Love You Too

How to care for yourself when you're caring for others

February 26, 2015 By Kate Ferguson

According to the Alzheimer's Association, women make up more than 60 percent of those giving care to others who have Alzheimer's and dementia. Caregivers routinely lose sleep and suffer from poor personal health. Here's how health experts suggest they care not only for others, but for themselves too.

Find local support services to get help. There are resources that can link you with adult day care, respite care (to give yourself a break from caregiving), training programs and support groups in your community and online, according to Ask Medicare, an Internet information source that offers helpful tips on caregiving and a variety of other health services. Visit medicare.gov and take a look.

Connect with other caregivers for much-needed support. When you share your experiences with others going through the same thing, not only do you realize that you're not alone, but you also discover an effective way to relieve built-up stress that can be harmful to your health.

Send out an SOS. Don't let pride stop you from simply asking for help when you need it. There are many personal and professional resources in communities that offer support or assistance to caregivers for meal management, transportation, social activities or other services. Some may even be free.

Take care of you. If you aren't healthy and strong enough, how can you be of help to others? Experts suggest you eat properly, get regular exercise, make time for yourself each week to do something you enjoy, and don't forget your own checkups and doctors' visits.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/caring-for-others-26879-5545