

CAREGIVER BILL OF RIGHTS

I have the right:

- To take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will enable me to take better care of my loved one.
- To seek help from others even though my loved one may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.
- To maintain facets of my own life which do not include the person I care for, just as I would if he or she were healthy. I know that I do everything that I reasonably can for this person, and I have the right to do some things for myself.
- To get angry, be depressed, and express other difficult emotions occasionally.
- To reject any attempt by my loved one (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me through guilt, anger, or depression.
- To receive consideration, affection, forgiveness, and acceptance from my loved one for as long as I offer these qualities in return.
- To take pride in what I am accomplishing and to applaud the courage it sometimes takes to meet the needs of my loved one.
- To protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me when my loved one no longer needs my full-time help.
- To expect and demand that as new strides are made in finding resources to aid physically and mentally impaired persons in our country, similar strides will be made toward aiding and supporting caregivers.