

# Self-Care Strategies

It is normal to be tempted to put aside your own needs and put the needs of the person you are caring for first. While this may be necessary sometimes, if you do it all the time, you might start to neglect your own basic needs and run out of energy. It is difficult to prioritize your own self-care while caring for someone else, but here we review some simple strategies to try.

## Remember these basic self-care strategies:

- **Support:** Ask and seek support from other family members and/or friends.
- **Physical activity:** Incorporate enjoyable physical activity or exercise.
- **Eating:** Maintain a nutritious, healthy diet. Seek a referral to a nutritionist for more information.
- **Spirituality:** Engage in spiritual support (religious activity, prayer, journaling, or meditation).
- **Recreation:** Spend recreational time for yourself, enjoy social time with friends and other people.
- **Sleep:** Protect time for sleep and optimize your sleep environment. Re-visit content from session 5 to improve your sleep habits:
  - Practice relaxation daily
  - Replace unhelpful thoughts about sleep with more accurate thoughts
  - Establish a wind-down routine, limit naps, and other healthy sleep hygiene
  - Modify sleep cues by sleeping only in bed and get out of bed if you are restless
  - Increase physical activity
- **Mental Health:** Ask for help from a trained mental health professional.
- **Respite Care Options:** Respite care is short-term temporary relief for those caring for family members who might otherwise need professional care and attention. Some websites that can help coordinate respite care are:
  - <https://www.caringbridge.org/>
  - <http://lotsahelpinghands.com/>