provide care despite experiencing poor health themselves, and 22% report deteriorating health as a consequence of caregiving.²

These developments underscore the importance of caregivers and the necessity to support their indispensable work.

70%

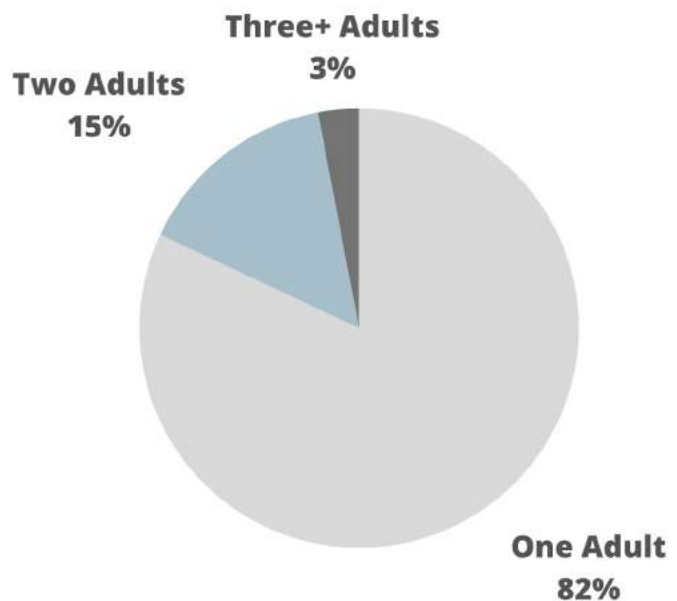
Up to seventy percent of caregivers show clinically significant symptoms of depression

36BN

Thirty-six billion hours of care yearly

38M

Thirty-eight million people in the USA taking care of loved ones



The typical family caregiver is a 47-year-old woman, with 82% caring for one adult, 15% caring for two, and 3% caring for three or more.

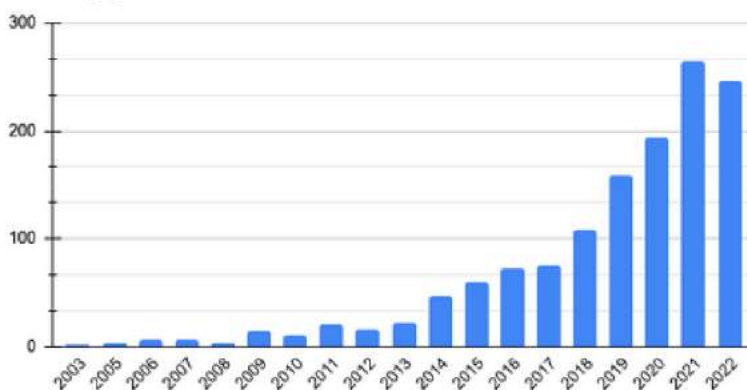
Mindfulness-Based Caregiving

The year 2023 witnesses a notable increase in mindfulness-based caregiving, with 42 published studies mentioning "Mindfulness" and "Caregiving" in their titles.³ This trend signifies the growing advantages of incorporating mindfulness into caregiving practices. Among the critical concerns in these studies, burnout has recently emerged as a prevalent issue for caregivers.^{4, 5, 6, 7}

Mindfulness-based caregiving offers promising solutions to caregiver challenges. New research demonstrates its potential to mitigate depression in elderly individuals.⁸ Moreover, research reveals a positive influence of mindfulness training in improving healthcare professionals' self-care abilities while enhancing their attention to patients' needs.⁹

Studies showcasing the effectiveness of mindfulness practices have been proven to help caregivers develop better coping strategies, improve mood, and manage emotional stress, enabling them to handle their responsibilities more effectively.

"Mindfulness and Caregiving" in academic journal article titles by year: 2003-2023



See source #3 on page 8

“
Being entirely present in the moment without judgment has been associated with better emotional health for caregivers.
”

Numerous studies have found mindfulness-based interventions, like Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, Adapted Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy, and Compassion Cultivation Training can improve caregiver distress, emotional regulation, and psychological flexibility.

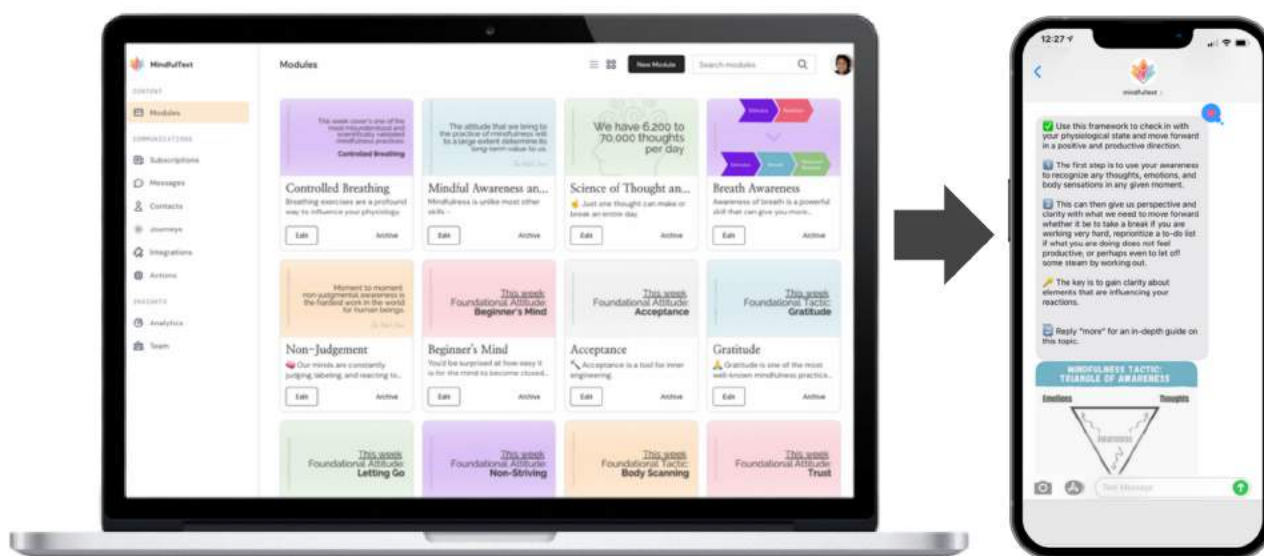
It is vital for caregivers, that throughout their caregiver journey, they are caring for themselves as well.

MindfulText: A Caregiving Solution

MindfulText aims to solve caregiver challenges by addressing caregiver wellbeing and emotional needs, encouraging self-care and resilience, fostering self-awareness, and attentiveness. MindfulText messages engage caregivers in their professional or service settings, offering a personal and close connection.

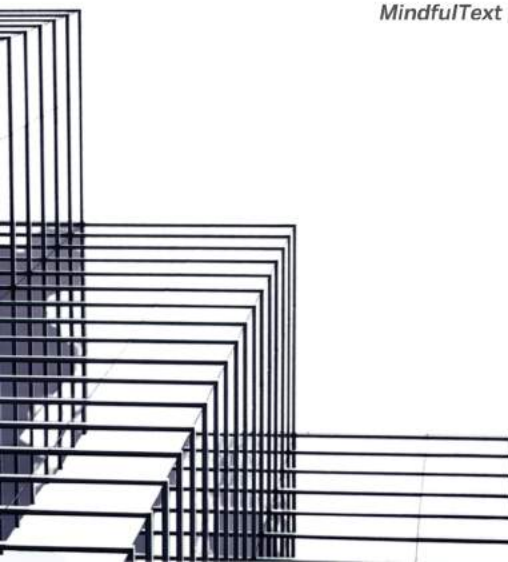
Given the widespread occurrence of video and app exhaustion in 2023, caregiving calls for accessible, cost-effective, and flexible alternatives. Mindfulness-based text message learning enables caregivers and care recipients to establish long-term emotional and mental wellness.

MindfulText cultivates mindfulness as a routine through daily text message cues that merge seamlessly with existing caregiving services and resources. This approach is reinforced by tested learning programs designed to integrate mindfulness into the support structure for patients, clients, family members, and fellow caregivers.



MindfulText platform and sample training modules.

Example message that patients, clients, family members, and fellow caregivers may receive.



Conclusion

In conclusion, a considerable portion of the American population engaged in caregiving faces challenges such as burnout and depression and the rise in mindfulness-based caregiving research emphasizes the potential benefits of incorporating mindfulness practices into caregiving routines.

Adopting mindfulness-based caregiving practices presents an opportunity to improve the well-being of both caregivers and care recipients, fostering healthier and more sustainable caregiving environments. By prioritizing the emotional health and self-care of caregivers, we can create a more resilient and attentive caregiving workforce, ultimately contributing to more effective healthcare systems and workplaces.

Mindfulness-based caregiving solutions like MindfulText offer a human-centric and accessible approach to fostering resilience, self-awareness, and emotional health for caregivers. By integrating daily text message prompts and a variety of interactive training modules, MindfulText provides an affordable and scalable solution to address the challenges faced in caregiving today.

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