



10 TIPS for Care "Getting"

1. Care for yourself!

- a. Take care of your health and well being.
- b. Take preventive measures to assure your safety.
- c. Do pleasant physical activities every day just for you.
- d. Get regular preventive medical check-ups.
- e. Drink plenty of water (8-10 glasses of water daily).
 - it keeps your muscles and skin toned
 - transports oxygen and nutrients to the body's cells
 - eliminates toxins and waste from the body
 - regulates body temperatures
 - reduces fatigue levels
- f. Make sure you get rest and sleep.
- g. Eat a well balanced and nutritious diet.
 - eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, proteins and carbohydrates
 - nutritious foods provide essential vitamins and nutrients
 - nutritious foods can help control many illnesses
- h. Use proper postures to avoid injury.

2. Be good to yourself!

- a. consider getting an occasional massage to reduce tension and stress
- b. award yourself with an ice-cream cone, a favorite food, or special present
- c. ask for help (don't be shy!)
- d. get and accept outside support
- e. recognize risk factors (obstacles to comfort, safety and well being) that could cause you harm, and work
- f. to reduce or eliminate them
- g. get 10 hugs and 10 kisses every day

3. Do fun things every day

- a. do something you like to do
- b. do something you want to do for yourself
- c. this can be as simple as taking a bubble bath, reading a chapter of a book, talking to a friend on the telephone, walking outside, etc.

4. Laugh a lot

- a. laughing improves breathing and circulation
- b. laughing fosters healing
- c. laughing stimulates the immune system
- d. laughing unleashes natural pain
- e. laughing changes your focus
- f. it makes you and others feel good

5. Smile a lot

- a. It takes 43 muscles to frown and 17 muscles to smile. It is 2.5 times easier to smile than frown. Therefore, smiling is energy efficient!
- b. Smiling is infectious; it is good for you and for others.

6. Arrange for planned time away every week

- a. Know what you want to accomplish, and plan for it. To be a healthy caregiver you want to allow for time away every week to care for your physical and mental health. Here are a few ideas!
- b. Movies alone or with others (whatever makes you feel happy)
- c. Picnic at the mall, in a park, by a pond, on a mountainside, in a valley, etc
- d. Attend a local support meeting
- e. Have a pleasant meal with friends
- f. Take a walk in the park
- g. Go for a swim
- h. Go on a date with your spouse, children, grandchildren, friends, etc.
- i. Go to the library, enjoy the peace and quiet
- j. Take a class for absolute entertainment or to learn something new
- k. Join a club for fun
- l. Participate in a sport or sport event that makes you feel good
- m. Read a magazine or a chapter of a special book
- n. Listen to the birds, enjoy the wind, the sun, the rain, etc
- o. Listen to music you love
- p. Dance to a favorite song
- q. What are your ideas?

7. Manage your pain and stress

- a. Pay attention to pain. Pain is protective. Respect it.
- b. Aches and pains are warning signs.
- c. Respond quickly to any signs of pain, stress or discomfort.
- d. Change behaviors that cause pain or stress.

8. Control Your Anger

- a. Anger is a feeling or emotion that ranges from mild irritation to intense fury and rage.
- b. Anger may result from frustration when our needs, desires, and goals are not being met. When we become angry, we may lose our patience and act impulsively, aggressively or violently.
- c. Uncontrolled anger may lead to health problems, resentment, physical aggression such as outbursts, intimidating or threatening behavior; verbal abuse, alienation, violence, destructiveness, etc.

To control anger, here are some suggestions:

a. Become aware of it, monitor it. Cues to anger are:

- 1) *physical*: rapid heart beat, tightness in chest, feeling hot or flushed
- 2) *behavioral*: pacing, clenching fists, raising the voice, staring
- 3) *emotional*: fear, hurt, jealousy, guilt, rage, etc
- 4) *cognitive/thoughts*: hostile self talk, images of aggression, revenge, etc.

b. Develop immediate and preventive strategies to manage anger

- 1) take a time out
- 2) use deep breathing
- 3) stop your thoughts
- 4) develop an exercise program
- 5) change your beliefs

c. Get professional help if you are unable to control your anger

- 1) anger must be controlled
- 2) take immediate action

9. Conserve your energy

- a. Schedule rest breaks
- b. Use gravity and momentum to reduce your work load
- c. Use delivery services (such as pharmacy or groceries)
- d. Shop by phone or computer
- e. Use power whenever possible
- f. Avoid any unnecessary tasks

10. Extremes: Avoid it!

a. Avoid extremes in posture

- 1) be aware of your body position
- 2) muscles are strongest and most efficient when they are well balanced
- 3) avoid bending and twisting
- 4) avoid reaching above your shoulders or below your knees

b. Avoid extremes in the environment

- 1) high temperatures can cause dehydration, exhaustion, heart problems, difficulty breathing
- 2) low temperatures can cause sensation loss, grip strength loss, decreased blood flow
- 3) noisy environments can make concentrating and hearing difficult
- 4) dark environments are a safety hazard and can cause slips, trips, falls, coordination
- 5) changes, muscle strain, fatigue and many other hazards

c. Avoid overexertion! (Overexertion is force)

- 1) do whatever you can to eliminate strain
- 2) work within your best comfort zone
- 3) get plenty of rest
- 4) avoid excessive lifting/lowering, pushing/pulling, holding/carrying

- (a) get help from others
- (b) change the environment to reduce your effort

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