



GREAT TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

Things to remember to take care of yourself.

- **Set Boundaries.** Be honest, open and direct about your time and energy limits. Maintain a sense of balance for you, your care receiver and your family.
- **Schedule Time for Your Own Needs.** Schedule a little time for yourself at least once a week. Take an art class, go out dancing on oldies night, or learn to play the piano.
- **Become Educated.** Have a clear understanding of what is necessary in providing care. Be sure to keep track of resources that give you easy access to information on health care, support services, legal matters, the aging process, housing and other health care options.
- **Be Creative.** Brainstorm with family, friends and professionals about traditional and non-traditional ways to provide care and maintain dignity and control for your aging loved ones.
- **Share the Care.** Share the responsibility of elder care with family, friends and paid helpers. Make lists of things that well-meaning friends can do when they ask to help.
- **Seek Professional Help.** If you are feeling overwhelmed by your caregiving responsibilities, experiencing low self-esteem, having frequent negative thoughts, feeling exhausted most of the time, abusing food or substances, contact a mental health professional to talk about your feelings.
- **Take One Day at a Time.** Focus on the present. Find simple, meaningful encouragement to fill you each day.
- **Respect Autonomy.** Respect your care receiver's need to make his/her own decisions and remain in control in as many aspects of his/her life as possible.
- **Talk With Others.** Meet and talk with others who share similar experiences to help you manage your stress and reduce your feelings of isolation.
- **Keep Your Sense of Humor.** Have a daily humor break. Watch funny videos and share light-hearted jokes. This is important for you and your care receiver.