



Taking care of children or an elderly loved one day in and day out can be rewarding, but also physically and mentally exhausting, especially if they have special needs or you have limited help. Read on for tips to help you stay mentally strong, enabling you to give the best care possible.

Take mini breaks throughout the day. If you can't step out in the fresh air, whenever possible, devote a few minutes to close your eyes, focus on slow, deep breathing, and do a few head rolls and shoulder shrugs.

Connect with others. If possible, schedule a lunch or walk with a friend or family member to share some fun. This can help relieve tension.

Get moving. Even light exercise like walking, stretching or dancing can help boost your energy and moods. Physical activity can also help clear your mind.

Turn to a soothing activity. If you can, do something regularly that refreshes you, whether it's a yoga session, baking, puttering in the garden, or playing with your cat.

Seek support from fellow caregivers. Call, email or join an online Zoom group for a regular check-in. You'll find encouragement and may learn ideas like activities to try or new technologies to ease some of your challenges.

Set limits on your time and energy. Figure out what you can reasonably do and what resources or help from others you may need.

Accept offers of help. Suggest specific ways people can help, such as picking up medications, meals and household necessities, mowing the lawn, driving to appointments, etc.

Build a support team. You can't do it alone. It's important to have a network of family members, friends, church or community organizations, and anyone else you can turn to in a time of stress to help support your efforts.

For peace of mind, designate a backup caregiver. Inform them about the chronic conditions, medications, specific groceries, supplies and lifestyle needs of your loved one, and provide their doctor's phone number.

Keep up with your own health! Go to all your checkups, get rest and eat healthy—and take preventive measures to help keep yourself and everyone you're caring for healthy.

Feeling overwhelmed? If you're depressed, angry, anxious or your sleeping or eating habits have changed, reach out to your Health Advocate counselor for help.



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In a crisis, help is available 24/7.

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