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Taking Care of Yourself: Tips for Caregivers

Taking care of yourself is one of the most important things you can do as a caregiver. Make sure you're eating healthy, being active, and taking time for yourself.

Dealing with Feelings of Frustration and Guilt

Caregiving, especially from a distance, is likely to bring out many different emotions, both positive and negative. Feeling frustrated and angry with everyone, from the care recipient to the doctors, is a common experience. Anger could be a sign that you are overwhelmed or that you are trying to do too much. If you can, give yourself a break: take a walk, talk with your friends, get some sleep—try to do something for yourself.

Although they may not feel as physically exhausted and drained as the primary, hands-on caregiver, long-distance caregivers may still be worried and anxious. Sometimes, long-distance caregivers feel guilty about not being closer, not doing enough, not having enough time with the person, and perhaps even feeling jealous of those who do. Many long-distance caregivers also find that worrying about being able to afford to take time off from work, being away from family, or the cost of travel increases these frustrations. Remember that you are doing the best you can given the circumstances and that you can only do what you can do. It may help to know that these are feelings shared by many other long-distance caregivers—you are not alone in this.

Taking Care of Yourself

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Taking care of yourself is one of the most important things you can do as a caregiver. Make sure you are making time for yourself, eating healthy foods, and being active. Consider joining a caregiver support group, either in your own community or online. Meeting other caregivers can relieve your sense of isolation and will give you a chance to exchange stories and ideas. If you need help, don't be afraid to ask for it.

Caregiving is not easy for anyone—not for the caregiver and not for the care recipient. There are sacrifices and adjustments for everyone. When you don't live where the care is needed, it may be especially hard to feel that what you are doing is enough and that what you are doing is important. It often is.

Learn about [sharing caregiving responsibilities with friends and family](#).

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