



CAREGIVER STRESS

5 TIPS FOR MANAGING LIFE AS A CAREGIVER



PRESBYTERIAN
SENIOR LIVING

TAKING ON THE ROLE OF CAREGIVER FOR A SENIOR LOVED ONE CAN BE CHALLENGING.

You're faced with a number of new responsibilities and unfamiliar feelings, like worrying about handling the additional obligations that come with caregiving, or fear about the future. You may feel guilt for not being able to do more or even anger and resentment towards your senior loved one.

While serving as a caregiver can be emotionally and physically exhausting, know that what you're feeling is normal. Although you're unlikely to eliminate caregiver stress completely, the following techniques can assist you with managing life as a caregiver.





DEVOTE SOME TIME TO YOU

Setting aside a few minutes each day to meditate or reflect can greatly lessen feelings of being overwhelmed. Take time to learn meditation techniques, whether from classes, books, DVDs, or online.

In addition, consider the following activities to keep your body and mind healthy:

- ✔ Engaging in daily exercise.
- ✔ Scheduling regular medical checkups.
- ✔ Eating well.
- ✔ Avoiding alcohol and drugs.
- ✔ Getting plenty of sleep.
- ✔ Doing some things you enjoy, such as engaging in a hobby.



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KNOW YOUR LIMITS

You're busy, but you can only do so many things at once. Research indicates that you're not as efficient as you may think when you multitask, and it may even harm your health.

Understand that at times, you may have to say no. Setting boundaries is critical to managing life as a caregiver. For the responsibilities you do take on, make lists and use a written calendar to manage it all.



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CELEBRATE THE POSITIVE

Among your many responsibilities as a caregiver, it can be easy to overlook those touching, beautiful moments you have with your loved one. Take time to enjoy the special times, and try to laugh every day; it's good for both your physical and mental health.



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SEEK SUPPORT

Even if you have taken on the role of primary caregiver for your loved one, you can't do it all alone. It's not a matter of if you'll need help from other family members, community resources and senior care providers—it's a matter of when and how much. Without a support system in place, you will burn out quickly, which will compromise your ability to provide the best possible senior living situation for your loved one.

Research has shown that social support can help you cope with a wide range of difficult situations, says AARP. Consider seeking support in the following ways:

- ✔ Connect one-on-one with old friends, or take advantage of social media for busy schedules.
- ✔ Contact a senior care expert who can help.
- ✔ Ask family members and friends to listen without judging.
- ✔ Ask for help and support from your place of worship.
- ✔ Seek assistance from a social worker, counselor or therapist.
- ✔ Seek out a caregiver support group online, through a hospital, or connect with a senior care provider in your area that can help.
- ✔ Consider Adult Day Services or other senior living options.
- ✔ Inquire about At-Home Services in your local area.



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TAKE CARE OF YOUR NEEDS AS A CAREGIVER

Amid the stress of caregiving for a senior loved one, it's easy to forget your own needs. Taking the time to care for yourself, understanding that you can only handle so much, celebrating special moments and seeking support can help you stay strong and confident as you continue managing life as a caregiver.

About Presbyterian Senior Living

Presbyterian Senior Living is a not-for-profit organization, fulfilling its charitable purpose and mission by providing high quality retirement choices, healthcare services and affordable residential living options for people 55 and older for more than 85 years. Headquartered in Dillsburg, Pennsylvania, Presbyterian Senior Living provides services to approximately 6,000 seniors in 30 locations in the mid-Atlantic region of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Ohio and Delaware.

Remember, you're not in this alone. We offer a wide range of services that complements the care you are already providing, as well as advice on how to begin the conversation with your loved one about their future.

HOW TO TALK TO YOUR LOVED ONE ABOUT THEIR FUTURE

