

Warning Signs of Caregiver Burnout

Physically – Exhausted and worn out

Emotionally – Resentful, stressed, bitter

Relationally – Feeling used or unappreciated by others

Financially – Overwhelmed or depleted

What Causes Caregiver Burnout?

The major cause of burnout is neglecting our own emotional, physical, and spiritual health. The demands on a caregiver's body, mind, and spirit can easily seem overwhelming leading to fatigue, hopelessness, and ultimately burnout.

What Can You Do?

Learning how to relax can be your best strategy. Set a timer for a specific number of minutes and simply relax, clear your mind of negative thoughts, and let go of your worries. Count backwards from 100 and focus only on the present time... be in the moment!

Take Care of Yourself. Get plenty of rest and eat appropriately. Avoid the use of alcohol, unhealthy foods, or drugs to mask stress or pain. Be realistic in what you expect from yourself.

Get Moving. When you are nervous, angry, or upset, release the pressure through a physical activity or exercise. Running, walking, working in the garden, or playing sports can help. Physical activities can relieve that "uptight" feeling and help you relax, clear your mind, and release tension.

Prioritize and make lists. Organize your life into priorities and remember you can't do everything. Lists may help you from becoming overwhelmed.



Stress and the Healthcare Provider

Is Caregiving Causing You Stress?

- Am I easily agitated with those I love?
- Am I becoming more critical of others?
- Am I having difficulty laughing or having fun?
- Am I turning down invitations to be with others?
- Am I feeling depressed about my situation?
- Am I feeling hurt when my efforts go unnoticed?
- Am I feeling trapped by all the responsibilities of life?
- Am I being manipulated?
- Am I missing sleep and regular exercise?
- Am I too busy with quiet time with my Higher Being?
- Am I feeling guilty when I take time for myself?

(Having 2 or more of these stressors may lead to burnout.)

What are two things **you** personally do to promote self-care?

One of the greatest challenges of a healthcare provider is taking care of themselves. Too many caregivers neglect their own health and wellbeing and put their own needs on the back burner.

What is Caregiver Stress?

Caregiver Stress is the stress that occurs from caretaking of another person, particularly patients. The caregiver may experience work overload, time pressure to get tasks done, risk of infectious exposure, difficult or deathly ill patients, or lack of peer support. They may lose sight of their own needs and become resentful or burned out leading to depression, anxiety, fatigue, or physical symptoms.



Seek support from other caregivers. You are not alone!



Take care of your own health so that you can be strong enough to take care of your loved one.



Accept offers of help and suggest specific things people can do to help you.



Learn how to communicate effectively with doctors.



CaregiverAction.org

MY ACTION PLAN

When writing an Action Plan, be sure it includes:

1. **What** you are going to do.
2. **How much** you are going to do.
3. **When** you are going to do it (e.g., what time of day).
4. **How often** you are going to do it.

Example: This week I will read a favorite book (*what*) for a half hour (*how much*) in the mid-afternoon when my spouse sleeps (*when*), three times—Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (*how many*).

This week I will _____ [what]

_____ [how much]

_____ [when]

_____ [how often]

How confident are you that you will complete your entire Action Plan during the week?

| (Circle) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|----------|------------|---|---|---|---|-----------|---|---|---|---|----|
| | not at all | | | | | totally | | | | | |
| | confident | | | | | confident | | | | | |

Check off each day you accomplish your plan

Comments:

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

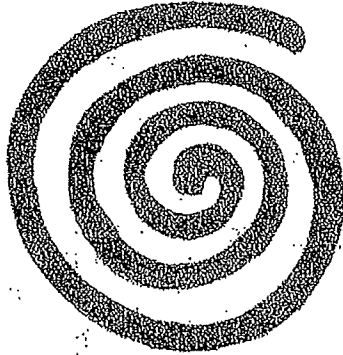
Saturday _____

Sunday _____



Desktop Finger Labyrinth

Keep this labyrinth on your desk. When you are stressed and need to relax, use your finger to slowly trace the path into the center and then out to the entrance. The spiraling path of the labyrinth teaches us to slow down and refocus as we become more centered and balanced.



the spiral .

Among the oldest symbols of spirituality,
they've been found on every continent,
scratched into rocks thousands of
years old. They represent the
winding journey we must
take inward if we're to
know and truly love
ourselves ...
returning with more power & wisdom.



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