

Caregiver Burnout: 6 Ways to Avoid It

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Burnout sucks. If you've ever been there, then you probably agree with that statement. The demanding circumstances of caregiving often give way to stress and pressure that take a toll on our physical and emotional health. Do any of these symptoms of caregiver burnout describe you?

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Irritability
- Resentfulness
- Neglecting responsibilities
- Drinking
- Smoking
- Excessive eating
- Difficulty sleeping
- Lack of energy

If you're experiencing any of these symptoms, you're at risk of (or have already reached) caregiver burnout. Not only does this threaten your health, but it also jeopardizes the health of the survivor you're providing care for. We want both parties to be happy and healthy so that recovery is maximized. That's why we developed these tips for you to avoid caregiver burnout:

Don't Be Afraid to Ask For Help

Let's admit it, sometimes asking for help is hard. We feel sheepish, guilty, fearful, or whatever lame excuse we can come up with. We know that we should do it, but something is always holding us back. Can you relate to that?

If so, remember this: Asking for help is *healthy* for both parties! If you avoid delegating your monstrous workload, you'll burn yourself out and then you and your survivor are left with nothing but fumes to run on.

Do it for the good of both parties and express your needs to family and friends, even if you're not sure how they'll respond.

Establish a Network

Networking isn't just for business people – it's for everyone! Create a list of people that you can count on, and this network will serve as your safety net. Knowing that you can call on these people at any time will help put your mind at ease and reduce your stress level. You can also start saving time and money by delegating small tasks that are inconvenient for you to someone who will find it more convenient. For example, if your sister is going to be at the grocery store at some point in the week, have her pick up the groceries you need instead of making the trip yourself.

Once you become comfortable asking for help, [create a list](#) of the people who respond favorably to your needs so that you can continue to use their help.

Put Your Foot Down

And keep it down. Do you feel like the caregiving workload is distributed unevenly? Do you find yourself doing almost all the work yourself? This is actually very common among primary caregivers. But does that make it okay? Nope. Not even the slightest.

To avoid resentment, hold other family members accountable for their share of the responsibility.

No Guilt Allowed!

Do you remember the last time you went out and saw your friends? Or better yet, did it without feeling guilty? It's hard to allow yourself to do something for *you* when you feel completely responsible for another human being. However, that feeling is exactly what leads to caregiver burnout.

Realize that taking breaks is good for your emotional health, and you'll be able to give better care if you take some nights for yourself. So go out! Have fun! And feel guiltless because you're doing it for the good of both parties.

Get Moving

Movement is simply just good for you! Most caregivers, however, don't think they have time for exercise due to a self-sabotaging guilt complex. Don't let your devotion to taking care of another person allow you to neglect your own health! This can lead to poor health and excessive amounts of [stress](#) – which we know can eventually lead to stroke! We don't want that.

Exercise within itself is an excellent stress reliever because it releases [endorphins](#), the feel-good hormone! It will help clear your head and allow you to sleep well at night – the perfect formula for a happy caregiver.

Take a Step Back

Let's quickly assess your situation: you're making a significant difference in someone else's life by providing them with care and attention. That's something to feel good about! And while it's easy to lose sight of that as you carry out your daily activities, we need to remind ourselves of this fact periodically. You're giving back in the best way and that's an anti-depressant within itself.

And there you have it. A 6-step formula to avoiding caregiver burnout and creating health and abundance for both you and your survivor. If this resonated with you, pick up the phone and call the friend or family member that you've secretly been wanting to contact. Go for a run. Go out with your friends. Bring balance back into your life and you can avoid caregiver burnout.