

Living Through Loss Counselling Society of BC

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COPING STRATEGIES FOR THE CAREGIVER

Caring for someone who is ill can be stressful and it is important that caregivers develop techniques to care for themselves.

All Caregivers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gain a sense of control/mastery to counter feelings of helplessness. ▪ Have a life outside of care giving through exercise; meditation; hobbies; friendships etc. ▪ Create a positive outlook and attitude by balancing engagement and detachment to care giving. ▪ Rituals symbolize transition and healing. ▪ Continue activities that give you identity self-esteem and joy. ▪ Understand your personal limitations. Set and maintain boundaries. ▪ Take a vacation from care giving. ▪ When someone dies the relationship continues in a different way. ▪ Try to resolve each loss as fully as possible. ▪ Keep your sense of humour! ▪ Work through the feelings with friends, family, or with professional assistance. ▪ Use a journal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take care of yourself physically through sleep, nutrition and exercise ▪ Develop and accept support when needed ▪ Find a way to express your own grief ; get in touch with your feelings ▪ Share responsibilities – or change your routine and tasks when you can ▪ Get creative, try new approach to regular tasks ▪ Learn to identify the unique ways in which your body informs you that you are stressed ▪ Remind yourself that you cannot change anyone – you can only relate to them ▪ Say “I choose” rather than “I should” or “I have to” ▪ Look for the good things that happened during the day- stay in the present
Family and Friends and Caregivers	Professional Caregivers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Normalizing your feelings after a loss- accept the reality. ▪ It is important to keep memories alive, share your stories. ▪ Meditate ▪ Exercise ▪ Use rituals as healing tools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain realistic expectations of yourself in relation to your job. ▪ Have regular formal meetings with your supervisor. ▪ Avoid shop talk during breaks ▪ Take responsibility for your chosen career.