

Caregiving brings stress. Here are 6 tips to help ease it

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The stress of caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease can take a toll

on loved ones.

It's important for caregivers' own health and well-being to reduce that stress, the Alzheimer's Foundation of America says.

"Finding ways to manage and reduce stress is of paramount importance for every Alzheimer's caregiver—untreated stress over a prolonged period of time can lead to caregiver burnout and a host of other health issues," said [Jennifer Reeder](#), the foundation's director of educational and [social services](#).

"Caregivers need to take care of themselves so they can provide the best possible care for their loved ones," Reeder added in a foundation news release.

April is National Stress Awareness Month, and it "is a great time for caregivers to be proactive about managing and reducing their stress and make an investment in [self-care](#) that will benefit them and their loved one for whom they are caring," she advised.

Here, the foundation suggests six steps that may help:

- Be adaptable and positive. This can influence stress levels for you and the person in your care. Going with the flow can help you both stay relaxed, while feeling agitated can have the opposite effect.
- Deal with what you can control. Some things will be out of your control, but you can control your reactions. Concentrate on finding solutions that can help make the problem itself a little less stressful.
- Set realistic goals. Not everything can be resolved at once. Try to prioritize, set practical goals, do your best to achieve them and take things one day at a time.

- Care for your own health. Get adequate rest, eat a good diet, drink plenty of water and exercise. You cannot provide quality care to a loved one if you don't take care of yourself.
- Refresh your mind regularly. Try exercise, yoga, meditation, listening to music or even taking a few deep breaths. These can all help relax the mind and reduce stress.
- Share your feelings. Don't be reluctant to talk about your stress, because that can help relieve it.

The foundation's helpline provides information and support for [caregiver stress](#). You can connect with a licensed social worker by calling 866-232-8484, web chatting at www.alzfdn.org or sending a [text message](#) to 646-586-5283. The web chat and text message features are offered in more than 90 languages.

More information: The U.S. National Institute on Aging has more on [Alzheimer's disease](#).

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