



PRIVATE DUTY
HOME CARE

CAREGIVER SUPPORT TOOL

CAREGIVER STRESS & COPING WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CARING FOR A LOVED ONE

How to Handle Stress:

- The best way to handle stress is to prevent it! Of course that may not always be possible, but there are ways you can learn to reduce stress – physically, emotionally, spiritually, and mentally.
- The following are basic stress management techniques that can help. Choose the ones you think will work best for you and make them part of your daily life.

Establish Priorities:

- Do you often feel rushed because “there’s no time?” Why not regulate the pace of your life?
- Make a list of tasks in order of priority. Concentrate on what’s really important to you and drop those things that only waste your time and energy.

Share the Workload:

- Don’t try to do everything yourself.
- Share the emotional and physical responsibilities among family members, friends, professionals, and private pay assistance.

Take a Break:

- Spend a few minutes a day alone to break the routine. This helps ease stress and gives you a better perspective of what’s happening around you.
- Set aside time during the week for recreation, hobbies or exercise. Regular exercise is an excellent way to reduce stress. Physical fitness gives you a feeling of well-being that affects everything around you.

Think Positive:

- Having a positive attitude will help you assert yourself and feel more in control.
- Don’t put unnecessary pressure on yourself.
- You can’t always control what goes on around you, but you can control how you respond.

Have a Sense of Humor:

- Laughter can be one of the best medicines for stress. Being able to laugh at yourself and the world can break tension and give you some relief from stress

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Respect and Reassure:

- Let your loved one know that you are supporting them and can be depended upon to help them solve their problems.
- Respect your loved one's need to make their own decisions and remain in control of their lives.
- Although limits are often placed on their autonomy due to their condition, a degree of participation in the decision making process is usually possible.

Make Small Changes:

- Move forward with small changes each step.
- Don't be overwhelmed by the complete care that may be necessary in five years when partial assistance may be all that is needed right now.
- Avoid making major decisions in haste.

Get Support:

- Find out if there's a support group in your community.
- Professional counseling may be another option if the situation and the relationship become overwhelming.
- Remember, you're not alone.