



## Caring for the Caregiver:

### 5 Vital Reasons to Prioritize Your Own Well-Being

Caring for a parent, loved one, or someone in need can be one of the most rewarding yet challenging roles. As a caregiver, it's easy to pour all your energy into the needs of your loved one or client. All too often caregivers are known to neglect our well-being.

Most have heard "You can not pour from an empty cup", or the airplane reminder that in case of emergency, you must "put on your mask first, before assisting others". Both are a great reminder that you must take care of yourself, so you can continue to show up and care for others.

Here are 5 reasons from my upcoming book, *Self Care for those Caring for Others*, on why you must prioritize self-care, especially when caring for others.

1. **Mental Health** - Caregiving without being intentional about caring for your own mental well-being can lead to burnout, anxiety, and depression.

**Take Action-** Normalize having a therapist. Prioritize doing 1 thing weekly that brings you joy. Make time each morning to just sit and ground yourself. Check in with yourself throughout the day. Write down 1-3 must do's for the day and allow that to be good enough. Find at least one thing to be grateful for daily.

2. **Physical Health** - Studies show caregivers are at a higher risk for chronic conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and obesity.

**Take Action-** Prioritize keeping regular medical appointments and ensure your doctor knows you are caregiving for others. Strive for at least 30 minutes of activity daily. Walk around the house intentionally when on the phone. Try walking in place or some form of activity while watching tv. Take a class you've been interested in, find a free video online, the list goes on. Just do something. Lastly, reduce your processed food intake. Pick protein and nutrient-dense foods, they will properly fuel and sustain you through your day.

3. **Emotional Health** - Caregivers tend to take on so much that relationships with friends and family often suffer. Be mindful to make time for not only yourself but for others. Be cautious not to slip into isolating yourself from others. Isolation can cause feelings of loneliness and resentment.

**Take Action** - Meet friends for an activity, a meal, or drinks at least once a month. Commit to talking to a trusted person bi-weekly. Join a caregiver support group online or in person. Sharing experiences with others who can relate reduces feeling alone and isolated. You can find community with us on our caregiver support Facebook page - [We Can See You](#)

4. **Productivity** - Juggling caregiving, work, and life one of the balls you are juggling hit the floor before bouncing back in place or maybe it kept rolling away. With multiple priorities things will get missed from time to time. An overlooked, email, missed appointment, forgotten deadline, past due bill. Life happens.

**Take Action** - Consider flexible working options to create better balance. Set aside a time weekly to make a schedule for the upcoming week for you, work, caregiving, and the needs of others,. After reviewing the schedule, engage others to see what you can delegate, eliminate, move to later, what is truly a priority, and where you can make time for yourself.

5. **An Example for Others** - Your family and loved ones see all that you do. Do not let people associate caregiving with sacrificing self, needs, and life. It doesn't have to be that way. Many times we don't make changes for our own good; but we will make changes if it helps others or teaches better habits.

**Take Action** - Prioritize taking care of yourself. Incorporate steps from above. Do your own internet searches for other options of balancing life and caregiving for others. Be intentional in your journey of creating balance one day at a time. Join us online, we are here to help.

For more tips, visit and follow my non profit website and social media pages where we are creating a community for caregivers, sharing resources, ideas, inspiration, motivation, and laughs.

