

# Caring for the Caregiver

Author <http://www.strengthforthemoment.com/about-the-author/> [Lori Hogan] shares her insights into how family caregivers can care for themselves while caring for others with the following tips:

- 1. Maintain a sense of humor.** Sometimes humor is all you have, especially when dealing with a disease such as Alzheimer's. One family caregiver recalls his dad eyeing his favorite candy bar at the store. "When asked if he'd like one, Dad declined, but then could be seen slipping the treat into his pocket," the son said. "I felt like a parent who could barely contain laughter as their child misbehaves in the most hilarious way." When all else fails, laugh!
- 2. Ask for help:** Caregiving can be very demanding of an individual's time and energy. Don't suffer in silence. Ask for assistance and <http://www.strengthforthemoment.com/stories-of-caring/share-your-story/> [share your story with others] at StrengthfortheMoment.com.
- 3. Be patient:** I once asked Paul's grandmother what she thought was one of the most valuable pieces of advice she could give me for my family. "Patience" is all she said. That advice still helps me through every situation.
- 4. Treat yourself:** Schedule a foot massage, manicure, nice dinner out or a concert to take yourself away from the situation and to reward yourself for the wonderful care you are providing to your aging relative. You shouldn't feel guilty about wanting to feel good.
- 5. Take a break:** So many of the caregivers in the book tried to go it alone, which is impossible in a demanding caregiving situation. Take single days or even a week's vacation. And when you're away, stay away.
- 6. Keep moving:** Even if you don't like exercise and your time is limited, keep moving. Simply taking a brief walk or parking the car as far away as possible from the store door can help.
- 7. Don't avoid the doctor:** You can become so busy with your loved one's health and well-being that you neglect your own. A healthy you is worth more to your aging loved one than a sick, weak you.
- 8. Avoid junk food:** Junk food, sugar and caffeine are so tempting under stress. Instead eat plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables, proteins, including nuts and beans, and whole grains.

- 9. Pray:** In a recent survey of family caregivers conducted for the Home Instead Senior Care<sup>®</sup> network, prayer was found to be one of the top coping mechanisms for those caregivers who repress their feelings. These caregivers know the value of prayer and meditation when life becomes overwhelming. Share your <<<https://www.facebook.com/StrengthForTheMoment>>> [prayer requests] with others at Strength for the Moment on Facebook.
- 10. Look to God:** These caregiving stories reinforced my belief that <http://www.strengthforthemoment.com/selected-scriptures/> [strong faith and a positive attitude] can guide us through even the most difficult situations. When facing difficulty, we can rely on our faith to remind us that we are not alone and that God is in control.