



## **At your Wits' End: Regaining Equilibrium as a Parent and Family Caregiver Handout**

Caring for others is not easy. Caring for children while caring for your loved one is especially challenging. This can be like balancing two full time jobs without any time off. Caregiving can be a threat to your well-being. Let's talk about how you can get relief from the stress that comes with it.

### **Common Challenges**

- Not having enough time
- Feeling emotionally flooded and impatient
- Experiencing distracted thinking

### **Strategies and Solutions for Self-Care**

- Ground yourself. Place your hand gently on the top of your head for 30 seconds to one minute and close your eyes to avoid distractions, breathe, and notice how you feel.
- Be present with your child. For instance, when you prepare their meal, sit down, and enjoy the meal with them, or if they are painting a picture, engage in the creative activity and paint a picture yourself!
- Let your loved one know you have heard their request or need and that you will get to it shortly, but to communicate that you first need a moment to gather your thoughts. You are allowed moments of time out.
- Lean on others to help you care for your loved ones.
- Explore alternatives when a situation is overwhelming. For example, if going to the pharmacy to pick up medications at noon leaves you waiting in line for 20 minutes, explore an alternative time to pick up those medications such as right when the pharmacy opens to lessen that wait time.
- Create a routine for you and your loved ones. This will eliminate the effort of planning a routine each day. Also, be sure to share this routine with loved ones as well, so everyone knows the plan.
- See the situation from another's point of view. It is helpful to understand what another person is experiencing because this naturally allows you to become more patient and calmer.
- Recognize the other persons needs and negotiate solutions.
- Schedule quiet time or self-entertainment.
- Accept what is and learn to let go of what you cannot control.



**You are not alone, and you do not need to continue to struggle!**

Remember, try to go easier on yourself and your family. Let things like doing dishes or laundry go when you need a break. You are caring for multiple people. This by itself is an everyday uphill climb!

**Identify Your Strengths**

Every family is unique in their own strengths. Try to recognize what your strengths are because this can help offset the challenges. What strengths do you have?

- Are you good at asking for help?
- Do you keep connected to people that can support you?
- Are you creative in how you approach tasks?
- Have you set up good routines to manage your household and does everyone pitch in to help?
- Do you know how to relax?

Write down these strengths and review them often. Look at them and draw from them when you're having a particularly difficult time. Identify how your family can draw on their strengths. How can you pull together to help one another?