



**THE ABCs OF
CAREGIVING:
A GUIDE**

**THE BRIDGING POINT
SOCIAL WORK
FINAL YEAR PROJECT**

FOREWORD

Dear caregivers,

This one-stop interactive guide is specially designed to help caregivers in Singapore who need to care for persons with mobility issues and physical disabilities such as cerebral palsy or individuals surviving stroke episodes. As a caregiver, you worry about giving the right care and support and caregiving finances. You may feel tired on more occasions than not, stressed or anxious about the medical and functional conditions of your charge. We have also learnt from caregivers like yourselves that a huge concern is about the long-term care in the event that you are no longer around.

Thus, the guide strives to provide practical and relevant information to better equip you for your caregiving needs and experience as well as self-care. It is intended as a one-stop resource with concise information to address the challenges in navigating the internet for key information to support caregiving issues, or related services and schemes.

The guide is also interspersed with mini games and exercises to help you relax and reflect on your caregiving experience. I hope you can continue to stay strong and healthy, and persevere in the journey ahead.

Teo Pek Wan (Ms)
Acting Director
Adult & Elderly Services, SPD

Here are some words from
other caregivers for you!

AFFIRMATIONS

“For those that feel down, don’t
think that it is the end and be
hopeful. When one door closes,
another one opens. Stay positive.”



SELF CAREGIVER WITH
SPINAL CORD INJURY

WHEN TIMES ARE HARD, JUST REMEMBER...

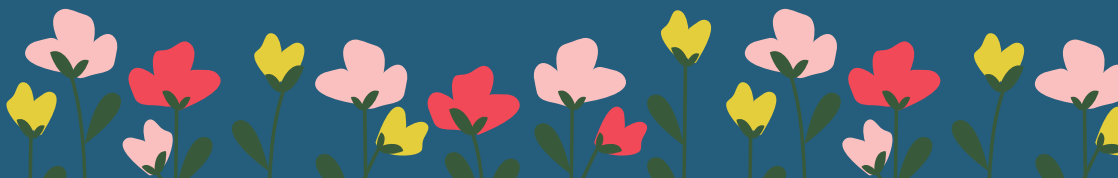
*Jiayou! Do not give up!
You can do it!*

There is help out there for you.

*Don't feel guilty, you
have done your best!*

*There are hardships, but be
patient and endure it.*

*Do not worry, just live
one day at a time.*



A dark blue background decorated with scattered, colorful triangles in shades of yellow, pink, and teal. The triangles are of various sizes and orientations, creating a festive, confetti-like effect.

Ask for help if needed!

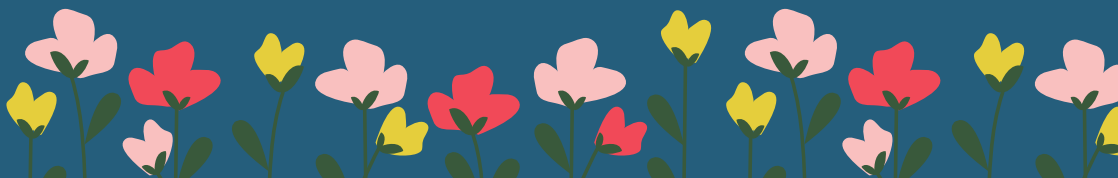
*You are appreciated by
your care recipients!*

*Don't push yourself
too hard.*

*You are not alone in
taking care of the person.*

*Make time for yourself to
have enough rest!*

*“There are only four kinds of people
in the world. Those who have been
caregivers. Those who are currently
caregivers. Those who will be
caregivers, and those who will need
a caregiver.” — Rosalyn Carter*



Acronyms

ACP	Advanced Care planning	28
LPA	Lasting Power of Attorney	32
HPB	Health Promotion Board	53
PWD	Person with Disability	122
FDW	Foreign Domestic Worker	125
DAC	Day Activity Centre	129
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general

DEFINING CAREGIVERS **2**

PHYSICAL DISABILITY **5**

DEFINING CAREGIVERS

Who are caregivers?

I am a person who provides care and assistance to another individual who needs it,

I am a caregiver!

I am someone that the family hired to provide care and/or to assist the primary caregiver.

I am also a caregiver!

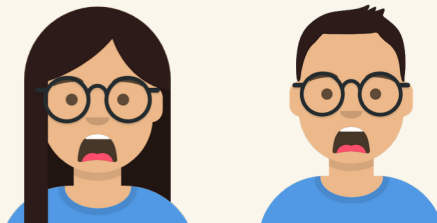


What are the roles of caregivers?

Attending to your care recipient's physical needs can include:

- Preparing meals
- Helping your care recipient bathe and dress
- Performing logistical tasks such as:
 - Sending your care recipient for appointments/check-ups
 - Buying groceries
 - Keeping the house clean
- Listening to your care recipient
- Advocating to your care recipient

My responsibilities:



The role of caregivers can be extremely difficult. You, as a caregiver, might have felt overwhelmed, resentful and even depressed during your caregiving journey.



I agree! Therefore, learning good self-care and reaching out for support is essential for you. In the best of circumstances, taking care of a loved one can be rewarding and meaningful, as well as challenging.



It is also important to know that you are **doing enough** for your care recipient. You do not need to be doing the same things as other caregivers, as different care recipients have different needs.


PHYSICAL DISABILITY

What is a physical disability?

1. A long-term loss or impairment of part of an individuals' body function.
2. This results in a limitation of physical functioning, mobility, dexterity or stamina.
3. Due to the functional loss, the individual will experience the inability to perform Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) such as walking, bathing, toileting, etc. (GPII, n.d.)



What are the causes?

1. Congenital 

Born with or developed one due to inherited genetic problems such as suffered an injury at birth or has issues with their muscles.

2. Aquired 

May be due to an accident, infection or disease or as a side effect of a medical condition

What are the categories?

1. Musculoskeletal Disability



The inability to carry out activities associated with movements of the body parts due to muscular or bony deformities diseases or degeneration.

Examples:

Osteogenesis Imperfecta, Muscular Dystrophy

2. Neuro Musculo Disability



The inability to perform controlled movements of affected body parts due to diseases, degeneration or disorder of the nervous system.

Examples:

Cerebral Palsy, Stroke

Possible effects on the body:

As a result of a specific or certain physical disability, some might have other health conditions which are called secondary conditions. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018)

Bowel and bladder problems



Certain physical conditions can affect the muscles of the bladder and urethra causing the bladder to empty suddenly and without warning.

Pressure soles or ulcers

PWDs with mobility issues are prone to developing pressure sores. These wounds are caused by constant pressure which develop on body parts such as the heel, hip, shoulder and back.

Overweight and obesity



PWDs may find it more difficult to control their weight and be physically active due to medications and physical limitations.

Fatigue

Feeling of tiredness or lack of energy as a result of medication and/or physical condition.



handy tips

FINANCIAL
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FINANCIAL PLANNING

Caring for someone with disabilities may make it seem impossible to set aside funds for the future.

However, a little goes a long way. Saving money doesn't mean you have to quit spending altogether.

Start following these tips and start prioritizing some financial goals over others!

2. DETERMINE THE AMOUNT OF MONEY YOU WANT TO SAVE

Think of a long-term financial goal and write down the amount of money you want to save per month. Remember, be realistic!!

Tip!: You can use SMART Goals

1. WRITE DOWN YOUR MONTHLY INCOME AND EVERYDAY EXPENSES

Once you get your monthly paycheck/ allowance, write it down in a finance notebook. At the same time, write down in detail all your expenses.

3. DIVIDE YOUR EXPENSES AND DETERMINE THE BUDGET BEFORE SPENDING IT

- a. Cost of living - food, utility bills and housing
- b. Other expenses such as transportation, insurance and entertainment
- c. Savings - the remaining amount goes into your savings account in case of a rainy day or for your financial goal in the future!

4. TRANSFER THE AMOUNT EVERY MONTH INTO SEPARATED ACCOUNTS

If you do not have separate bank accounts, just divide the money accordingly into envelopes and safe keep it. Remember to only use what is within the budget unless you really need it.

TIPS WHEN SHOPPING IN SUPERMARKET

- Make a grocery list before shopping
- Use coupons and vouchers to maximize your savings as you shop.
- Look out for promotional items when you go shopping
- Supermarket brands are 10% – 15% cheaper than comparable products of popular brands

NEEDS VS WANTS

A need is something essential in your life while a want is a choice or desire. Before purchasing items, you can ask yourself questions like:

“Do I really need it?”

“Do i already have something similar to it at home that is functional?”

“Do i need it now?”

REVISIT YOUR BUDGET AS NEEDED

Your income, expenses and priorities will change over time. Adjust your budget accordingly, but always have one.



PLANNING MONEY

After looking at the tips on how to plan your finances, lets try to do it by yourself!

Income \$

Total Expenses \$

Savings \$

Helper

\$

Phone bills

\$

Groceries

\$

Internet

\$

Eating Out

\$

Utilities bills

\$

Clothing/
personal
maintenance

\$

Entertainment

\$

Health and
Medical

\$

Wants

\$

Transportation

\$

HANDY TIPS: COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES

“ At the beginning, I did not understand my daughter. However, gradually, I learnt to communicate and understand her. Adding on, now I always talk to my daughter whenever I feel upset because it makes me feel better rather than keeping everything to myself. She does the same as well.”



CAREGIVER OF DAUGHTER WITH
SPINAL CORD INJURY

my reflection:

COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES

Why is communication important?

While caring for your care recipient, there are bound to be misunderstandings or disagreements between the two of you.

Effective communication is key in building and improving the relationship between you and your care recipient to ensure their satisfaction, enhance care recipient's adherence to medical regimes and improve clinical outcomes.

In the long run, this may help reduce conflicts and help you understand your care recipient better.





How to be an active listener?

- Pay attention
Sit up, Open posture, Leaning forward,
Eye contact, Relax
- Show that you are listening
Ask questions to explore the topic further.
This encourages your care recipient to tell you more
- Allow them to finish stating their point first before responding
- Be open, honest and respectful!

How to resolve a conflict?

Take time to relax and clear your mind

STEP 01

Tip! Talking right after an argument may worsen the conflict. Take some time to cool down and compose yourself first.



Tip! This gives your care recipient insight to where you are coming from. Avoid making personal attacks and "you always" statements.



State your concerns about the issue and how it affects you

STEP 02

Discuss in an appropriate venue and time

STEP 03

Let your care recipient have their say

STEP 04

**Practice
effective listening**

**STEP
05**

Tip! open-ended questions usually begins with 'why', 'what' and 'how'



Ask open-ended questions to explore their knowledge, opinion or feelings

Tip! Give recommendations on how to improve yourself and your care recipient's behaviour



Brainstorm solutions

**STEP
06**

**STEP
07**

**STEP
08**

Agree on the best way to resolve the conflict

Tip! Actions speak louder than words! Take action and change! If conflict persists, try getting an opinion from a third party to mediate the tension



What to do when your care recipient is feeling down?

Observe their actions and behaviours

STEP 01

Tip! If they are doing dangerous acts such as self harm, do inform a professional.



Tip! If they don't feel like sharing, ask how you can help them feel better. You can always ask them again once they feel comfortable to share.

STEP 02

Ask them what the issue is



Listen and empathise

Affirm that their feelings are valid. For example you could say, "it is alright to feel this way,"

STEP 03

Fill them with comforting words. Hug them if it is appropriate!



Reassure your care recipient that you will be there for them in times of need.

STEP 04



Tips when communicating with professionals

- Prepare a list of question you wish to ask
- Prioritise the more important questions.
- Clarify if you are unsure of anything.
- Ask for additional written materials such as booklets or brochures if you need them.

Don't withhold, be bold

Sometimes, your care recipient may find it hard to understand your feelings and needs. How do you express yourself such that you receive empathy from them?

Use these three pointers to help get your message across!

- **Feelings**

"I feel _____"

- **Wants/ Needs**

"I want _____"

- **Reach out**

"Can you help me?"



Holding family meetings

Family members need to work together to make decisions. With more family members available to care, the burden of caregiving on you will lessen.

Before the meeting:

- prepare a date and venue
- prepare an agenda

During the meeting:

Make sure everyone is heard, and stay respectful. Avoid any conflicts and end on a good note. Ensure all is on the same page.

After the meeting:

Update those absent, and schedule a next meeting if needed.



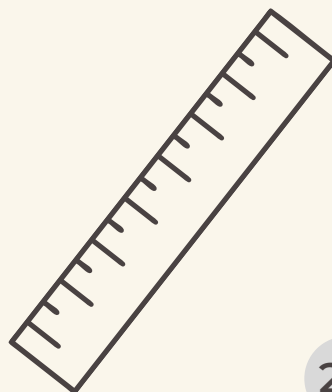
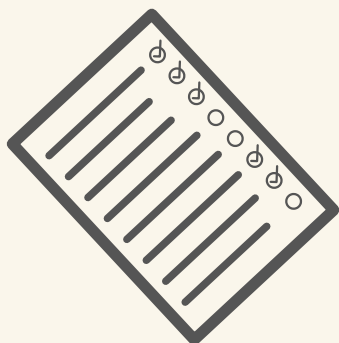
ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS

Why is organising important?

You, as a caregiver, are required to wear many hats. You may be a main caregiver, but you may also be a parent, a student or a working adult. Balancing many tasks may be tough, and you would also need to ensure that you are always at the peak of health!

Being a caregiver can be stressful and time-consuming. Without organising, tasks may pile up, documents may go missing, and things may get messy.

Luckily for you, here are some tips to help you get organised so that your stress is reduced!



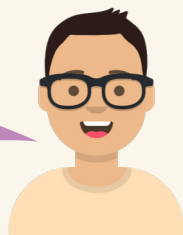
Organisational tips!

- Use a calendar

You can use a colour coding system to help your calendar be more organised.



Tip! Events for your care recipient can be coded as a colour and other personal events can be coded in another colour!



- Labelling

Labelling can help you get organized as all your items can be easily identified.

Labelling medicine

Use a pill organiser to help you, especially if your care recipient has to take medication often times throughout the day.

Labelling files

Important medical documents belonging to your care recipient may be needed in times of unforeseen emergencies.



It is always good to have important documents filed into one folder and clearly labelled so that it would be easy to retrieve, even when you are scrambling in a hurry.

Health Buddy App

SingHealth's Health Buddy mobile application enables you to access health information and services whenever you need to. This app can be crucial in ensuring your care recipient doesn't miss anything important.



Scan the QR code to access it through your phone!

HealthBuddy can:

- Manage your SingHealth appointments
- Register on your mobile devices to save waiting times in clinic
- View and Pay your bills online
- Get accurate medical information on your care recipient's symptoms, condition and medicines

And more!

TIME MANAGEMENT

What is time management?

It is the ability to use one's time effectively or productively. (10 Best Time Management Tips for Caregivers from a True Expert, 2018)

Why is time management important?

Time management is important to get more done with less stress, help you feel in control and meet your goals.

Tips!



- Schedule self care first.

Don't let self care fall to the bottom of your list of things to do. Instead, cut out time for your self care first.

- Plan Ahead.

Planning saves time and reduces stress in the long run because it will help avoid last minute scrambles.

- **Define Roles and Responsibilities.**

When there is more than one person performing caregiving tasks, it is important for everyone to be clear on their responsibilities to ensure there are no mix-ups. When tasks fall through the cracks or there is an overlap, time is wasted because schedules have to be rearranged. This might cause unnecessary tension among family members which could have been avoided.



- **Make A List, Prioritise It and Stick To It.**

Caregiving may be overwhelming and it can be hard to stay focused. Sometimes it may be difficult to sort through tasks to find out what really needs to be prioritised. Having a to-do list will keep you organised as it will show all the tasks in one place. Once you have a list, focus on 3 things per day.

- **Don't Procrastinate.**

Putting things off just makes things harder so resist the urge.



6. Manage Expectations.

It is important to understand what you can realistically achieve. As your responsibilities grow, you cannot expect yourself to get everything done "perfectly". Sometimes it is important to let go and accept that "good enough" is really good enough.

- 1 Thing At A Time.

Stay focused on whatever you're doing. Once you're done, move on to the next thing. If you're working, do your work. If you're relaxing, focus on yourself. You'll feel better and get more done.

- Expect Detours

Know that things don't always go according to plan and crises happen. Know that it is not your fault and that these things are inevitable. Take a deep breath and use your new time management skills to get back on track.



HANDY TIPS: PLANNING AHEAD

“ Although it is a taboo topic, it is important to plan for the future. We have planned what happens for multiple scenarios, especially about End-of-Life care and what happens if we become unconscious, and are unable to make decisions for ourselves. This can be easily done at hospitals or pro-bono lawyers.”



CAREGIVER FOR DAUGHTER
WITH MUSCULAR DYSTOPHY

my reflection:

ADVANCE CARE PLANNING (ACP)

ACP is a series of discussions to plan for your care recipient's future health and personal care. With this, your care recipient will be in control of their lives and will know that their wishes will be honoured when they are unable to speak for themselves!



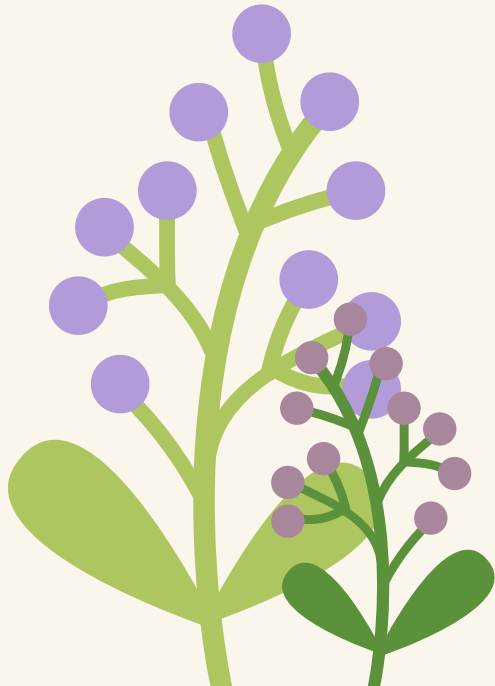
ACP involves:

- **Sharing** your care recipient's personal values and beliefs
- **Exploring** what they might or might not want in certain medical situations
- **Choosing** someone (*yes, that might be you!*) to voice out their wishes if they can no longer do so in the future
- **Noting** down their wishes and sharing their plan

Why is ACP important?

Making your care recipient's wishes known saves you or any other loved ones from having to guess about the type of care they might prefer, in the event that an unexpected medical emergency happens.

In these tough situations, ACPs can help doctors care for your care recipient in a way that matches their life values and goals. This would also enable you to have assurance and a peace of mind that you are fulfilling your loved one's wishes.



How do I go about planning for an ACP?

Step 1:

- Initiate the conversation and share with your care recipient about how ACP can benefit them
(Turn to page 19 to find out how to initiate a family meeting!)

Tip!

Some questions to ask your care recipient may include:
"What gives your life purpose?"
"How do you feel about using a machine to stay alive?"
"Where do you want to be cared for if you become very sick?"

Step 2:

- If your care recipient is keen to explore ACP, allow them to share their wishes and goals for care in the future.
• This will help them better help them, as well as yourself, to understand their decisions.



Step 3:

- Help your care recipient record their decisions and wishes on a document.
- It will be beneficial to discuss your decisions with healthcare professionals so as to know possible alternatives that can ease the process of planning

Tip!

Ask your care recipient to choose one or two trusted individuals to be their voice. Request your care recipient to involve these trusted individuals as they make their plans.



For more information, visit:
www.livingmatters.sg
through the QR code above

Step 4:

- Remind your care recipient to update their plans if their preferences change. This may be relevant if there are new experiences or changes to their health.
- Always know where the ACP is kept so that you are able to retrieve it if the situation arises.

Other alternatives to plan ahead

Lasting Power of Attorney:

Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) appoints donee(s) to make financial or personal welfare decisions for your care recipient if they lose their mental capacity.

How do you sign up?

The LPA is a legally-binding document that needs to be certified by a Certificate Issuer after you've completed it, Visit the link below for a list of Certificate Issuers.



For more information, visit:
www.publicguardian.gov.sg
through the QR code.





caring for self

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INTRODUCTION

Caregiving is physically and emotionally exhausting. The duties of caregiving are stressful and since most care recipients are in need of long term care, it can be really damaging for the caregivers to be under that amount of stress for long periods of time. Therefore, it is important for caregivers to remember to recharge their batteries before it leads to stress and burnout.

What is the difference between stress and burnout? Stress, by and large, involves too much: too many pressures that demand too much of you physically and mentally. Burnout, on the other hand, is about not enough. Being burned out means feeling empty and mentally exhausted, lack of motivation, and beyond caring.



Before you help others, it is important that you first help yourself. When your needs are taken care of, the person you care for will benefit, too. Caring for yourself is one of the most important things you can do as a caregiver and yet, it is often forgotten.



When you get the support you need, you will be less vulnerable to problems, including depression, anxiety and burnout. Your mental and physical state will affect the quality of care you are able to provide. Therefore, when you are healthy, you will be able to look after your care recipient better.



Throughout this section, there will be activity pages that you can complete such as colouring, word search and crossword puzzles. These activities are designed to keep you entertained and to pick your brain. When you're feeling overwhelmed with your caregiving duties, use them to take your mind off it so be sure to try them out!

CARING FOR SELF: BOUNDARIES SETTING

“ I am able to step away from a chaotic situation to calm myself down. This enables me to de-escalate the situation better.”



CAREGIVER OF
MOTHER WITH STROKE

my reflection:

BOUNDARIES SETTING

What are boundaries?

Boundaries are invisible lines that mark the limits to an area. Boundary setting essentially means setting a clear distinction between what you can and cannot do and what you want and do not want to do.

Why is it important to set boundaries?

- Caring for someone else has the potential of leading to stress, fatigue, burnout and losing sight of your personal life.
- Thus, setting boundaries allows you to maintain an emotional connection to the person you are caring for without the negative feelings towards your care recipient.



How to set boundaries

- Identify what is stopping you from caring for yourself. Ask yourself this question: "Am I being selfish if I put my needs first?"
- Prioritise and try to have your own private time. Your time and energy should be divided for both your care recipient and yourself.
- Reach out to others if you need help. You do not have to suffer alone and there are people you can ask for assistance when needed.
- Only do what you can; do not overdo or over commit. Doing more than you can only result in burnout. Instead, learn to prioritise and to say 'no'.

What to do if boundaries are crossed?

Restate your boundary in a positive way. It is our responsibility to tell those closest to us what is okay and what is not okay.



STRESS

What is caregiver stress then?

Caregiver stress syndrome is a condition characterized by physical, mental and emotional exhaustion. It typically results from a person neglecting their own physical and emotional health because they are focused on caring for an disabled loved one. (Ingber, 2018)

What causes it?

It might be:

1. Constant demands of caring for a person who has a serious disability
2. Lack of boundaries between your role as a caregiver and a spouse, child, or other loved ones.
3. Unrealistic expectations on yourself, thinking that you can do it all and refuse to ask for help.
4. Overwhelming needs of your loved one, or the financial and other resources needed to care for someone with a long-term illness or disability.

Checklist

Are you:

- Anxious, depressed, irritable?
- Feeling tired and run down?
- Having difficulty sleeping?
- Prone to overreacting to minor nuisances?
- Suffering from new or worsening health problems?
- Having trouble concentrating?
- Feeling increasingly resentful?
- Drinking, smoking, or eating more?
- Neglecting responsibilities?
- Cutting back on leisure activities?

If these sound like you, take some time to reflect which areas in your life are causing you stress. You can use the stress wheel on the next page to help with your reflection.

Stress wheel



How do I manage my stress?



1. Recognize warning signs early. Refer to the checklist regularly and know your own warning signs, and act to make changes. Don't wait until you are overwhelmed.



2. Identify sources of stress. Ask yourself, "What is causing me to feel stressed?" or refer to the stress wheel and reflect.



3. Identify what you can and cannot change. Remember, we can only change ourselves. When you try to change things that you have no control over, you will only increase your sense of frustration.



4. Understand your needs and take action. Taking some action to reduce stress gives us back a sense of control.

Break time!

FEEL FREE TO COLOUR THE PAGE



It is not how much you do, but how much love you put in the doing." – Mother Teresa

CAREGIVER BURNOUT

What is caregiver burnout?

This term is used to explain a state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion caused by the prolonged and overwhelming stress of caregiving. (Smith, 2019)

Signs of caregiver burnout

Here are some warning signs that show you may be suffering from caregiver burnout. It is important to recognize these signs so that you can quickly deal with the problem and prevent burnout. If these sound like you, please seek help.

Do you suffer from caregiver burnout? Look at the checklist at the next page.



Checklist

Do you:

- Have less energy as compared to previous months?
- Seem to catch every cold or flu that's going around?
- Feel constantly exhausted, even after sleeping or taking a break?
- Neglect your own needs, either because you're too busy or you don't care anymore?
- Revolve your life around caregiving without feeling satisfaction?
- Have trouble relaxing, even when help is available?
- Get impatient and irritable with the person you're caring for?
- Feel helpless and hopeless?

If this sounds like you, you might be experiencing burnout. However, there are some things you can do to find motivation again.

How to deal with caregiver burnout?

1 Positive thinking

Remember that no matter the situation, you aren't powerless. This is especially true when it comes to your mindset.

Instead of dwelling on things you cannot control—like a particular situation, **work towards accepting** them and **shift your attention** onto the things you can control. Try and remind yourself to **look on the brighter side** of things.

For example, how caregiving has brought you closer to your care recipient. Remember to **celebrate the small victories**.



2

Get the appreciation you need

Feeling appreciated can go a long way towards not only accepting a stressful situation, but enjoying life more. It is nice to be shown appreciation every once in awhile, but if your care recipient does not or is unable to show appreciation towards you, take some time to **acknowledge your work** and **reward yourself**. Try **making a list** of all the ways your care giving is helping your care recipient. This is to **validate yourself** of your hard work when validation from others is hard to come by.



I am doing well!



3

Ask for caregiving help

Don't try to do it all alone. Don't be shy about **accepting help**, look into **respite care** and try to get family members involved. You may want to **divide tasks** like medical responsibilities, finances and bills and groceries, for example.

If you have concerns or thoughts about how to improve the situation, express them and **start a dialogue** with them. (*We discuss how to hold a family meeting on page 19*) Remember that people will be less likely to help if you give orders, or insist on doing things your way. Therefore, try to **let go a little**.

"Sometimes asking for help is the most meaningful example of self-reliance."

~U.S. Senator Cory Booker

I don't feel so well today. Can you help me bring Ma for her appointment instead?

No problem!



ABOUT ME

AM I DOING ENOUGH?

LET'S THINK POSITIVE! :)

What is the problem I am facing now?

How can I look at this in a positive way? (maybe what you have done well!)

Listing what I have done to help my care recipient!

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

***For each thing identified, reward yourself!**

If I need help, these are who I can call/ask:

-
-
-

I AM DOING ENOUGH!

Break time!

PREVENTION OF CAREGIVER FATIGUE

S S T E L H P M A P D A E R I F P
L E X E R C I S E E B V I T M Q X
E N M L F P H O B B I E S S F K J
E S B Z H C Y C M Y T I M E O F F
P Y C I S U M Q H J M A S T J N Q
P G I W G Q R M L Y Y N G M Z U I
T S B P T X T E B X D I V O Q T B
A Z M A F J Q E L V X R R S Y R X
K U E I C S G H Y A W T A L K I W
E G D O X A K J Q Z X L T T A T L
C D I T S S H Z R C S A A Z I I G
L W T S L D E X W L I K T B P O Z
A K A H M Y E J L C B P A I Q N N
S M T X U N A X H C T H I E O S V
S J I B C S D I V S P M S Q R N E
E S O Z J F P R B X Y F X Y R B K
S F N N Z Y B W G Y V Z L C N R P

breaks	exercise	hobbies	hydration
massage	meditation	music	nutrition
read pamphlets	relaxation	sleep	taichi
take classes	talk	time off	yoga

Use this word search to learn ways on how to prevent yourself from getting tired out! Check your answers on page 141.



CARING FOR SELF: SELF-CARE METHODS

“I usually write down all my feelings in my phone to destress. Since I also care for my mother with dementia ,I will make a point to go out and have some time to myself to take care of my own mental well-being.”



CARING FOR SOMEONE ELSE
WHILE BEING A SELF CAREGIVER
WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

my reflection:

SELF-CARE METHODS

Self-care is not simply about limiting or addressing stressors but also about enhancing your overall well-being.

There are common aims to almost all self-care efforts:

1. Taking care of physical and psychological health
2. Managing and reducing stress
3. Honouring emotional and spiritual needs
4. Fostering and sustaining relationships

In the following pages, we have different self-care methods that might inspire you. Pick a few to try out for yourself!



HEALTHY EATING

What is a balanced diet?

A balanced diet is where your body obtains all the essential nutrients in the correct proportions.

Why is it important to have a healthy and balanced diet?

It's easy to forget about your own meals and to prioritise healthy habits like nutrition. However, nutrition can also be an important factor to prevent burnout as chronic stress has been linked to increased inflammation in the body.



How can you plan a balanced and healthy diet for yourself?

Base your diet on the
"My Healthy Plate" recommendation.



It was designed by the Health Promotion Board (HPB) to give Singaporeans a visual guide for creating balanced and healthy meals. It shows the right amounts of foods and portions to eat at each meal.

If you have specific dietary requirements or existing medical conditions, please check with your doctor whether My Healthy Plate meets your specific dietary needs. (Health Hub, n.d.)

Fill 1/2 your plate with fruits and vegetables

They are naturally low in fat, and high in fibre, vitamins and minerals which can help lower your risk of developing heart disease, stroke, and other conditions.



Fill 1/4 with whole-grains

Wholegrain foods such as brown rice and wholemeal bread contain vitamins, minerals and dietary fibre which are good for you and helps you feel full longer.



Fill 1/4 with meat and others

This includes bean products, poultry, seafood, eggs and low-fat dairy products. Aim for 2 servings of fish per week.



Use healthier oils

Select healthier unsaturated fats and oils (such as canola oil or olive oil), and limit saturated and trans fat intake. But do remember, even healthier oils should be consumed in moderation.

Choose water

Make water your drink of choice. It quenches thirst better than sugar-sweetened beverages. Besides, drinking too many sugar-sweetened beverages can lead to weight gain.

Reduce salt intake

Limit your daily intake of salt to 1 teaspoonful daily, whether from sauces, table salt or processed foods.

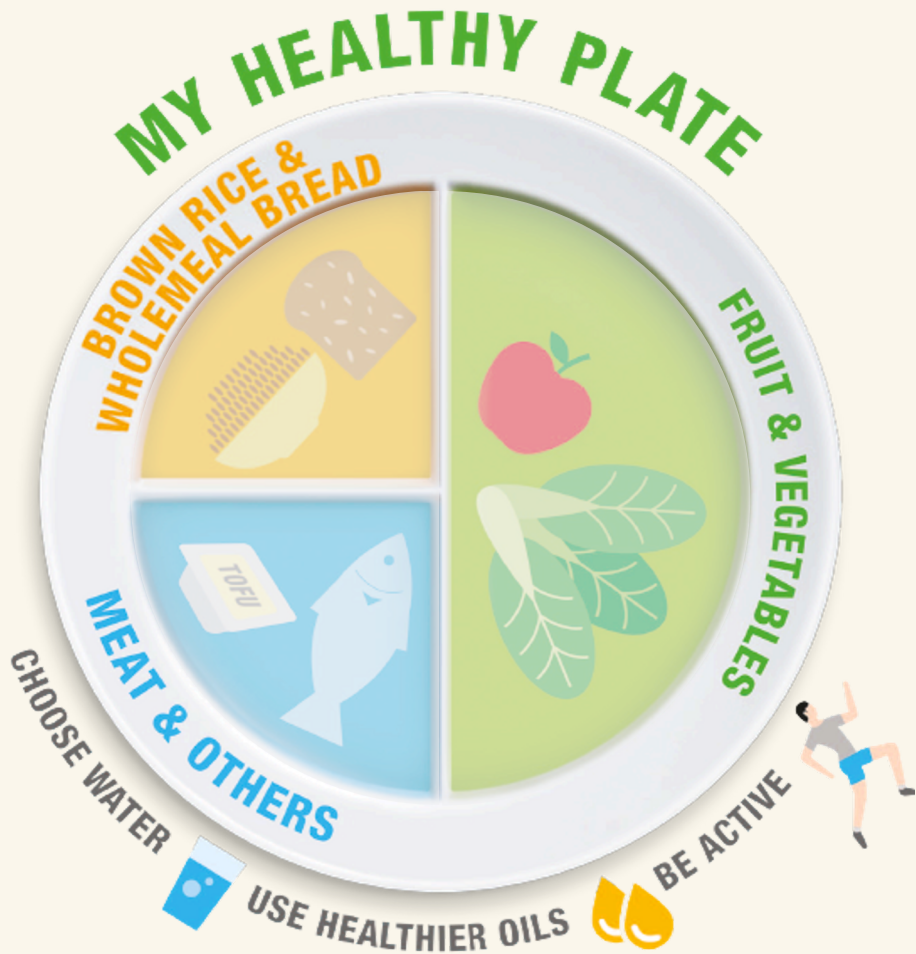
Reduce sugar intake

Added sugar can be found in sweetened drinks, fruit juices, jam and processed foods. Limit your daily intake of added sugar to 8 – 11 teaspoons.

Drinking in moderation

Healthy adult men should not drink more than 2 standard drinks a day, and women no more than 1 a day. A standard drink is 1 can of beer, $\frac{1}{2}$ a glass of wine or 1 shot of spirits.

Try making your own meal plan by creating a meal on your own using the plate below!

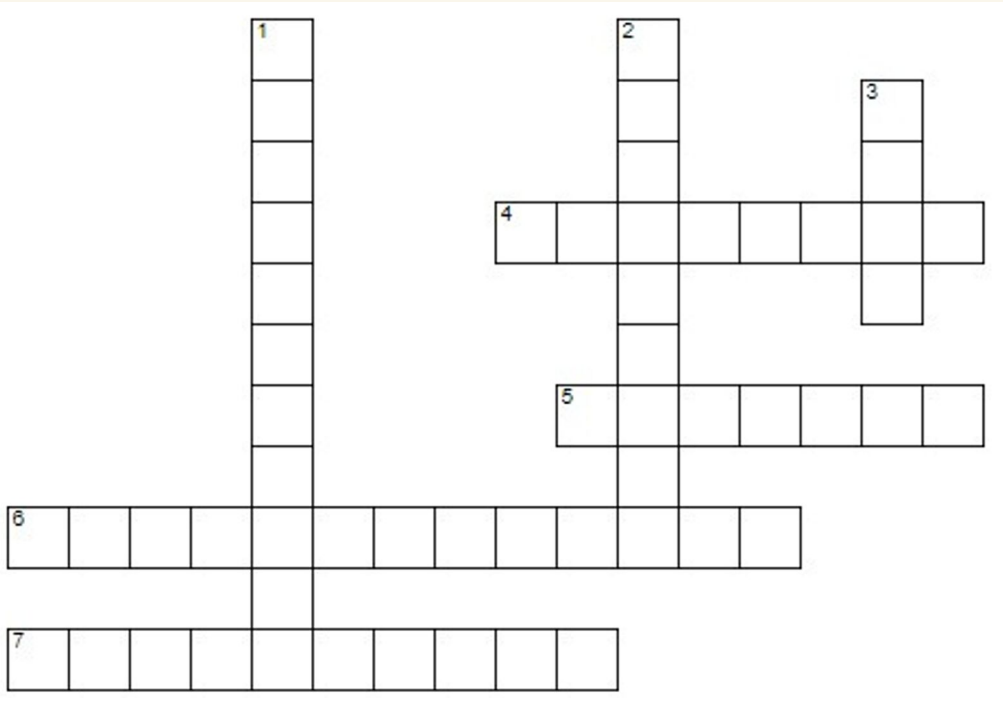


"Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live." — Jim Rohn

Break time!

SELF-CARE CROSSWORD

Use this crossword to find out your knowledge on self-care, then check your answers on page 142.



ACROSS

- 4 (_____) keeps me healthy. When in doubt, sweat it out.
- 5 Having (_____) helped me when I felt overwhelmed with caregiving.
- 6 (_____) ensures that I can find help within my reach.
- 7 Having (_____) ensures that I do not do too much or too little in terms of caregiving

DOWN

- 1 Eating (_____) helps me keep fit and nourished.
- 2 Spending (_____) gives me the space to take care of myself when I am stressed.
- 3 When I am tired, I make sure that I try to (_____).

MOVING YOUR BODY

Why is exercise important?

- Provides physical benefits
- Reduces the impact of illness and chronic disease.
- Enhances mobility, flexibility, and balance.
- Improves sleep.
- Boosts mood and self-confidence.

Here are some tips for you to be physically active:

- Take exercise breaks throughout the day. Try three 10-minute “mini-workouts” instead of 30 minutes all at once.
- Make an appointment with yourself to exercise. Set aside specific times and days of the week for physical activity.
- Exercise with a friend and get the added benefit of emotional support. Instead of chatting with a friend over coffee, chat with them while walking, stretching, or strength training.

Make cleaning count

Cleaning can be a drag, but since you have to do it anyway, you might as well make it count! Do workouts such as lunges and squats while finishing your household chores. For example, you can tone your arms by keeping them raised at a 90° angle in front of you as you carry the laundry basket from room to room.

An app for your phone!

Healthy 365

This application by the Health Promotion Board (HPB) enables you to lead a healthier lifestyle amongst all the busy days that surround you. This app allows you to track your daily steps, count corresponding calories burned, track your heart rate, and much more! You can also earn points when you win challenges, and earn rewards when participating in the Eat, Drink, Shop Healthy Challenge.



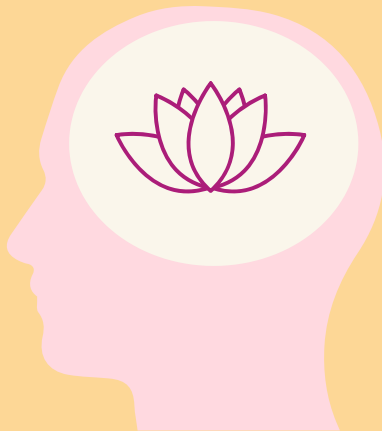
scan the QR
code to access it
through your
phone!



HOBBIES

Why are hobbies important in caregiving?

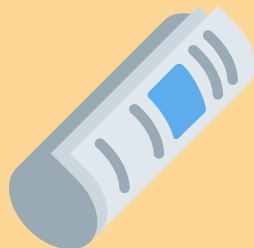
Attending to someone's daily needs is not only physically demanding but also takes a toll on your mental and psychological health, making caregiving a daily challenge. There is no doubt that you need to step out every so often to treat or do something for yourself. If you have been pursuing interests before, there is no need to give them up because of caregiving. In fact, it becomes a necessity to continue your hobbies for they are helpful in boosting your energy levels and reducing stress. Having a hobby stimulates your mind, improves functioning and assists in providing a better quality of care for your care recipient.



Hobbies you can explore

Reading

You can definitely binge some books that can take your imagination away for some time. Try short stories or articles that you can read and finish right away if your care recipient needs your attention promptly. If you have more time, you can read novels or poetry.



Watching shows

If you like watching movies or shows, this can be a good option for you. As long as you can still keep an eye on your care recipient, or if he does not require your full attention, then you can take time to watch some videos. If your care recipient is sleeping, you can watch the series on your mobile devices with your headsets on, so as to not disrupt their sleep.



Listening to music

Listening to your favourite music is a sure way to de-stress and reset your mental energy. Listen to soothing music with your headset on or any music of your preference. While listening to music, you can still keep your eyes on your care recipient.



Trying a new physical activity

Almost nothing is more effective than exercising. However, exercising does not have to be a chore. In fact, when you try something new, it can become a fun new hobby. If you want to get more exercise in but don't enjoy the treadmill, try signing up for a yoga class, join a bowling league, or dropping in on a dance class.

Growing plants

Gardening offers therapeutic benefits such as increased flexibility and mobility. Gardening gives you something to nurture, and it enhances your interest in nature and the outdoors. You can also join a gardening group that gives you the opportunity to connect with others who love to garden.



What are some other hobbies I have currently, and what other hobbies can I think of apart from the ones listed previously?

Break time!

ACTIVATE YOUR BRAIN JUICES WITH THIS SUDOKU PUZZLE!

Answers for sudoku on page 142

5	4			6			7	8
3		6	1	8			2	
	9	2			4	5		
6		9				7		5
7	1		4	9	6			
4		8			3	1		
				3		9		
1	8					2	5	7
9	5			2	7			

*"Be determined to handle any challenge
in a way that will make you grow."*

— Les Brown

POSITIVE SOCIAL MEDIA

It can be hard not to get caught up with social media on days when we might be feeling down, vulnerable, or simply overwhelmed. Remember that you have control over what you choose to see, so choose to make it a positive experience.



Unfollow or mute accounts

Unfollow accounts that leave you feeling less than positive after viewing it. It does not have to be immediate but after some repetition of negative feelings, ask yourself why you are following them and if it's really beneficial to your life. If the answer is no, unfollow and move on.

Find accounts that inspire



Find accounts that inspire you to be more creative, think outside the box, and embrace who you are. Don't waste time with anything less.



Know your privacy settings

Privacy on social media is a big concern. Choose who can see your posts and visit your page.

Approve of anything shared on your page by others before it goes live. There are a lot of ways to stay social and still have that piece-of-mind.

Share other's work



Social media networks are a great tool for sharing your own work or thoughts, but they're also great for helping others share. Use your social media to spread the word about causes or events you care about, help your followers get their work out in the world, or just share those things you think your audience will enjoy.



Be positive

The easiest way to ensure you have a good experience on social media is by staying positive with how you use it. Whether it's sharing something you read, posting your own thoughts or commenting on others, keep a positive outlook. There's no need to be hurtful or insulting on social media. If you run into others who are negative, simply ignore or block them.

Schedule or limit Social Media Time



If you are spending more time on Facebook or Instagram instead of working or paying attention to those around you, consider limiting your social media access.

Scheduling social media might help, telling yourself you can only go on for an hour each day. Or you could declare social media off-limits at certain times during the day e.g. no phones during dinner and charge your phone outside of your bedroom at night.

Stop lurking and engage



An easy way to make social media a positive force in your life is to **engage** instead of lurk.

People who comment and connect with friends are happier on social media than people who scroll without commenting. However, remember to stay positive and supportive, and don't make a negative comment online.






Don't believe everything you read

If Facebook is your primary source of news, it's time to branch out. Consider the author of each post, article or blog you read and read it carefully before accepting information as truth and stamping your approval on the content.

Try writing down a positive thought!

← Create Post POST

 **Bridget**

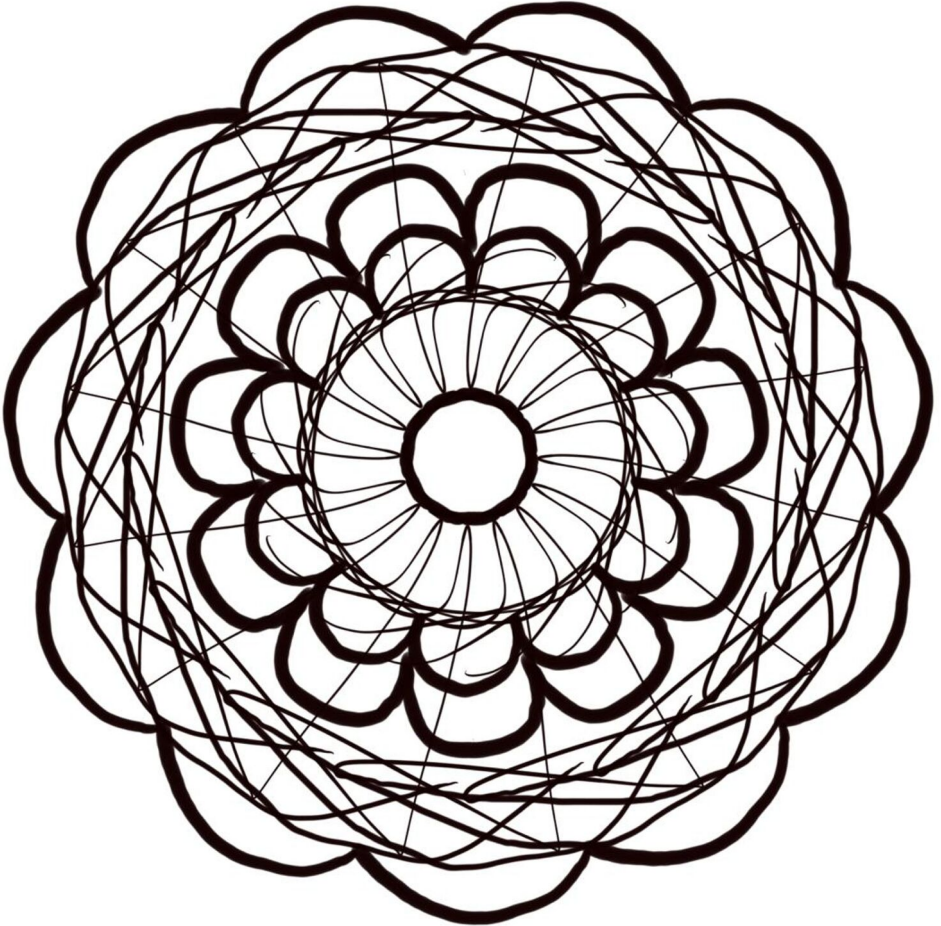
 Only me ▾  + Album ▾

What's on your mind?

Now that you are done, post it on your facebook!

Break time!

FEEL FREE TO COLOUR THE PAGE



• *"From caring comes courage." – Lao Tzu* •

CARING FOR SELF: CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

“I have been so blessed in this life. I feel that I should give back to the community. After observing the issues that people with disabilities have, I understand and want to help them. This is why I research more information about the financial or funding schemes and affordable medical products that will help people like me to cope better.”



SELF CAREGIVER WITH
SPINAL CORD INJURY

my reflection:

CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

Why is it important to connect with others?

As a caregiver, it can be difficult to prioritise your social life. However, it is important to maintain social connections to feel less isolated and prevent burnout. Close connections are important to your well-being. Put time and energy into building your relationships with others to cultivate and maintain them.

Ask yourself:

Are you getting enough **face-to-face time** with your friends?

What are you doing to nurture your relationships with friends and family?

Establishing a social support network

Even with strong support, caregiving can be such a demanding and lonely job making isolation common. Whatever the situation is, there are ways to find support, and this support is essential to a caregiver's well-being. How can you enhance your support networks?



1. Create a team

When there are many family members who are responsible for your care recipient, consider how you could divide the work. This may be in terms of money or time. Ensure that everyone is part of the team and no one ends up taking on most of the work.

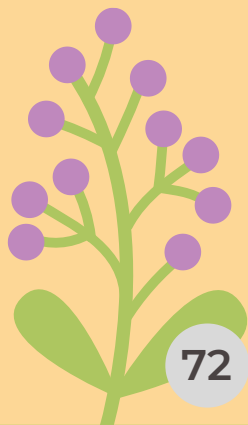
2. Share the situation, even when it's difficult to do so

Take the time to share the difficulties of a loved one's condition with extended family and friends. Reaching out may be difficult, especially if you feel like you might "burden" others. However, unless people know your challenges, they won't be able to help.

3. Accept help

It can be tempting to want to handle things yourself, but that will most likely be impossible without burning out. You'll need a lot of help, and many people find fulfillment in helping out. So if friends or family offer a meal, take them up on it.

Remind yourself that you are not a burden, and that you deserve to be heard. It may be difficult but don't give up trying to reach out. Not everyone will volunteer to help, but some will happily do so if they are given a chance.



Answers on
page 142

Break time!

picture 1



spot the 7
differences!

picture 2



SELF ESTEEM

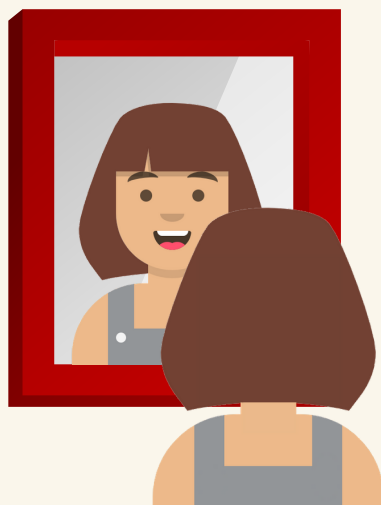
What is self esteem?

Self Esteem is confidence in one's own worth or abilities.

Why is self esteem important?

When a caregiver has a good self esteem, they will be able to see himself or herself in a positive way and they will be able to face caregiving challenges more positively. Thereby, reducing caregiver stress.

*"Never underestimate your problem or your ability to deal with it."
— Robert H. Schuller*



How to improve self esteem?

1. Eliminate self criticism and introduce self compassion

Self criticism is when you act or criticizing one's own fault or shortcomings or when you say something bad about yourself.

We tend to be more compassionate to our friends than we are to ourselves. Therefore, when this happens, ask yourself what you would do if it was your friend in this position instead.

2. Learn to accept compliments

When you hear a compliment, try not to say: "no la no la, where got." etc. Instead of rejecting the compliments, you can learn to say: "thank you".



3. Acknowledge your success



A lot of times, we would belittle our own achievements. We might say that “anybody can do this, it is not a big deal.” These kind of self talk can hurt our self esteem. Celebrate these small achievements and think about how much you have improved, grown and changed. You can also try writing your achievements down.

4. Affirm your real worth

Make a list of qualities you have that are meaningful in the specific context. Then choose one of the items on your list and write a short paragraph about why the quality is valuable and likely to be appreciated by other people in the future. Do the exercise every day for a week or whenever you need a self-esteem boost.

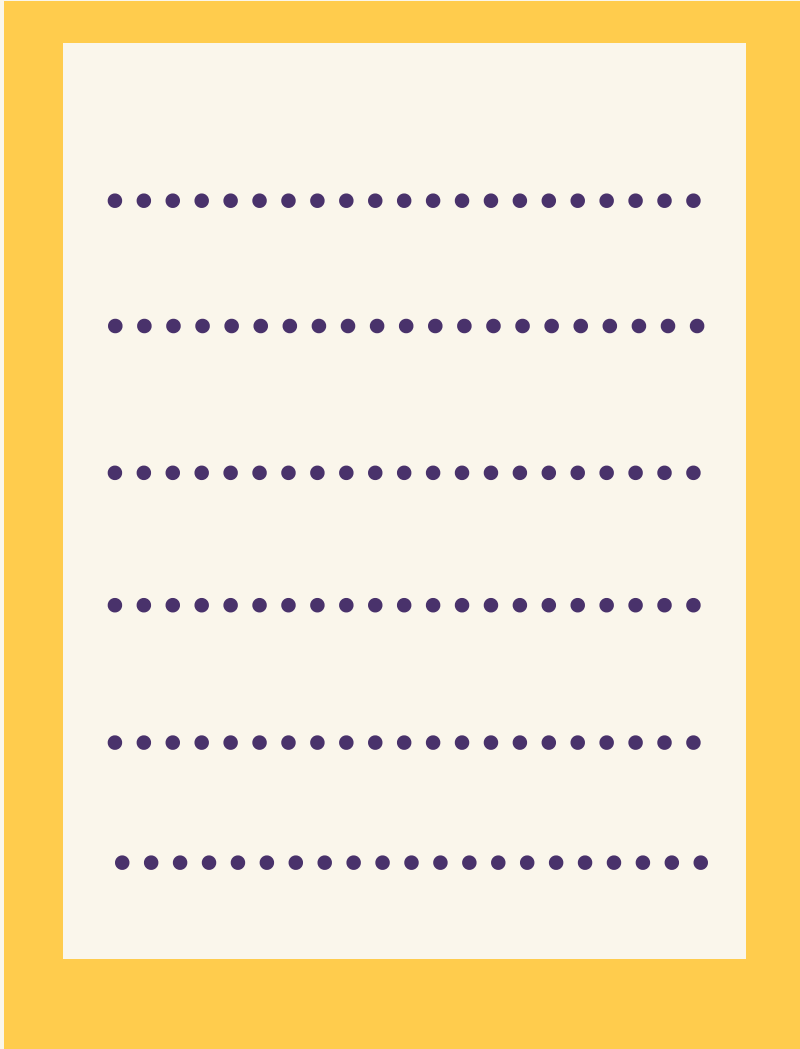
example:

I am organised.
I am able to keep
my home tidy and
plan my time well.
.....



try make your own list
in the next page!

What are some qualities I have that makes me special and proud of myself?



A large yellow rectangular frame containing six horizontal rows of dark purple dots, intended for writing.



Break time!

picture 1



spot the 6 differences!

picture 2



EMOTIONAL REGULATION

What is it?

Many emotions surface when you take on the job of caregiving. Some happen right away and some don't surface until you have been caregiving for awhile.

It is important to remember that you are important. All of your emotions, good and bad, about caregiving are not only allowed, but valid and important.

Caregivers are often reluctant to express these negative feelings for fear they will be judged by others or themselves. (Emotional Side of Caregiving, n.d.)

Why is it important?

If you don't deal with ALL of your emotions, they will keep tugging at you until you stop and acknowledge them.

For example, not paying attention to your feelings can lead to poor sleep, illness, trouble coping, stress eating, substance abuse, for example.

Only when you admit to your feelings, you can then find productive ways to express and deal with them, so that you can cope better in the future.

Some examples of emotions you may experience as a caregiver

Frustration

Frustration leads to a higher likelihood of losing your temper. Sometimes, as a caregiver, you feel that you can't do anything right no matter how hard you try. You are more likely to get frustrated when tired.

Anger

It is normal to feel angry when caregiving for someone who may or may not be willing to receive help. It's not always possible to be in perfect control of your emotions. Learn to walk away and give yourself a "time out." Identify supportive people you can talk to who will listen as you vent about the things that happened.

Tiredness

Sleep is often disturbed by the care recipient or because you can't fall asleep due to caregiver stress.

Sleep has to be a priority. As a caregiver, you also need to think about yourself. Just pushing through each day will eventually cause you to burn out. Emotional issues can weigh you down and impact not only your ability to cope and provide care, but they can also harm your health and well-being.

Guilt

Guilt when caring for care recipients comes in many forms. There is guilt over not doing enough. There is guilt over not loving or even liking the care receiver at times. Sometimes caregivers also feel guilty about thinking of their own needs and see themselves as selfish.

You need permission from yourself to forgive yourself. You have to accept that you are not perfect. We all carry around a lot of expectations. Consider changing guilt into regret.

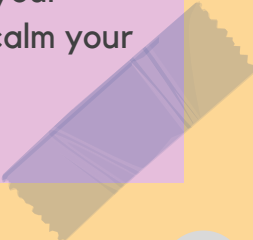


Fear/Anxiety

Caregivers take on a huge amount of responsibility, not only for the day to day care of the care recipient, but also for all the other things that “might” happen while being a caregiver. Scaring ourselves about the “what ifs” may keep us from enjoying the present.

This fear often leads to anxiety. Anxiety can emerge as an impulse to run away, not sleeping, heart palpitations, or the urge to cry. Pay attention to your anxiety—it is our body’s early warning system that something isn’t right. When you feel anxious: Stop. Breathe. Meditate. Make some tea. Anything that will give you a break from what is happening in the moment.

Therefore it is important to have contingency plans. It might make sense to have a back up caregiver in mind in case something should happen to you, or to think about how you would handle predictable medical emergencies based on what disabilities your care receiver has. When you get anxious, talk to someone who knows your situation and can give you perspectives and calm your fears.



Depression/Sadness

This is feeling hopeless or helpless, the inability to sleep, or trouble getting up and facing the day. And sometimes it makes you want to cry. Depression is treatable and should be taken seriously. Talk to a professional if you think you might be depressed, join a caregiver support group, find a counselor who understands caregiving, and ask for help from friends and family. You can also exercise as it is proven way to relieve some of the symptoms of depression.

Grief

Watching the care recipient not being able to do things that used to be easy and natural is sad. We also grieve for them, the person who used to be and our relationship with that person. We often need to grieve the loss we are experiencing on a daily basis.

Sometimes creating a ritual can be helpful. Writing on a piece of paper the things they can no longer do, then rip the paper into small pieces as a way of letting go may help. We tend to want to avoid the sadness that comes with grief, but allowing ourselves to feel it promotes healing.

EMOTIONS TRACKER

Try tracking your emotions for one month! For each petal, colour it with the emotion that represented your day.

Month:

Happy

yellow

Sad/depressed

blue

Grief

grey

Angry/Frustrated

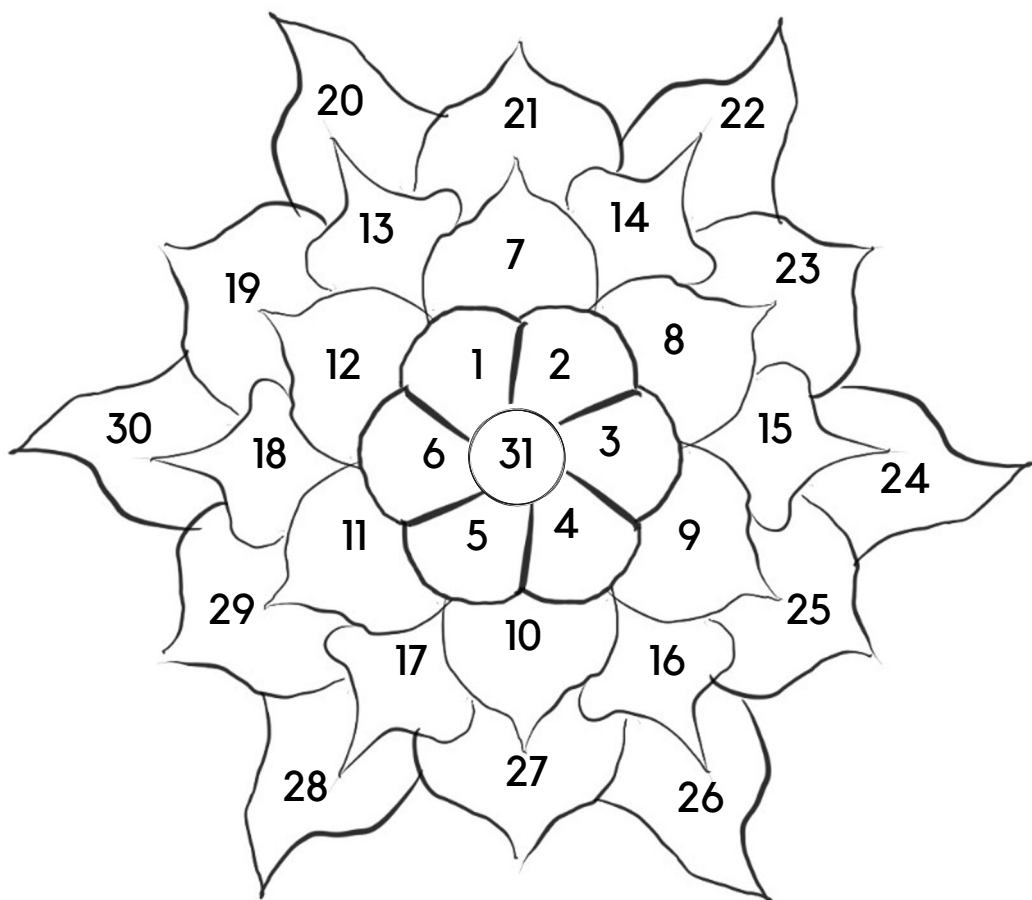
red

Tired

green

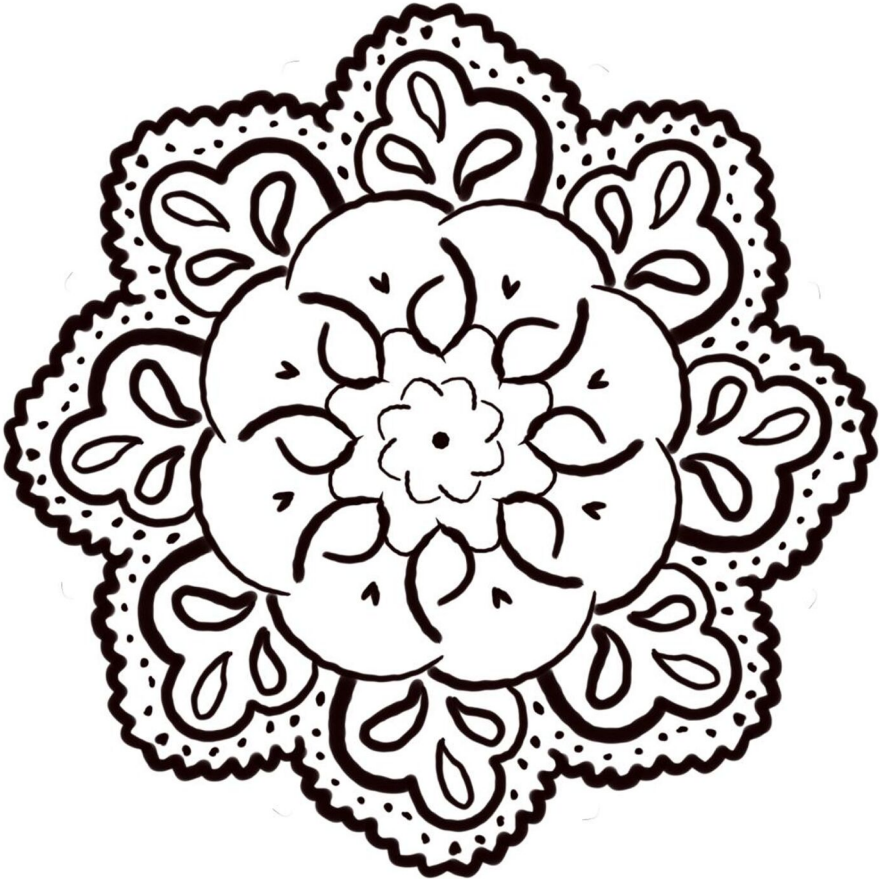
Fearful/Anxious

purple



Break time!

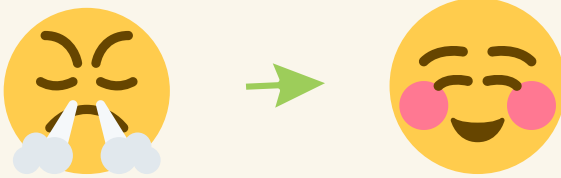
FEEL FREE TO COLOUR THE PAGE



"Be a rainbow in someone else's cloud."

— Anonymous

BREATHING TECHNIQUES



What is deep breathing?

Deep breathing is when you breathe deeply, the air coming in through your nose fully fills your lungs, and the lower belly rises. (Jewell, 2018)

Benefits

- Relaxes you and reduces stress
- Lowers and stabilizes your heart rate
- Lowers your blood pressure
- Lowers your chances of getting injured
- Manages depression, anxiety and sleeplessness

How to practice tummy breathing?

- Sit in a comfortable position or lie flat on a comfortable, flat surface.
- Relax your shoulders.
- Put a hand on your chest and a hand on your stomach.
- Breathe in through your nose for about two seconds. You should experience the air moving through your nostrils into your abdomen, making your stomach expand.
- Purse your lips (as if you're about to drink through a straw) and exhale slowly for about two seconds.

Tip! Lie on your stomach with your head resting on your folded hands. Inhale deeply so you can feel your abdomen pushing against the floor.



DATE:

—

**LIST DOWN AND DRAW THE THINGS YOU
ARE THANKFUL FOR!**

MY REFLECTION EXERCISE

MEDITATION

What is meditation?

Meditation is a means of transforming the mind. When meditating, focus on your mind and breathing in the present moment.



Why meditate?

Meditation develops concentration, clarity, emotional positivity, and a calm seeing of the true nature of things. With regular work and patience, you can work towards a profoundly peaceful and energised state of mind. Mindfulness helps caregivers manage negative emotions and build their emotional strength.



Benefits of meditation

- Reduces stress and controls anxiety
- Promotes emotional and physical health
- Lengthens attention span
- May reduce age-related memory loss

How do you meditate?

- Sit or lie comfortably. No interruptions during the session.
- Close your eyes.
- Breathe naturally.
- Take a few moments to settle into your body.
- Focus your attention on **your breathing and on how the body moves with each inhalation and exhalation**. Let your mind focus on your body and nothing else.
- Maintain this meditation practice for two to three minutes to start, and then try it for longer periods.



MINDFULNESS

What is mindfulness?

It is the awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally.

Why is it important?

The purpose of mindfulness is to focus on the present and to avoid dwelling on ruminations about the past or anxious thoughts about the future. Mindfulness helps caregivers stay in the present so they can manage their negative emotions and build their emotional strength.

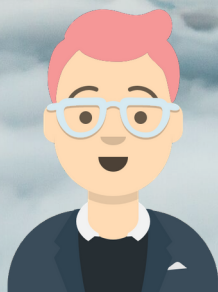
MINDFULNESS TECHNIQUES

Mindfulness Meditation

1. Set aside a 1 to 5 minute period of time, and tell yourself that you will not engage your thoughts during that time. As thoughts pop up, just notice them and let them go.
2. As you notice your mind thinking about things, try to let those thoughts go without judging them and return your attention to the experience of breathing.

Tip! The point of this meditation is to become more aware of your thoughts without engaging them.

You can focus on anything in the present, such as sounds, a picture you like, or a candle flame, so long as you don't have to think about it.



Mindful Eating Exercise

You will learn how to increase your awareness while eating, which can increase mindfulness and improve your eating habits overall.

1. Use your tongue to feel the texture of your food and to gauge the temperature.

Ask yourself, "How does it really taste? Is this something I really want? Does it satisfy my taste buds?"

2. Become aware of repetitive habits and the process of eating. Notice how you eat. Fast? Slow? Are you stuck in any mindless habits, such as eating a snack at the same time each day, multi-tasking while you eat, or eating the same foods over and over again?

Ask yourself the following questions: "Do I have any ingrained habits concerning how I snack? When I pick up my fork, what stands in the way of eating wisely?"

Compassion Meditation

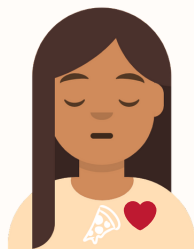
You can improve self-compassion by working on unhelpful thoughts and by practicing this meditation.

1. Take a few deep breaths and ground yourself in the present.



2. Focus on your heart and visualise softness, warmth, and compassion glowing in your chest.

Repeat these phrases to yourself: "May I be happy. May I be well. May I be safe. May I be peaceful and at ease."



3. After a minute or two, visualise extending this energy to include somebody you care deeply about.

Now repeat the phrases, filling in the person's name. For example, "May my wife be happy..."



4. Next, visualize extending the energy to somebody you feel neutrally about. Repeat the phrases with his or her name. For example, "May the cashier at the store be happy..."

Repeat the phrases with his or her name. For example, "May the cashier at the store be happy..."



5. Now extend the energy to somebody for whom you have negative feelings. Repeat the phrases with his or her name.

Name of person you have negative feelings for




6. Finally, visualise extending this energy to the rest of the world.



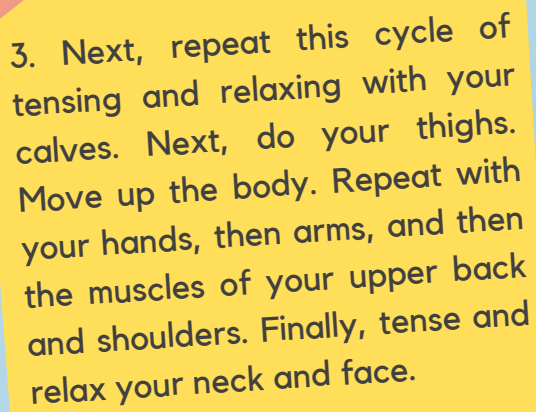
Progressive muscle relaxation

This exercise will help you recognize when your muscles are tense and teach you how to return your muscles to a relaxed state.

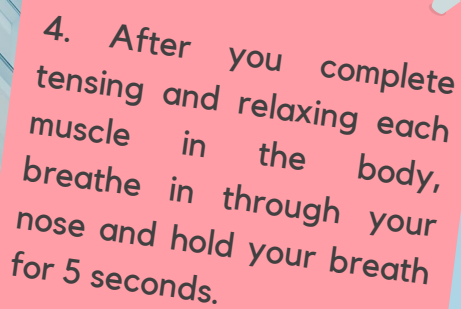
-
- 1. Breathe normally and let your body just 'be'. Take note of how your body feels from your toes to your head. Does any of your body feel tense, stiff, or achy?
-



2. Close your eyes and notice how your toes feel. Tightly curl your toes to the point where you feel tension, as if trying to squeeze a small ball between your toes and the ball of your feet. Hold this toe curl for 10 seconds. Release your curl and let your toes spread. Notice how your toes feel when they are free from tension.



3. Next, repeat this cycle of tensing and relaxing with your calves. Next, do your thighs. Move up the body. Repeat with your hands, then arms, and then the muscles of your upper back and shoulders. Finally, tense and relax your neck and face.



4. After you complete tensing and relaxing each muscle in the body, breathe in through your nose and hold your breath for 5 seconds.

Body Scan Meditation

This meditation can help you become more accepting of areas of pain or discomfort.

Get into a comfortable position. You might lie down on the floor or in bed with a pillow under your head. Take a few deep, grounding breaths and gently bring your awareness to the present.

Pay attention to a specific body part, such as your left foot. Notice the sensations you feel, but try not to get lost in thought. Gradually let your focus move to different body parts—each leg, your hips, stomach, chest, hands, arms, and head.

Become aware of your mind's tendency to get lost in thought. When you notice this happening, just let the thought go and gently redirect your attention back to your body.



MY REFLECTION EXERCISE

DATE:

|

**LOOK BACK AT THE MEDITATION
EXERCISE AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING
QUESTION:**

How are you feeling right now?
What are you thinking right now

JOURNALLING

What is journalling?

Simply put, it is "writing life" down. Writing in a journal is **an opportunity to pause** to write down what's on your mind. If you've never kept a journal before, writing down your thoughts and feelings may seem awkward at first; it just takes some time and commitment to make journalling into a positive habit.

Why do it?

1. Allows you to clarify your thoughts and feelings, thereby gaining valuable self-knowledge
2. A good problem-solving tool; oftentimes, one can hash out a problem and come up with solutions more easily on paper.
3. Journalling about traumatic events helps one process them by fully exploring and releasing the emotions involved, which also allows the experience to become fully integrated within one's mind.

Benefits!



DEFLECTS
ANGER



DEVELOP
SELF WORTH



ENHANCES
PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT



PROVIDES
TIME FOR
REFLECTION



REDUCES
STRESS

These are simple steps to start!



1. Consider a medium that appeals to you



Choose the one that encourages you to journal!



2. Develop a ritual for journalling



Choose what's right for you, it can be anytime & anywhere!



3. Don't bother with the style

The words that fall on the page are purely yours. Don't focus on grammar and spelling or how long or short, or the readability of your work is. Let your thoughts flow and focus on the thoughts and emotions.



4. Evaluate your feelings fairly

Don't be reluctant to relive negative experiences. However, end your journalling sessions with a few words: potential solutions to your problems, things you appreciate or give you hope in your life, relieving the stress of the negative experiences.



5. Re-read your work

Review your journal entries, with the intention of discovering meaning and memory. Your journal may show you the way out of a personal challenge.

These are a few practices you can start off with!

Gratitude Journal

A daily gratitude journal is where you list three or more aspects of your day in which you are grateful.

3 things I am thankful for!!

1.

2.

3.

Reminder to myself!

This relieves stress you have in your life already and create a more positive mood at the moment. You can cheer yourself up with a few pages of reminders for the things you have to appreciate in life in the future as well!

Try it out for a week
in the next page!



WEEKLY GRATITUDE JOURNAL

SUNDAY

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

TUESDAY

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

THURSDAY

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

SATURDAY

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

MONDAY

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

WEDNESDAY

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

FRIDAY

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

GOOD
TIMES

Emotional Release

WHAT MADE ME HAPPY?

WHAT MADE ME SAD?

WHAT MADE ME ANGRY?

HOW CAN I LOOK AT THE SAD THINGS BETTER?

SOME SOLUTIONS I CAN TAKE

AN ENCOURAGEMENT FOR MYSELF!



PEN DOWN MY FEELINGS

Bullet journal or personal planning journal

Some people simply keep journals to track what they need to do each day, goals they have, memories they created, and other things they don't want to forget.

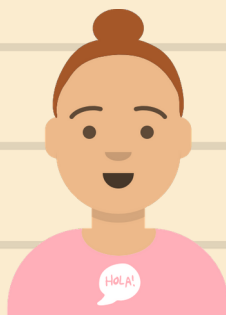
SEIZE THE DAY!

MY DAILY PLANNER

MY TASKLIST	MY APPOINTMENTS	NOTES TO SELF

Being more organized and balanced is a great way to feel less stressed as it can help keep your mind uncluttered and help you to remember what's important to you.

You can use the template in the next page as well!



Daily Planner

GOALS

-
-
-
-
-

TO DO

! URGENT !

NOTES

AM

NOON

PM

MENU



It is important to have **SLEEP**



The recommended
minimum for the
average adult is
7 to 7.5 hours per night

Without sleep, you will:

1. Have difficulty focusing
2. Experience a reduction in your reaction time
3. Compromise your immune system
4. Cause health problems like diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular disease
5. Be unable to process emotions and keep them in check

Tips to have a better sleep!



Devote your bedroom to sleep

Try to avoid sleeping in the same room as your care recipient. If you must, get a sleep mask to block out blinking lights from any health equipment. Keep it cool, dark, and quiet. Ensure that your mattress is comfortable and supportive.



Cultivate good habits

Avoid heavy meals or heavy exercises late at night, and limit your caffeine and alcohol past the afternoon. These substances interfere with your sleep, and they're no friend to stress, either. Also turn off all your electronics at least 30 minutes before bed.



Creating a bedtime

30 minutes to an hour should be enough time to calm your mind and prime you for a good sleep. Whatever your bedtime routine looks like, the most important thing is that it should be simple, relaxing, and consistent.



Watch your sleep schedule

Follow a regular sleep schedule where you go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends. Try to avoid napping too much, too. While naps might seem like a harmless way to squeeze in more sleep, it's actually better for you to get all of your sleep at once. If you nap during the day, limit it to a 30-minute power nap.



Have a bedtime routine

It's simply a way to train your brain to start winding down for the night. Stimulating activities like tidying the house or answering emails can make it harder to fall asleep. A little transition time, where you focus on calming activities, can make a huge difference when it's time to turn out the lights and go to sleep.

Checklist on ideas to try before sleeping

Taking a warm shower

Putting on your favorite pajamas

Having a cup of herbal tea or warm water

Eating a light bedtime snack

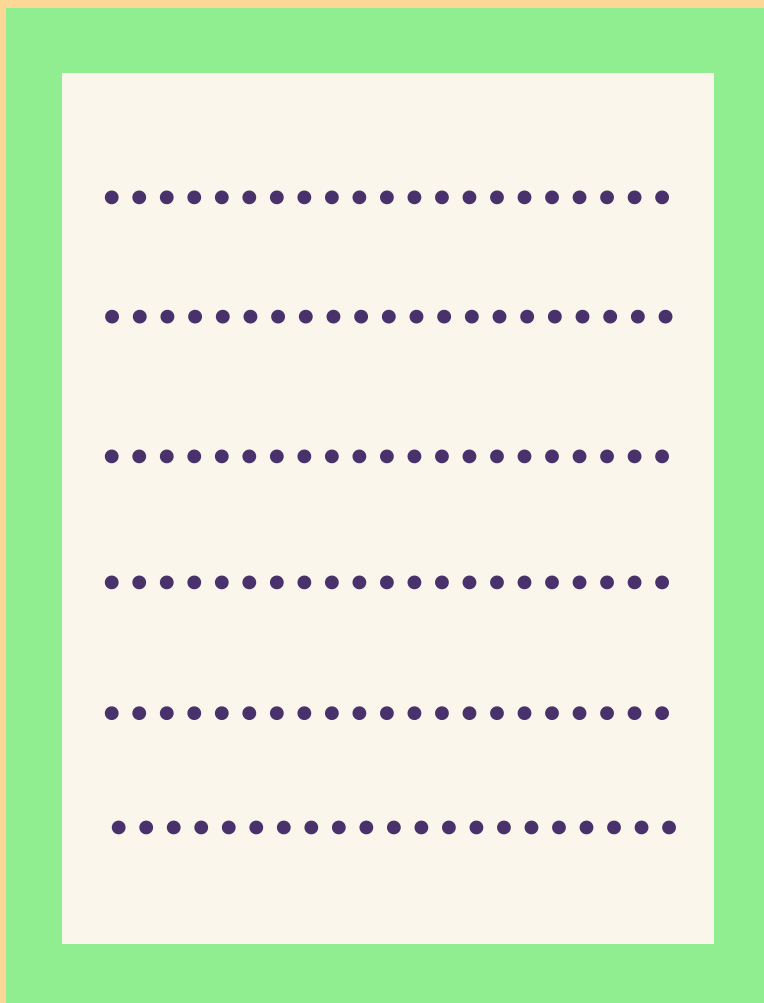
Reading or listening to an audiobook

Journalling or Meditating



My night time routine:

(plan out your night time routine and try following it!)



"A good laugh and a long sleep are the two best cures for anything."

~ Irish Proverb

Break time!

Self-care methods bingo

Try out this bingo by crossing out the activities you have completed and see if you manage to get a bingo! Good luck~

word search	watch TV	making friends	meditation	colouring
crossword	exercising	reading	positive self-image	meditation
listening to music	practicing mindfulness	FREE SPACE	planning your day	eating healthier
compliment yourself	deep breathing	meditation	sleep	sudoku
using social media	deep breathing	doing something you like	express your feelings	journalling

GOAL SETTING

What is a goal?

According to the online Oxford Dictionary, a goal is defined as "an aim or desired result".



Setting goals or deciding what you would like to accomplish in the next three to six months is an important tool for taking care of yourself. We will be talking more about self care goals but you can adapt these tips for every aspect of your life!

Why is it important to set self-care goals?

A self-care plan can help you enhance your health and wellbeing and to manage your stress. Learn to identify activities and practices that support your wellbeing and help you to sustain positive self-care in the long-term.

Setting self care goals will help with:



1. Clarity and focus

Knowing your self-care goals is the first step to understand what you need to achieve them.



2. Improving the use of your time and focus on decision making

You will be able to decide what is a priority for you and what is not.



3. Peace of mind

Deciding your self-care goals can help organise your ideas, open your eyes to different perspectives and priorities, and lead you into commitment and action.



4. Measurable results

Setting realistic and clear goals allows you to celebrate your milestones.

How to set self-care goals?

Understand your goal
(Keeping in mind that a goal
is a broader statement
under which you can set
tasks to achieve that goal)

STEP
01

Understand **why** it is
important for you to
achieve this goal

STEP
02

Think about **what** you
need (resources,
knowledge etc.) in
order to reach this goal

STEP
03

Think about **how** you
would know when you've
reached your goal

STEP
04



Tips for goal setting



1

Set Timelines for the Goals

Focus on what you want to achieve in the short to medium term (3-6 months). You can always revisit your list of goals as the situation changes, and once you have a good handle on the short to medium term, you can then start to address longer term goals.



Visualise it

The more you visualise a goal or dream you have, the more chances of it actually happening. Try keeping a journal to write down all the things you'd like to achieve, day by day, or for the year. Writing things down is a sure way to keep yourself motivated about achieving your goals.



2

3

Be accountable

No goal can ever be achieved without dedication. Try to do a little every day for yourself to achieve goals and you'll see progress.



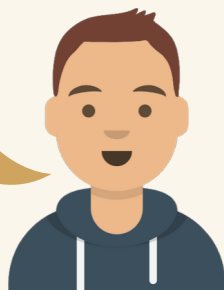
Some goal examples you can set

- Take a break from caregiving.
- Get help with caregiving tasks like bathing and preparing meals.
- Engage in activities that will make you feel more healthy.

4



For more information about how to set SMART goals, you can access <https://www.independence.edu> through the QR code



Goal setting example

Start date: 2nd August

End date: 2nd December

MY GOAL

Goal: Feel more healthy

Possible action steps:



Make an appointment for a physical checkup.



Take a half-hour break once during the week.



Walk three times a week for 10 minutes.

Now that you have an idea of how to set goals, flip to the next page to start setting your own goal!



Start date:

End

Date:

MY GOAL

Goal:

Possible action steps:





*other
resources*

CURRENT
SCHEMES **122**

RESPIRE CARE **128**

USEFUL NUMBERS **139**

ANSWERS FOR
PUZZLES **141**

CURRENT SCHEMES

Assistive Technology Fund (ATF)

This provides subsidies for persons with disabilities (PWDs) to purchase assistive technology devices to enable independent living.

Individuals will be given subsidy of up to 90% of the cost of assistive technology devices, subjected to a lifetime cap of \$40,000.

Amount of subsidy will be determined according to the applicant's gross household income.

(Figures accurate as of 2019)

These are example of ATs:



For more information, please visit:
<https://www.sgenable.sg/>
through the QR code.

Senior Mobility and Enabling Fund

Provides holistic support for seniors to age in place by extending subsidies to Singaporean seniors who:

- Require mobility and assistive devices for daily independent living
- Are receiving government-funded home care and care within the community and are needing home healthcare items

Application for each device category is only once per lifetime.

Assistive devices include:

- Walking sticks
- Wheelchair
- Commode
- Hospital bed

Home healthcare items include:

- Catheters
- Milk supplements
- Adult diapers
- Wound dressing



For more information, please visit:
<https://www.silverpages.sg/>
through the QR code.

Enhancement for Active Seniors (EASE Direct Application)

Installation of improvement items to make flats more elderly-friendly and improve mobility and comfort for elderly residents.



For more information,
please visit:
<https://www.hdb.gov.sg/>
through the QR code.



Caregiver Training Grant

- A \$200 annual subsidy for caregivers to attend approved courses to better care for their care recipient(s).
- The subsidy is provided for **each care recipient** every financial year (April to March the following year).

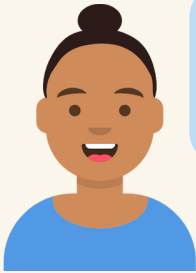
(Figures accurate as of 2019)



For more information, please visit:
<https://www.silverpages.sg/>
through the QR code.

Foreign Domestic Worker Grant

- Monthly \$120 cash payment for families who need to hire FDWs to care for their loved ones who require permanent assistance with at least 3 ADLs
- Each household is eligible up to two FDWs caring for two family members at the same time



For more information, please visit:
<https://www.silverpages.sg/financial-assistance/> through the QR code.

(Figures accurate as of 2019)

FDW Levy Concession for PWD

- Allows families to pay \$60 instead of \$300 of monthly levy
- Each household is eligible to get concessions for up to two FDWs caring for two family member at the same time

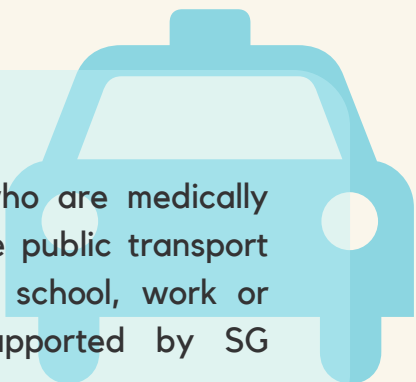
(Figures accurate as of 2019)



For more information, please visit:
<https://www.silverpages.sg/> through the QR code.

Taxi Subsidy Scheme

A subsidy scheme for PWDs who are medically certified and are unable to take public transport and can use taxis to travel to school, work or employment-related training supported by SG Enable.



For more information, please visit: <https://www.sgenable.sg/> through the QR code.

Public Transport Concession Scheme for PWDs

- Concession card for PWDs for travelling using public transport
- 25% discount or more off adult fares for all basic bus and train services fares
- No additional fares for distances beyond 7.2km
- Option to purchase a Hybrid Concession Pass (HCP) with unlimited rides on basic bus services and trains at \$60 per month



For more information, please visit: <https://www.sgenable.sg/> through the QR code.



ComCare Long-Term Assistance / Public Assistance Schemes

A scheme for those permanently unable to work because of old age, illness, disability or family circumstances and need help to support themselves.

Note: The children must be supporting their own families and each has a household income of \$1,900 and below, or per capita household income of \$650 and below.



For more information, please visit: <https://www.msf.gov.sg/> through the QR code.



(Figures accurate as of 2019)

ComCare Short-to-Medium Term Assistance

A scheme for those who need temporary financial assistance as they are not able to work because they are sick, temporarily disabled, or have to be a full-time caregiver.



For more information, please visit: <https://www.msf.gov.sg/> through the QR code.



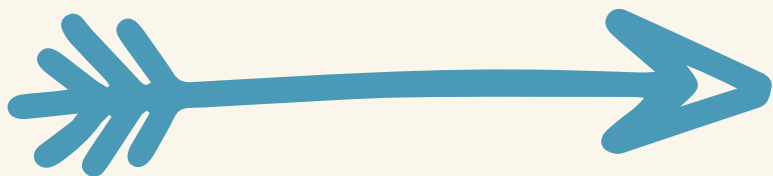
RESPITE CARE

What is respite care?

Respite care refers to services provided by a health care agency that allows a primary caregiver a temporary break from caring for their care recipient.

How to get respite care?

Ever felt like you need a break in your caregiving journey, but could not because you simply have no time, or do not have anyone to take over your caregiving duties? Caring for someone requires a huge amount of commitment and it is normal to feel tired, be it physically or emotionally. Here are some suggestions on where to seek help during this healing period.



1. Silver Pages E-care Locator

You may use this locator to find out more about respite services near you and share your preferences during the application process.

Please scan the QR code to access this locator.

You may also contact any Service Providers directly to understand more about their type of services and for private admissions (without subsidies).



2. Social Worker or Case Manager

If you are in touch with either a social worker or a case manager, you may approach them if you wish to apply for any respite services.

3. Day Activity Centre (DAC)

DAC provides full-day care and community living skills training for individuals with disabilities aged 16 and above (those below 21 will need consent).

DAC is designed to equip persons with disabilities with daily living skills and community living skills to maximise their independence.

It provides a form of respite for caregivers during the day and support caregivers who are working in the day. (Short-term respite care is also available).

Seek assistance from your social worker for assistance in submitting an application for DAC.



Please scan the QR code to view a list of organisations that have a DAC.

4. Centre-based weekday/weekend respite services

This means that they will be taking care of your care recipient during weekdays or weekends should you require relief from your caregiving duties. Please refer to the tables below for the possible day care centres you can enrol your care recipient in.

<i>Centre-based weekday respite services</i>			
Region	Area	Participating Day Care Centres	Contact number
Central	Toa Payoh	Abilities Beyond Limitations and Expectations Limited (ABLE)	68017460
North	Woodlands	Vanguard Senior Care Centre (Woodlands)	6540 9200
South	Chinatown	Yong En Care Centre	6225 1002
	Telok Blangah	Active Global Active Aging Hub @ Telok Blangah Parcview	6536 0086
West	Ayer Rajah	St Luke's Eldercare (Ayer Rajah)	6262 1501
	Bukit Batok	St Luke's Eldercare (Bukit Batok)	6266 6615
	Clementi	St Luke's Eldercare (Clementi)	6872 2210
		Jamiyah Senior Care Centre	6776-8575
	Ghim Moh	Active Global Active Aging Hub @ Ghim Moh Edge	6536 0086
	Jurong	NTUC SilverCircle (Boon Lay)	6259 5804
NTUC SilverCircle (Jurong West)		6715 6767	
	Keat Hong	St Luke's Eldercare (Keat Hong Centre)	6891 0370

(Figures accurate as of 2019)

Centre-based weekend respite services			
Region	Area	Participating Day Care Centres	Contact number
Central	Serangoon	NTUC Silver Circle (Serangoon Central)	6289 8581
		NTUC Silver Circle (Ci Yuan)	6385 4975
	Marine Parade	St Luke's Eldercare (Marine Parade Centre)	6284 1089
North	Yishun	St Luke's Eldercare (Nee Soon Central Centre)	6759 9053
	Sembawang	Sunshine Welfare Action Mission (SWAMI) Home	62576117
North East	Punggol	St Luke's Eldercare (Sumang Central Centre)	6244 8031
South	Telok Blangah	SASCO Day Activity Centre for the Elderly (DACE)	6276 8713
		Active Global Active Aging Hub @ Telok Blangah Parcview	6536 0086
East	Changkat	St Luke's Eldercare (Changkat Centre)	6789 9956
	Changi	Peacehaven SPICE @ Changi	6546 5678
West	Clementi	SASCO Integrated Eldercare Centre	6273 5183 / 64640342
	Hong Kah North	SASCO Hong Kah North Day Care Centre	6425 0462
	Keat Hong	St Luke's Eldercare (Keat Hong Centre)	6891 0370

(Figures accurate as of 2019)



For more information, please visit https://www.healthhub.sg/a-z/medical-and-care-facilities/12/respite_care#2 through the QR code.

5. Nursing homes

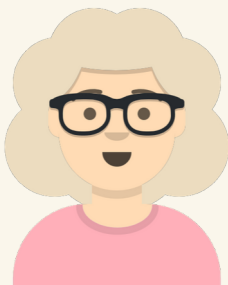
Nursing Home Respite care providers are able to provide 24/7 help for a fixed period of time (*usually a minimum 7 days to 30 months per year*) for your care recipient should you require a break.

Nursing Homes			
Region	Area	Participating nursing homes	Contact Number
Central	Balestier	Orange Valley Nursing Home	6250 6636 / 6258 0123
	Toa Payoh	United Medicare Centres	6258 4848
	Queensway		6479 5888
	Braddell	Econ Nursing Home	6487 3133 / 6226 1188
	Bukit Merah	NTUC Health Henderson Home (elderly)	6270 6654
North	Marsiling	Orange Valley Nursing Home	6362 7333 / 6362 5340
	Woodlands	Vanguard Care Home	6540 9200
		Man Fut Tong Nursing Home	+65 3157 1151
North East	Yio Chu Kang	Econ Nursing Home	6752 0038

(Figures accurate as of 2019)



For more information, please scan the QR code.



<i>Nursing Homes</i>			
Region	Area	Participating nursing homes	Contact Number
	Buangkok		6385 6860
	Recreation Road		6382 8463
East	Changi	Orange Valley Nursing Home	6545 5977 / 6545 5649
	Simei		6260 0020 / 6260 1590
	Chai Chee	Econ Nursing Home	6441 6811
		NTUC Health Nursing Home	6812 8960
	Geylang East	NTUC Health Nursing Home	6708 8600
West	Clementi	Orange Valley Nursing Home	6873 9988 / 6873 9803
	Hillview	United Medicare Centres	6760 1555
	Upper East Coast	Econ Nursing Home	6445 8838
	Choa Chu Kang		6769 8878
	West Coast	Jamiyah Nursing Home	6776 8575
	Jurong West	NTUC Health Nursing Home	6708 8400

(Figures accurate as of 2019)

If you need respite care within one to five working days, please refer to this link to view the nursing homes that you may want to contact.



6. Home care services

Care@home by NTUC health

- Home personal care services
- Home nursing services
- Home therapy services
- Home medical consultation
- Interim caregiving services

Contact number: +65 6715 6715



ABLE Respite Services

- Centre-based respite services

Daily programmes are conducted for their care recipients between Mondays and Fridays from 10:30 am to 4:30 pm, except public holidays.

- Home-based respite services

For caregivers who are home-bound because of the limitation of their care recipient

Regular home-based respite provides a steady and reliable schedule where a nurse would go into the homes to care for the care recipients.

A value-add service is a befriending programme, Person-2-Person (P2P). P2P programme is complimentary.

Contact number: +65 6801 7460

(Figures accurate as of 2019)

7. Emergency respite care

Sometimes, it is difficult to predict when you will require respite care. For example, you may fall ill all of a sudden but are at a loss because there is no one to help to take over your caregiving duties. Here are some suggestions on what to do during this period.

1. Find a trusted friend, family member or neighbour, who:

- has an extra pair of keys to your house
- is aware of the type of care your care recipients require.

On your part, it is helpful if you leave a note somewhere in your house that includes the Do's and Don'ts when caring for the care recipient, or perhaps the type of medicine they need to consume.

2. Call an agency that provides emergency respite care. Here are some agencies that provide this service:

- Orange Valley

Offers emergency respite care but placement is subject to available vacancies at applicant's selected nursing home and the submission of latest medical records and chest x-rays

- Abilities Beyond Limitations and Expectations Limited (ABLE)

Emergency home-based respite allows the caregiver who is suddenly taken ill to recuperate while a healthcare professional attends to the bed-bound care recipient.

Planning ahead for respite care

Go Respite is a new pilot programme that aims to encourage you to plan ahead in terms of respite options for both yourself and your care recipient, ensuring that the needs of both you and your care recipient will be met. Through this programme, you are able to pre-enrol your care recipient into your preferred nursing home, or senior care centre, thus shortening the waiting time needed to receive accessible respite care.

The pre-enrolment will be valid for 2 years upon completion and you will need to update your status thereafter. Please note that pre-enrolment does not guarantee placement. Admission to the service is subject to vacancy and care recipient's medical condition is stable with no significant change from the point of pre-enrolment.

How to pre-enrol

1. Talk to your care recipient and family to select a suitable respite care option, based on preferences on location and duration of care.

2. Choose your preferred respite care option and provider.



3. Fill in the pre-enrolment form (in the QR code) and submit it to AIC either by email, post or walk-in to any AICare Link Branch or government structured hospitals.



4. Apply for Household Means Testing (if applicable).



Note: You do not need to pre-enrol if your loved one is already visiting a senior day care centre. Please approach your regular day care provider should your loved one require respite care.

Note: You will need to complete a household means test when you pre-enrol, if you **do not currently have a valid means test** or if your current means test validity is expiring. Please note that household means test for community care services differs from the means test that is done for inpatient services in the hospitals.

AIC will send you an acknowledgement letter upon receiving your application. When you receive the acknowledgement letter, please contact your preferred service provider to schedule an assessment. The service provider will also advise you on the necessary information that will be needed when you activate the service.

Always remember that it is okay to take a break if you need it. Do not forget that you are human before anything else, and you need to take care of your own needs too. It is only when you have time to rest that you can come back stronger and much more energised.



USEFUL NUMBERS

General Helplines

Ambulance (Non-Emergency)	1777
Civil Defence (Fire / Emergency Ambulance)	995
Police	999
ComCare Call	1800-222-0000
Suicide Hotline: Samaritans of Singapore (SOS)	1800-221-4444

Caregiver Support

AWWA Centre for Caregivers	6511-5318
Caregiving Welfare Association	6466-7957
Caregiver Association Of Mentally Ill (CAMI)	6782-9371
Dementia Helpline (Alzheimer's Disease Association, Caregiver Support Group)	6377-0700
TOUCH Caregivers Support	6258-6797

(Figures accurate as of 2019)

Services Helplines

Agency for Integrated Care	6603-6800
Association of Women for Action & Research (AWARE)	1800-774-5935
Care Corner Counselling Hotline	1800-353-5800
Cerebral Palsy Alliance Singapore	6585-5630
Community Psychogeriatric Programme (CPGP) by Changi General Hospital	6850-1840 / 6850-1841
Dementia Helpline (Alzheimer's Disease Association)	6377-0700
HCA Hospice Care	6251-2561
Institute of Mental Health (IMH) Helpline	6389-2222
Lions Befrienders Service Association	1800-375-8600
SAGE Helpline for Seniors	1800-555-5555
Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH) Helpline	1800-283-7019
SG Enable	1800-858-5885

(Figures accurate as of 2019)

Answer for puzzles

Word search

Across

- Exercise
- Hobbies
- Support systems
- Boundaries

Down

- Healthy Food
- Time Alone
- Rest

Crossword

S	S	T	E	L	H	P	M	A	P	D	A	E	R	I	F	P
L	E	X	E	R	C	I	S	E	E	B	V	I	T	M	Q	X
E	N	M	L	F	P	H	O	B	B	I	E	S	S	F	K	J
E	S	B	Z	H	C	Y	C	M	Y	T	I	M	E	O	F	F
P	Y	C	I	S	U	M	Q	H	J	M	A	S	T	J	N	Q
P	G	I	W	G	Q	R	M	L	Y	Y	N	G	M	Z	U	I
T	S	B	P	T	X	T	E	B	X	D	I	V	O	Q	T	B
A	Z	M	A	F	J	Q	E	L	V	X	R	R	S	Y	R	X
K	U	E	I	C	S	G	H	Y	A	W	T	A	L	K	I	W
E	G	D	O	X	A	K	J	Q	Z	X	L	T	T	A	T	L
C	D	I	T	S	S	H	Z	R	C	S	A	A	Z	I	I	G
L	W	T	S	L	D	E	X	W	L	I	K	T	B	P	O	Z
A	K	A	H	M	Y	E	J	L	C	B	P	A	I	Q	N	N
S	M	T	X	U	N	A	X	H	C	T	H	I	E	O	S	V
S	J	I	B	C	S	D	I	V	S	P	M	S	Q	R	N	E
E	S	O	Z	J	F	P	R	B	X	Y	F	X	Y	R	B	K
S	F	N	N	Z	Y	B	W	G	Y	V	Z	L	C	N	R	P

Answer for puzzles

Spot the difference



MEET THE TEAM



Amala



Jia Wei



Amirah



Hana



Nicole



Shi Yau



Ain



Danielle



Charlene

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