

Warning Signs for Caregivers



The strain of caregiving can lead to exhaustion – physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Such exhaustion, sometimes called “burnout”, can cause compassionate, involved caregivers to feel detached, resentful, sad and even angry and become unable to continue giving good care.

Caregivers often neglect themselves while caring for others. Trying to do your best all the time for another person can sometimes feel like a burden. Caregiving can be a rewarding and fulfilling experience that will bring you great pride.

The following is a list of warning signs that you need help from others.

- Avoiding phone calls or visits from friends, family, and other loved ones
- Loss of interest in fun activities you previously enjoyed, such as going to a movie or eating out
- Feeling blue, irritable, hopeless, and helpless without relief
- Changes in appetite, weight, or both
- Changes in sleep patterns – feeling tired all the time or “keyed up” and unable to rest
- Getting sick often
- Feeling emotionally and physically exhausted
- Irritability and impatience, anger at your loved one or yourself
- Feeling resentment about giving care, or toward others who you feel should be helping out more
- Feeling guilty about your feelings
- Feelings of wanting to hurt yourself or the person for whom you are caring

Help is available. Call your hospice care team, your personal health care provider, or your clergy if you are experiencing any of the signs listed above. You are not alone.

