



# Care for Caregivers

Family Caregivers also need care. Learn how to **care for yourself** as well as your loved one.

Do you need an hour of respite? Would a retreat provide the tools you need to thrive as a caregiver? Let us help you learn how to care for yourself. Ask about the following programs that may be available to help you care for yourself: Family Caregiver Retreat, Share the Care, Caregivers College, Respite, Peer Support, and Workshops. Call 920-467-4100 for more information.

## *Caregiver's Bill of Rights*

Caregivers often find it difficult to maintain their physical and emotional health while caring for a loved one. A Caregiver Bill of Rights was developed years ago to help caregivers recognize their responsibilities and limitations. There are many different versions of The Caregiver's Bill of Rights which is believed to have first been published by the AARP.

1. I have the right to take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the capability of taking better care of my care receiver.
2. I have the right to occasionally get angry, be depressed, and express other difficult feelings.
3. I have the right to reject attempts by my care receiver (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me through guilt, and or depression.
4. I have the right to take pride in what I am doing and to applaud the courage it sometimes takes to meet the needs of the person I am caring for.
5. I have the right to appreciation and emotional support for my decision to accept the challenge of providing care.
6. I have the right to protect my assets and financial future without severing my relationship with the care receiver.
7. I have the right to respite care during emergencies and to care for my own health, spirit and relationships.
8. I have the right to provide care at home as long as physically, financially and emotionally feasible; however, when it is no longer feasible, I am obligated to explore other alternatives, such as (home care or) a residential care community.
9. I have the right to maintain facets of my own life that do not include the person I care for, just as I would if he or she were healthy. I know that I do everything that I reasonably can for this person, and I have the right to do some things just for myself.

10. I have the right to protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me when my care receiver no longer needs my help.
11. I have the right to seek help from others even though my care receiver may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.
12. I have the right to expect all family members, men and women, to participate in the care of aging relatives.
13. I have the right to receive consideration, affection, forgiveness, and acceptance for what I do for my loved one for as long as I offer these qualities in return.
14. I have the right to temporarily change my living environment as needed to aid in caring for aging care recipients.
15. I have the right to expect professionals, in their area of specialization, to recognize the importance of palliative care and to be knowledgeable about the concerns and options related to older people and caregivers.
16. I have the right to sensitive, supportive responses by employers in dealing with unexpected or severe care needs.
17. I have the right to receive training in caregiving skills, along with accurate understandable information about the condition and needs of the care recipient.
18. I have the right to expect and demand that as new strides are made in finding resources to aid physically and mentally impaired persons in our country, similar strides will be made toward aiding and supporting caregivers.

It is important for a caregiver to realize his or her own limitations to maintain a healthy attitude and not feel guilty if he or she is not able to do everything.