

Tips for Taking Care of Yourself While Caring for Another



From NYC Caregiver

Accepting help from family, friends, and neighbors can provide the break you may need. Using services available through your community agencies can also be helpful. Some of these services are free, some have a small fee, and others are based on a sliding scale, according to your income.

Following are some guidelines to remember throughout your caregiving.

Set realistic goals. Providing care is likely just one of the many conflicting demands on you. It is important to recognize what you can and cannot do.

Maintain your health. Your well-being affects everything you do. Taking care of yourself is important and involves eating balanced meals every day, exercising regularly, getting adequate sleep and rest, and taking time to doing something just for you.

Communicate with your family. A family meeting from time to time may help others understand what's involved in the caregiving and the kind of help you may need. If possible, develop a 'care schedule' to share the responsibilities.

Talk with your employer. Employers are increasingly offering flextime scheduling to help caregivers meet responsibilities outside of work. For employees who need to be with their care recipient for an extended period of time, there is the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). Under FMLA, eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a twelve-month period for a family medical event. Check with your Human Resources representative for more information.

Use community resources. Identify resources in your community that will help you in the area of caregiving that you find especially trying. Polk Family Caregivers can link you with services in your area.

Try a support group. In addition to offering useful information, such groups provide a unique forum for caregivers to come together and share experiences and feelings in a supportive environment. [Support Group](#) validate your role as caregiver and reduce isolation.