






CAREGIVER TOP 10




01 ROUND UP




Learn all you can about your loved one's condition from every available source. Be a notetaker to gather info from providers in a dated log/journal. Use your favorite note-taking app or an old school notebook.




02 BE PREPARED



What's your status? Do you have medical and/or financial POA - Power of Attorney?



Your access to medical information and your ability to care for your loved one may be dependent on your status.



03 BREATHE


Wrapping your head and heart around your loved one's health situation might mean you're not functioning at your best. Acknowledge the intensity and rally the troops - friends, family or respite care to boost your reserves. Acknowledging the intensity isn't a weakness on your part. It's a strength.

04 MORE LEGAL


Has your loved one communicated long-term, end-of-life preferences? The POLST form (Practitioner Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment) is an important discussion point. Difficult? Yes - but the burden you might carry in the future could be lessened if you know your loved one's wishes.




05 BREATHE




Take a close look at your schedule and commitments. Adding a caregiver role creates an imbalance in self-care if you're not diligent and playful. An unapologetic nap or a walk is restorative. Remind yourself that "no" IS a complete sentence in response to tasks you cannot take on.




06 FINANCES & INSURANCE



The cost of care is mind boggling. Look at every option for coverage: insurance policies, LTC (long term care), Veteran's benefits, disability coverage.



Tracking expenses and being diligent about costs is an exhausting but necessary task. Don't forget to track caregiver time and expenses.



07 TEAM EVAL


Assessing the team. Do you have the right care in place? Lean into the network of support through social workers who are often well-resourced with info about local services - medical drivers, home health aides, meal services and more.

08 PAPER TRAILS MATTER


Take a look at your systems for tracking care and expenses in Items #1 and #6 - are they working well for you or do you need to adjust? Keeping track of log-in info, passwords and more might become overwhelming on top of everything else and periodic clean-up of records is important.



09 LISTEN & LOVE



Your loved one may struggle with communication and your interactions might be stressful and overwhelming. Pausing, smiling, not reacting in the moment can be healthy responses. Humor and lightness - especially toward yourself - is important.




10 RESOURCES



www.caringbridge.org



www.elderhelpers.org



www.lotsahelpinghands.com

www.archrespite.org