

## **Abstract**

Senior care is nowadays in majority a family care. This rigorous work focuses on the sources of support for informal carers of the non-self-sufficient senior. In order to evaluate the possibilities of supporting family carers, we need to know how they look at their care situation. The work is therefore based on exploring the experience of informal carers with care and discovering their needs. For setting up appropriate intervention strategies it is necessary to listen to those on whom the bulk of the responsibility for the caretaker lies.

The first part of the thesis consists of a theoretical grounding of the issues of family care and support, which is provided to the carers. It also covers topics related to the altered role of carer (eg motivation for care, needs and difficulties of carers). The theoretical part of the thesis is supplemented by a chapter dealing with the gender issues of carers and the whole section summarizes possible sources of support for carers focusing on self-help groups. A qualitative research strategy was selected for research, and data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews and the focus group method in two follow-up studies. At first, 20 semi-structured interviews with carers - 10 men and 10 women were carried out. In a special part, the use of self-help groups as a source of support for family carers was examined. As part of the broader GAČR project entitled Evaluation of the needs of family members caring for the elderly, another 34 semi-structured interviews and one focus group were carried out.

The empirical part maps the experience of informal carers with the care of a non-self-sufficient senior, from the point of view of women and men. There are described the circumstances in which a person becomes a family caregiver, the nature of the care, the hardships and the needs the carer has during the care, with regard to the gender aspects of family care. The follow-up part of the research provides insight into how carers look at self-help groups as a possible source of their support for care for a non-self-sufficient senior.

## **Keywords**

Family care, senior, carer, motivation, needs, critical moments of care, gender, support of carers, self-help groups