

Caring for Caregivers

Human beings are caregivers by nature. Whether we are caring for our children, spouse, siblings or aging parents, we always seem to be nurturing someone else. Caring for others definitely has its rewards but it can also be physically and emotionally – not to mention financially – draining. The question is “what can we do to keep ourselves in physical and mental shape so we can better care for our loved ones?”

Physical Well-being:

- **Get enough sleep.** Caregivers are notoriously sleep deprived. If you cannot get a full night’s sleep, then try taking catnaps during the day.
- **Eat a well-balanced diet.** Don’t neglect your own nourishment by eating healthy food and drinking plenty of water.
- **Exercise regularly.** It goes without saying that physical exercise will strengthen your body but it will also help you sleep better.
- **Get away.** A brief vacation from the day-to-day stresses of intense care-giving will give your body and your brain time to rejuvenate.
- **Consult a physician.** If you are experiencing any physical illness, get treatment immediately and allow time for recuperation.

Mental Health:

- **Talk with someone.** Routinely reach out to a close friend, confidant, clergy member or mental health professional to discuss feelings or frustrations.
- **Keep up with current events.** Stay in touch with the outside world by watching TV news and reading books and periodicals.
- **Stay mentally alert.** Work on games, puzzles and projects that stimulate creative thought processes.
- **Find a hobby.** Activities like painting, crocheting or even line dancing provide excellent means for taking your mind off the day-to-day.
- **Seek peace within.** Employ relaxation or meditation exercises in a serene environment either naturally outdoors or indoors with calming music.
- **Welcome affection.** Allow yourself to be loved by friends and family. Accept their help when they offer it.



Caregivers Need Attention Too

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