

## A Healthy Caregiver's Checklist

What does “Taking care of yourself” mean to you? Some caregivers sigh and say, “Well, I just do what I have to do each day.” That's a lot, and you're good at it. But take a look at yourself too. You give care to your loved one daily, and it's wise to “check your own pulse” daily too. The following checklist is a reminder of areas to look at to help you gauge your own well-being.

The more of these questions you can answer “YES” to, the more you are taking good care of yourself – and the better able you'll be to continue taking care of your loved one.

- Do I have enough energy?
- Am I getting enough sleep?
- Am I eating balanced, wholesome meals?
- Do I exercise regularly?
- Have I talked to a person outside the home today?
- Am I taking some time daily for relaxation and renewal?
- Do I use respite care when I need to?
- Am I asking for help when I need it from family, friends, support services?
- Am I able to look ahead and see what decisions I will need to make, and start planning for those now?
- Do I have the financial advice and information I need?
- Am I continuing to be involved in activities I've always enjoyed?
- Am I keeping up my contacts with friends and neighbors?
- Am I sharing my concerns and dilemmas with someone who cares?
- Am I keeping in touch with my own feelings? Do I give myself permission to feel whatever I'm feeling?
- Did I laugh today/
- Did I hug someone today? (Did I let someone else hug me today?)
- Did I tell someone “I love you”? (Did I let someone else tell me “I love you”?)