

Positive experiences in dementia care-giving: Findings from the IDEAL programme

What do carers find satisfying about caring?

Carers are family members, friends, or other supporters who provide help and support to people with dementia. Carers will have different experiences of caring. Some carers can find caring stressful. Some carers can also find caring to be a rewarding experience. In this study we explored what carers found satisfying when providing care.

For this study we used information provided by carers who had taken part in the IDEAL programme. This study looks at what helps people to 'live well' with dementia.

Carers were asked about the satisfactions they gained from providing care. Of the 900 carers who answered this question, 839 detailed satisfactions from caring. 49 carers had no satisfactions, and 12 were unsure.

We looked at the answers from the carers who identified satisfactions. We found they talked about eight topics:

- Carers had 'grown' and learnt new skills through caring.
- Carers enjoyed spending time with the person with dementia.
- Carers were making a difference to the life of the person with dementia.
- Carers found it satisfying that they were fulfilling their duty by caring.
- Carers were helping the person with dementia to keep some of their independence.
- Carers felt they were providing good quality care.
- Carers were helping to improve the well-being of the person with dementia.
- Carers enjoyed their relationship with the person with dementia.

The findings show that carers can identify positive experiences of caring. This helps us to think about the types of support that carers may find helpful. People working with carers should ask them about these positive experiences. This will help them to provide good support to carers.

This is a summary of a [research article](#) which appeared in the **Ageing & Society** journal in June 2022.