



kids therapy made simple

Caregivers

Sometimes asking for help is the most meaningful example of self reliance.
- Unknown

A growing body of research shows that individuals that provide care to disabled or chronically ill loved ones have a higher risk of harmful physical, mental and emotional consequences for the caregiver. It is so important to make sure that as a caregiver you do not overwork yourself and dismiss the stress, fatigue and overall burnout that you may feel. We cannot take care of others unless we first take care of ourselves.

(for more resources visit www.parentcompanion.org)

Self-Care Checklist for Caregivers

Physical Health

- I'm exercising
- I'm seeing my own doctor
- I'm getting enough sleep
- I'm eating nutritious meals regularly

Social Health

- I'm seeing family & friends regularly
- I'm keeping up with at least 1 activity I enjoy
- I have fun at least once a week

Emotional Health

- I'm getting ongoing emotional support from at least 1 person
- I have at least 1 outlet for stress
- When I feel I can't handle difficult emotions on my own, I will get help
- I understand that typical emotional responses to caregiving include denial, anxiety, anger, frustration, guilt and shame

Taking Care of Yourself

Becoming a caregiver has the potential to be all-consuming, but it should not be at the expense of your own well-being. The most important thing to remember is that **you are not alone**.

- Rely on positive sources in your life
- Do not be intimidated - you don't have to apologize for wanting to understand what is going on
- Maintain a positive outlook
- Keep in touch with reality
- Learn the terminology & seek information - if you don't understand stop the conversation and ask questions
- Don't be afraid to show emotion
- Avoid pity
- Keep daily routines as normal as possible
- Take one day at a time

The HALT Principle

When things aren't going well, remember **HALT**:

Hungry

we can be hungry for actual food or less tangible things like affection and understanding

Angry

acknowledge it, reflect upon it and release it in constructive, nondestructive ways

Lonely

being alone can be a self-imposed situation; reach out and connect with others

Tired

the physical need to sleep, rest and rejuvenate is critical to staying healthy physically and emotionally

These states can create negative behaviors and high stress.