

## Tips for Family Caregivers

The Caregiver Action Network offers these 10 tips for family caregivers. Please take some time to contemplate them and make them personal by fill in the blanks as suggested.

- 1. Seek support from other caregivers. There is great strength in knowing that you are not alone.**

Other caregivers I can reach out to are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- 2. Take care of your own health so that you can be strong enough to take care of your loved one.**

I will take care of my health by:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- 3. Accept offers of help and suggest specific things people can do to help you.**

Some things I could use help with are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I will accept help from: \_\_\_\_\_

- 4. Learn how to communicate effectively with doctors.**

Some things I could do to improve my communication with doctors are: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- 5. Caregiving is hard work so take respite breaks often.**

I will take a break from caregiving to do: \_\_\_\_\_

I will contact the following friends/family or agency to watch my loved one so I can take this break:

\_\_\_\_\_

**6. Watch out for signs of depression and don't delay in getting professional help when you need it.**

- ☐ Symptoms of depression include:
- ☐ Persistent sad, anxious or "empty" mood
- ☐ Trouble falling or staying asleep, or sleeping too much
- ☐ Poor appetite or overeating
- ☐ Loss of pleasure and interest in activities once enjoyed, including sex
- ☐ Irritability, restlessness
- ☐ Persistent physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment (such as chronic pain or digestive disorders)
- ☐ Difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions
- ☐ Fatigue or loss of energy
- ☐ Feeling guilty, hopeless or worthless
- ☐ Thoughts of death or suicide

*If you have been experiencing five or more symptoms for more than two weeks, see your doctor.*

**7. Be open to new technologies that can help you care for your loved one.**

Areas in which new technology might be helpful are: \_\_\_\_\_

I will inquire about adaptive equipment in the following ways: \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Organize medical information so it's up to date and easy to find.**

I will organize medical information by (choose goal date to have this completed): \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Make sure legal documents are in order.**

I will organize legal documents by (choose goal date to have this completed): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Give yourself credit for doing the best you can in one of the toughest jobs there is.**

Things I am doing well: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_