

Caring for the Caregiver

Caring for a family member or friend with dementia can be an all-consuming job. So much so that you might forget to take care of yourself. Use this worksheet to help identify the best ways to meet your physical, emotional, spiritual and social needs.

Physical

Exercise is an important part of staying healthy. But that doesn't mean you need a hot, sweaty workout every day. On the line below, jot down the activity that would appeal to you. Consider a regular walk through a nearby park or by a lake. Spend time in your garden or grow herbs and tomatoes in pots. Create a walking path in your basement, particularly in inclement weather. Consider a work-out video. Invite a friend or neighbor to join you. Who knows, your family member may want to be a part of the fun as well.

Emotional and Spiritual

Tap into your feelings. Maybe your family is not supporting you or you are at odds with your siblings. By writing down what is going on and what you are feeling, it can help you deal with your emotions. Find a support group. Look to your local faith community or Alzheimer's Association. You may find people who are also caring for someone with dementia. Discover other ways that you could get the support you need and write those below.

Social

Are you neglecting friends or favorite activities? How long has it been since you did something fun with your spouse or best friend? Sometimes regular emails or short telephone calls to a good friend can help you stay in touch. Write down your favorite pastimes and the people with whom you would like to do those activities. Remember, it's OK to ask for help.

For more suggestions for handling actions and behaviors commonly demonstrated by persons with Alzheimer's disease and other dementia illnesses,
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