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## 4 Self-Care Strategies for Alzheimer's Caregivers

Being a caregiver for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease can be overwhelming. You may worry that you can't provide for all of their needs and stress over their well-being. You might feel guilty when you're unable to help them and experience emotional pain when you have difficulty communicating. Because of these pressures, it's common for [caregivers to experience burnout](#). It's important for caregivers to know that they deserve time for self-care and leisure. From Mercer County Animal Codes, here are a few ways caregivers can balance their responsibilities while addressing their own needs.

### **Focus on Your Health**

Caring for someone with Alzheimer's means keeping track of their medications, communicating with their doctors, and driving them to appointments. And if you're treating their symptoms holistically, it may also mean enrolling them in cognitive behavioral therapy, support groups, and memory training. With all of these tasks on your mind, it's easy to forget that you're due for a cleaning at the dentist or a check-up with your own doctor. Write down your own appointments on a calendar or set alerts on your phone.

### **Reach Out and Connect**

Being a caregiver can frequently be an isolating experience. You may spend most of your days at home, and the person you're caring for may not always recognize you. It can feel like your friends and other relatives don't quite understand what you're going through—and to make matters worse, venting to them leaves you feeling guilty.

Thankfully, there are support groups for caregivers that meet in person and online. There are also [therapists who specialize in helping caregivers](#). Knowing that you're not alone can make it that much easier. There are plenty of other caregivers out there dealing with the same challenges, and leaning on each other can lift your spirits and foster new friendships.

Insurance can be a crucial aid when it comes to covering the cost of therapy sessions. Most insurance plans, including those obtained through an employer or the healthcare exchange, offer some level of mental health coverage. This often includes therapy sessions, making them more accessible and affordable. If you lack insurance or are looking for a new plan, [shopping the healthcare exchange](#) can be a viable option. The exchange offers a variety of plans with different coverage levels, ensuring you can find one that suits your therapy needs and budget. Remember, investing in your mental health is just as important as caring for your physical health, and insurance can play a key role in making that investment more manageable.

### **Take Time to Relax**

Much of your time might be occupied with your responsibilities to your loved one, but trying to manage your stress without an outlet can wear you down, and according to Healthline, it can even [lead to physical illness](#). Carving out a little time for yourself to relax can work wonders for your mood and alleviate your stress.

Switching to decaf coffee can be a beneficial step towards a more relaxed and hydrated lifestyle. Unlike regular coffee, decaf doesn't contain caffeine, a stimulant that can cause jitteriness and interfere with sleep. By choosing decaf, you can still enjoy the comfort of a warm cup without the potential stressors associated with caffeine. Plus, decaf coffee can contribute to your daily water intake, helping you stay hydrated. While it doesn't replace water, it won't contribute to dehydration since it lacks [the diuretic effects of caffeine](#). So, if you're looking for a simple way to enhance relaxation and hydration, consider making the switch to decaf coffee.

Perhaps you have a few minutes to meditate after waking up and before [going to bed](#). Maybe you can find a half-hour to stretch and flow through [a soothing yoga sequence](#) or dedicate a chunk of time every evening to reading an engaging novel or [writing in a journal](#). Having hobbies outside of being a caregiver isn't selfish—it's a necessary component of self-care. It can also be worthwhile to take time to optimize your home for a less stressful life.

Going for a walk can also be a good way to relieve stress. If you don't have a dedicated walking path, consult [a walk score map](#) of your area. You'll be able to quickly pick out a good route for walking.

## Respite Care

The thought of taking time off from your caregiving duties might be a little nerve-wracking. You may worry that someone else won't understand your loved one's needs like you do, or that they will feel confused or overwhelmed in your absence.

All of these fears are normal, but you can't be a caregiver 24/7—everyone needs time to themselves, and that includes you. According to Aging Care, there are several [respite care options](#) for caregivers who need a few days off. Talk to a trusted relative, get in touch with a local volunteer group, or contact adult day care centers to inquire about their services. Giving yourself a break every once in a while can help you be a better caregiver in the long run.

Caregivers who are responsible for relatives with Alzheimer's spend most of their time doing selfless work. It's crucial that they have the opportunity to prioritize their own self-care, too.