



CHECKING IN ON HOW YOU ARE FEELING

Stages of Caregiving

FRUSTRATION

Wide range of emotions surface

- Denial
- Anger and rage
- Guilt
- Loneliness
- Embarrassment
- Panic

ISOLATION

- Outings decrease
- Friends drop away
- Activities decrease
- Depression over relationship changes

RESENTMENT

- Patient's dependency too burdensome
- Bitterness over changed life plans

DETACHMENT

- Worries of abandoning patient
- Consider placement options
- Life after caregiving surfaces

RELIEF vs. DESPAIR

- New feelings surface
- Relief over end of difficult phase
- Numbness - feeling nothing doesn't hurt
- Sadness, grief over loss of loved one
- Despair

IMPORTANT CAREGIVER QUESTIONS

- Did anyone offer help during the week?
- What was the outcome of this help?
- Did YOU ask anyone for help this week?

- What was the outcome of the favour you asked?
- Who could you have asked this week and what could they have done?

Solution Possibilities

VENT: LET IT OUT BEFORE EXPLODING

- Learn disease stages and symptoms
- Throw/hit pillows, verbalize "why me?"
- Validate your negative feelings
- Plan and do things outside your home
- Plan and do fun things inside your home

CONCENTRATE ON THE EXTERNAL

- Investigate new activities
- Keep up social contacts
- Participate in favourite activities
- Set time/place to grieve loss

ALTER IMPOSSIBLE "SHOULD"

- Seek and accept help
- Write new life plan with illness

NURTURE YOUR INDEPENDENCE

- Seek independence in small steps
- Respite...home care...day care
- Revel in new freedoms; do new things

DEVELOP POSITIVE FEELINGS

- Confide in trusted friend/family member/support group
- Commiserate with other caregivers
- Support group: share wisdom/give help
- Crying is good therapy
- Develop coping mechanisms

(Reprinted by permission from the Alzheimer's Disease Association of Alaska) Develop coping mechanisms