

## Taking Care of Yourself

Caring for your loved one will take up much of your time and energy. But look after your own needs, too. Build a support network. This network can include friends, family, and organized groups. Also realize when it's time to look at other caregiving options, and that family dynamics will change.



### Make Time for You

Spend some time outside of your role as caregiver. You may not feel right about being away from your loved one. But doing things for yourself helps keep you healthy and better prepared to face the challenges of caregiving. Try things such as the following:

- Plan activities with friends or family members.
- Pursue a hobby that you enjoy.
- Exercise to help relieve stress and keep healthy.
- Relax. Read a good book or take a nap.

Look into ways to get regular breaks from caregiving. Family, friends, or hired aides can help. Call your local Alzheimer's organization for suggestions of resources.

### Accept Your Emotions

At times you may feel anger, frustration, fear, or resentment. Try not to feel guilty. These are all normal emotions. Share your feelings with someone you can talk to. If you feel depressed, tell your doctor. Also watch for signs that others in the family, such as children, may need help dealing with emotions. Finally, your loved one will sometimes do things that you find amusing. Don't be afraid to laugh. Encourage your loved one to laugh, too.