SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

ASSESSMENT TOOL FOR PARKINSON’S CAREGIVERS

Much is asked of a Parkinson's caregiver. Often more energy is going out to take care of others than coming in for renewal. Many caregivers feel like they are running on empty. It is important to look at your life and assess where you are doing well and where you need more help and support.

Here are several areas of a caregiver’s life that need attention. Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5, one being low and needs attention and 5 being full and satisfied. Then look at your 3 lowest areas and think of things you could do to fill them up. Write your own ideas next to the empty bullets!

SUPPORT OF FRIENDS

1   2   3   4   5
Low            High

Things you can do:
• Ask a friend that wants to help to do one thing on a weekly basis to take a to-do off your list, like mow the lawn, cook a meal, come over and watch your spouse so you can go shopping on your own, etc.
• Ask a friend to meet you for lunch and go to a movie every other week.
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SUPPORT OF FAMILY

1   2   3   4   5
Low            High

Things you can do:
• Ask a relative to stay over one night a week to watch your spouse so that you can get a good night’s sleep.
• If a relative is remote but wants to help, ask if they can contribute money to hire a cleaning service.
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GENERAL SESSIONS
PERSONAL VOCATION

1 2 3 4 5
Low High

Things you can do:
• Look into your company’s personnel policies to see if they offer programs or special assistance for caregivers.
• If you can’t work outside the house full-time, can you work part-time or remotely?
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PHYSICAL HEALTH

1 2 3 4 5
Low High

Things you can do:
• Take a walk every day in the morning to start your day. Take a walk every evening to end your day.
• Go to water aerobics twice a week.
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LEISURE AND PLAY TIME

1 2 3 4 5
Low High

Things you can do:
• Listen to your favorite music for a half hour.
• Finger paint with the kids next door.
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**SPIRITUAL LIFE**

1 2 3 4 5
Low High

Things you can do:
• Meditate for 15 minutes a day.
• Read a daily meditation or scripture.
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**SENSE OF COMMUNITY**

1 2 3 4 5
Low High

Things you can do:
• Find a caregiver support group.
• Volunteer for something that uses one of your talents.
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Identify two or three areas that you need to “fill up.” Think of two or three things you can do in these areas that are small and manageable. Be specific. Then put them on your calendar and/or ask a friend to help you do these things.

Caregiving may take up a large amount of your time and energy. But you also need to take care of yourself so that you can take care of your loved one with Parkinson’s. If you are running on empty, you will not be a good or gracious caregiver.

And finally, Parkinson's doesn’t have to define who you are. You are a person with needs and interests beyond being a caregiver.