



Care for Caregivers

Caring for a loved one can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience, but it can also be emotionally and physically exhausting. Caregivers, also known as caretakers, play an essential role in providing support and assistance to those who are unable to care for themselves due to illness or disability. However, in the process of caring for their loved ones, caregivers often neglect their own needs, leading to burnout, depression, anxiety and other health problems. That's why it's crucial to focus on caring for the caretaker, as well as the person they are caring for. Here are some tips for caregivers to help them prioritize their own well-being:

One in every four Idahoans is a family caregiver. They are your brothers, sisters, parents and grandparents, children, cousins, friends, and neighbors. They are you.

Source: Idaho Caregiver Alliance

Take care of your physical health. Caregivers often neglect their own physical health while caring for their loved ones. Make sure to eat healthy, exercise regularly, and get enough sleep to maintain your own physical health.

Seek emotional support. Caring for a loved one can be emotionally challenging, and it's essential to have a support system. Consider joining a support group or seeking professional counseling.

Take breaks. Caring for a loved one can be a 24/7 job, but it's essential to take breaks to prevent burnout. Consider hiring a respite caregiver, asking family or friends for help, or taking some time for yourself. Remember, it's OK to accept help from others.

Practice self-care. Self-care is essential for caregivers to recharge and take care of themselves. Consider taking a bath, reading a book, or engaging in a hobby that you enjoy.

Stay organized. Caregiving can be overwhelming, but staying organized can help reduce stress. Consider keeping a schedule, making to-do lists, and organizing medical and financial documents.

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Set boundaries. It's essential to set boundaries to prevent caregiver burnout. Decide what tasks you can and cannot do and delegate responsibilities to others when possible.

Simplify tasks. Simplifying tasks can help reduce stress and make caregiving more manageable. Consider using tools like a pill organizer or hiring a cleaning service to help with household tasks.

Stay connected. While it can be difficult to keep social appointments with friends and family, it is important to maintain social connections to feel less isolated and prevent burnout. Realizing that you're not alone and that others are going through similar experiences nurtures your ability to be self-compassionate.

Ask for help. To avoid burnout ask for help. When we don't ask for help, we can significantly drain our emotional, mental, and physical capacity, leaving us emotionally exhausted. Asking for help can come in the form of asking a friend or a family member to help out every now and then with your loved one. You would be surprised by how many people would lend a hand.

Have an accountability partner. Whether it's a spouse, family member, close friend, or neighbor, having someone keep you accountable for putting your needs first will prevent caregiver burnout. A quick once-a-week check-in from an outside source can be enough to keep you on track with your personal goals as an effective person and caregiver.

Caring for a loved one can be difficult, but caring for the caregiver is also important. To avoid burnout and provide the best care possible, caregivers should prioritize their own well-being.

Resources for Caregivers

Idaho Caregiver Alliance – ICA offers various **resources** and **classes** that can help caregivers find the support they need. Visit idahocaregiveralliance.com

Caregivers Connect | Facebook – Join this Facebook community where you can find like-minded support from other caregiver members. Join [here](#).

Family Caregiver Navigator – Sponsored by the Idaho Caregiver Alliance, the program helps caregivers connect with resources throughout Idaho to improve their quality of life. Learn more at caregivernavigator.org



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