Don’t feel shame about asking for help

Don’t let someone help you?

It’s important to know that there is help available if and when you need it. Getting help doesn’t mean that you can’t cope or that you’re weak. You may feel shy about asking for help, but you will feel a lot better when you do. Let your family know if you need help and work out what jobs they can do. They often feel good knowing they are helping. Don’t wait until you feel really stressed out before you ask for some help. There are some tips to help you feel good and keep well – after all you are important too!

Don’t feel about others. You help someone, so why should you feel guilty about going out or wanting to do something for yourself.

Try not to feel guilty

Some carers say they feel guilty when they have time out. When you have some time out, the idea is to enjoy yourself and unwind so that you can return to your daily tasks feeling better. Feeling guilty will only bring you down. It’s important for both you and the person you’re caring for to have some time away from each other and spend time with other people.

Try not to feel guilty

Some carers say they feel guilty when they have time out. When you have some time out, the idea is to enjoy yourself and unwind so that you can return to your daily tasks feeling better. Feeling guilty will only bring you down. It’s important for both you and the person you’re caring for to have some time away from each other and spend time with other people.

Reward yourself

Some carers get massages. Some carers say they just like to take a long bath. Whatever it is, you deserve to give yourself a reward sometimes!

Exercise

Along with eating well, you need to exercise to have a healthy heart. Each day, try to do at least 20 minutes of exercise you enjoy – this can include walking to the shops or dancing to your favourite song! Exercise helps you to feel less stressed and gives you some time out from your usual tasks.

Try not to feel guilty

Some carers say they feel guilty when they have time out. When you have some time out, the idea is to enjoy yourself and unwind so that you can return to your daily tasks feeling better. Feeling guilty will only bring you down. It’s important for both you and the person you’re caring for to have some time away from each other and spend time with other people.

Reward yourself

Some carers get massages. Some carers say they just like to take a long bath. Whatever it is, you deserve to give yourself a reward sometimes!

Eat well

It’s easy to eat food that’s not good for you when you’re busy. Eating well will reduce your chances of developing diabetes and other health problems, so you can keep on caring. You need three wholesome meals a day, with healthy snacks in between, so that you have enough energy to get through the day. Here’s a guide of what you should eat to keep healthy:

Don’t be too hard on yourself

It’s easy to think of all the things we feel we haven’t done right, but how often do we feel proud of what we have done right? It’s important to value all the good things you do and to remember that you’re a special person, playing a really important role in the life of the person you’re caring for. Try not to keep thinking “I should have done this or I should have done that”. Each time you say this you are being hard on yourself. Try to say “I could” instead, because this puts less pressure on you.

Reward yourself

Some carers get massages. Some carers say they just like to take a long bath. Whatever it is, you deserve to give yourself a reward sometimes!

Get things off your chest

Have a talk with someone you trust. Don’t keep things bottled up. We often think that we always have to be the strong one, but even strong people need to have someone who will listen to them. Often just being able to talk with someone about how things are will help you feel a lot better.

You have the power within to feel better

It’s a waste of energy trying to change the way someone is. Sometimes carers say that the person they care for won’t change their ways which makes things hard at times. Trying to change the way someone is, usually doesn’t work. But you can change the way you react! Instead of getting angry or upset, just say to yourself “that’s the way they are but I don’t have to be like that”.

Have a say

Speak out. If you’re unhappy about a service, you have the right to tell them. Things won’t improve if you don’t speak out and services providers can only fix a problem if they know about it. If you’re shy, it’s a good idea to have a talk with someone you trust who knows about services and can help you.

How to get help

For information, support and counselling, or to join a carer support group, call:

Centrelink - Disability, Sickness and Carers Line: 13 27 17

To arrange support services including respite and community transport call ADHC Regional Information, Referral and Intake:

Metro South Region (02) 9334 3700
Met North Region (02) 8841 3950
Hunt Region (02) 4978 6222, Telkwa 302 784 321
Northen Region (02) 6621 1400, Telfife 1300 364 563
Southern Region (02) 6169 9200, Telfife 1300 841 569
Western Region (02) 6668 1594, Telfife 1300 134 450, www.latch.nsw.gov.au

Home Care Aessment Access and Assessment Team Telife 1300 787 906

Metro South Region (02) 9334 3700
Western Region (02) 6841 1594, Northern Region (02) 6621 1400,
Metro North Region (02) 9841 9350
Southern Region (02) 6128 9200,
Hunter Region (02) 4978 6222,
Get some fresh air
Spending too much time inside can make people feel tense. Spend some time outdoors doing something you enjoy. Sometimes just changing your environment, for example visiting your friends, will make you feel better.

Get plenty of sleep
Sleep helps you to cope. If you don't get enough sleep, you can become rundown. Try having a nap when you can to keep up your energy levels - you'll find you're more refreshed afterwards.

Join a carer support group
It often helps to be able to talk with other people who know what it's like when you're caring for someone. You don't have to feel alone – join a carer support group. A carer support group is a group of people who are carers just like you, who come together on a regular basis to talk about what it's like caring for a family member or close friend. The idea is to have some time out from caring, share ideas about looking after someone, get emotional support and information about what is available to help you.

Benefits of joining a carer support group:
• be with people who know what you're going through
• emotional support
• overcome loneliness
• get information about available services
• make new friends

Take a break – ask about respite
If you're looking after a family member or someone with a disability and you need some time out, you can receive what is called “respite”. Respite means that you can have a break while the person you care for is being looked after by experienced support workers. There are different types of respite, including:

Centre-based respite
There are centres across NSW that look after people who are frail, ageing or have a disability. Some centres specialise in looking after children with an intellectual disability, autism or a physical disability. Other centres specialise in looking after people with dementia.

There are centres where people can stay overnight or for a short stay, and there are centres where people just go for a day and participate in recreational activities.

Home-based respite
There are services across NSW that can organise for a support worker to come to your home and look after the person you care for while you take a break. You are entitled to have a break! So don't be shame, arrange some time out for yourself – you are important too! Aboriginal Home Care has outlets throughout NSW and can arrange respite for you.

Other information services

- Commonwealth Respite and Carer Link Freecall during business hours 1800 052 522
- Freecall for emergency respite support outside standard business hours is 1800 059 059
- Freecall to the Aged Health Care Services Information Line is 1800 500 853
- Early Childhood Intervention Infoline Freecall 1300 656 865
- NSW Young Carer Project – Carers NSW Freecall 1800 242 636 (02) 9280 4744
- Kids Help Infoline Freecall 1800 551 800 www.kidshelp.com.au
- Lifeline 13 114 (24 hour) www.lifeline.org.au