

PATHWAYS CENTER *for* GRIEF & LOSS

CAREGIVERS' SELF CARE

Being a caregiver is draining - physically, emotionally and spiritually. Good self-care is a critical ingredient in providing quality care to others. Some caregivers feel guilty when they take time for themselves. But it is important to stay balanced, healthy, and avoid reaching "the end of your rope."

It takes practice to recognize what is occurring inside you, while at the same time trying to provide care for others. Change begins with insight. As you start to realize when you are reaching your limits, you can better anticipate and address your needs. In this manner you best care for yourself, and can therefore best care for others.

Everyone has their own unique style of relating to the stress of living. With the added responsibility of caring for another, sometimes you manage that stress well, while at other times you need a break to avoid experiencing Compassion Fatigue. Compassion Fatigue is a state of tension and preoccupation, and can be the result of the cumulative stress of caregiving.

COMPASSION FATIGUE INDICATORS

Exhaustion and loss of energy

Irritability and impatience

Cynicism and detachment

Omnipotence and feeling indispensable

Physical complaints and depression

Disorientation and confusion

Minimization and denial of feelings

SELF CARE SUGGESTIONS

Celebrations

birthdays

births

weddings

graduations

Focused Reflecting

take a bath

take a walk

go for a drive

listen to music

write in a journal

Support

take a break

join or attend a group

share with others

seek out a trusted friends or professional

explore what resources are available to you

Distracting

engage in a hobby

read a book

exercise

practice yoga or meditation

see a movie

"The bow that is always bent will quickly break, but if unstrung will serve you at your need. So let the mind some relaxation take, to come back to its task with fresher heed." ~Phaedrus



Prepared by Pathways Center for Grief & Loss, 4075 Old Harrisburg Pike, Mount Joy, PA 17552
Phone: (717) 391-2413 or (800) 924-7610 ♦ info@pathwaysthroughgrief.org
www.pathwaysthroughgrief.org ♦ Permission to copy required