Self-care for the Caregiver

Caring for a sick or injured loved one can be rewarding but also physically and emotionally overwhelming. Taking a little time for yourself is crucial and can help you be a better caregiver.

Take mini "time-outs" just for you. Even just a few minutes can be helpful. Do something you enjoy that helps you relax.

Get moving. Even light exercise like walking, stretching or dancing can help boost your energy and moods. Physical activity can also help clear your mind.

Connect with other caregivers. Check out online caregiving forums, websites and support groups to find others who truly understand the ups and downs of caregiving and can offer encouragement.

Focus on your own health. Go to all your checkups, take your medications, get rest and eat healthy. This will benefit the person you are caring for as well.

Set limits on your time and energy. Figure out what you can reasonably do and what resources or help from others you may need.

Build a support team. You can't do it alone. It's important to have a network of family members, friends, church or community organizations, and anyone else you can turn to in a time of stress to help support your efforts.

If you are struggling with caregiving, your Health Advocate Licensed Professional Counselor can provide support and coping strategies. A Work/Life Specialist can also help locate resources including support groups as well as in-home care, respite care, assisted living and long-term care in your area.

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