Help for family caregivers

Is it time to ask for help?
As a family caregiver, it’s okay to feel stressed, tired ... even angry. But how do you know when caring for someone else is causing you to neglect yourself?

Some signs:
• You’re missing your doctor visits
• Your colds are lingering
• You’ve lost focus and energy
• You’re sad for no reason

That’s when you know it’s time for a change.

Give yourself a well-deserved break
Look into respite care. For a short time, someone else takes over your daily care duties. So you can go on vacation ... or just to the movies!


Ways to manage it all
You may not be able to hand off your duties. But you can do things to bring a little balance back to your life. Try seeking support from other caregivers. Or reward yourself with time off.

Other tips:
• Accept the help of family and friends. Be ready with a list of jobs everyone can tackle, like house repairs or meal duty.
• Encourage the person you’re caring for to be as independent as they can.
• Eat healthy and exercise. When you take good care of you, you’ll take better care of someone else.
• Bond with the person you’re caring for. Watch a movie or flip through old photo albums together.

Federal and state resources
You may feel like you’re alone, but you’re not. Here are a few places to get support:

• Agency on Aging (AAA): If you take care of an older person, call here first. If he or she has a lower income, they could get meals at home, house repair, legal aid and more. To find your state or local AAA, call 1-800-677-1116.
• National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP): Get in touch with resources for respite care, caregiver training, counseling and more.

You may also be able to get home health care through Medicare or Medicaid. To find out more, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).


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