

Support for caregivers: What is a psychosocial support at L'Antr'Aidant?

When or under what circumstances might I feel the need for psychosocial support?



- "I'm experiencing exhaustion as my mental load keeps increasing the more my spouse's illness progresses."
- "I feel lost in all the steps I have to take to get support at home to help my mother."
- "My sister has just been diagnosed with a neurocognitive disorder. I'd like to improve my communication with her to maintain my relationship despite the illness."
- "I feel isolated. I need a space to talk about what I'm going through as a caregiver."
- "I'm considering taking in my 48-year-old son living with an intellectual disability, and the only option would be a CHSLD. I'm wondering whether this environment would be adapted to his needs."

Definition of psychosocial support and particularly the one given by L'Antr'Aidant.

"At L'Antr'Aidant, psychosocial support is at the heart of our commitment to caregivers. It takes shape through four axes: individual psychosocial support, caregiver coaching, in-context support groups as well as adapted interventions during collective activities in the community.

Support individual Caregiver coaching **Support of** proximity who aims empowerment Support in a group Active involvement of the caregiver through support highlighting strengths that give rise to autonomy and motivation to **Interventions** adapted inside increase its power to act and meet group activities their needs.

Personalized psychosocial support, continuously adapted to needs, through which the caregiver may need:

- To be listened to without judgment, to express their difficulties;
- To be recognized for their skills and expertise;
- To be informed and guided towards the resources best suited to their needs.

Meetings are held at the caregiver's convenience and location (at home, by phone or online). telephone or virtual). Throughout the process of supporting the caregiver, the L'Antr'Aidant recognizes the complexity of this process, knows that it takes time, progresses at varying speeds and that it requires flexibility, vigilance and great respect for individual needs.

A short activity lasting 2 to 4 sessions offered to caregivers experiencing certain difficulties with their loved one, for example :

- Incomprehension in the face of puzzling behavior
- Discomfort when accompanying activities of daily living
- Challenges in accessing services and navigating the healthcare system.

The intervener offers support to the person with the aim of acquiring, enhancing and/or consolidate skills in a challenging situation, taking into account the person's strengths and available resources.

Support groups bring together caregivers from diverse backgrounds to discuss issues created FOR, BY and WITH caregivers.

Through meetings, psychosocial support aims to encourage exchange and support between participants. The themes addressed also provide a space for learning through the sharing of information and discussion between peers on a subject that affects close care. As well as the development of a secure, supportive social safety net.

The **collective activities** offered by L'Antr'Aidant aim to raise awareness among partners and thecommunity about the reality of caregiving, and to help improve the living conditions of caregivers.

These activities can be offered in various forms such as:

- L'Antr'Aidant training courses
- Awareness-raising and information workshops
- Conferences on various themes related to caregivers

The individual and group approaches are equally effective. The caregiver can choose or with the help of the psychosocial counselor, which is best suited to their needs.



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Monsieur Lupin and Madame Abel are a couple. Mr. Lupin has to support Mrs. Abel more and more, due to a loss of physical autonomy. Mrs. Abel needs help with various daily activities such as: personal hygiene, getting around the house, and going out for shopping. A month ago, she had a fall and was hospitalized. Mr Lupin says he finds it difficult to support his wife. He wonders about the possibility of returning home, given the increased help and assistance she needs. After consideration, Mrs. Lupin is relocated to a nursing home. Mr. Lupin is feeling discouraged, and is experiencing a great deal of sadness, anger and guilt in the face of all these changes. He has difficulty living alone and reorganizing his life.

Diagram of the cargiver's journey through psychosocial support

The beginning of the search for help

Mr. Lupin calls the L'Antr'Aidant helpline. A psychosocial counselor offers him a sympathetic ear, a space to talk about his situation and his emotions. Taking into account Mr. Lupin's émotions, she offers him individual psychosocial support where he can discuss his concerns, name his emotions and share ideas for personalized solutions.

Individual psychosocial support

A psychosocial worker is assigned to Mr. Lupin's situation. During the exchange, she identifies his need to take his mind off things and get out of the house. She suggests meeting him at a small café near his home. On the day of the café meeting, he expresses himself about his regarding concerns his partner's accommodation and the guilt he feels about this decision.

The counselor hears his concerns, she suggests that he deepen his reflection on the emotions he has experienced, by presenting him with a clinical tool on guilt, and by suggesting various solutions adapted to his situation.

Adapted interventions, group activities -

Based on the elements discussed during meetings, the psychosocial identifies that it could be relevant and helpful to offer Mr. Lupin the opportunity to participate in a training activity on the theme of compassion fatigue. Through this training, it would be the opportunity to develop deeper on burnout, guilt and the search for one's identity outside his wife's support.

Mr Lupin feels ready to take part in this training and this learning context with other caregivers.

Continuous process which continues, stops or resumes depending on the

Courage tindness. Solidarity. Creativity. Power to

During the meetings, Mr Lupin shares his communication difficulties with his partner. Even though she agreed with this accommodation, she would blame him for abandoning her. He doesn't know how to act in this situation. The support worker suggests tips and tricks to improve communication and maintain his alliance with his partner.

Coaching for caregivers

Support group

Through individual support, Mr Lupin says he feels alone in his situation. He would like to be able to talk to others who are going through the upheaval of a change of living environment with the person they are accompanying. The psychosocial counselor tells him about the support groups and invites him to participate. She gives him the schedule for the support group and registers him.

There's no final destination, just a desire to make the road more enjoyable!