



7 Practical Ways to find time for Self-Care

A Caregivers life is packed full with grooming, doctors or therapy appointments, exercises and food preparation often before noon and all for the well being of someone else. With that in mind it is understandable that Caregivers experience exhaustion, depression and burnout. But when they look for help the advice offered, although exactly what they need, may cause them to roll their eyes and shake their heads: ***Get plenty of sleep: Get regular exercise: Eat a healthy diet and my all time favorite- Spend time doing the things you enjoy.*** When life is so busy it can be challenging to see how to find time for any of these things.

Here are 7 practical ways to find a few extra minutes throughout your day to add one or two self-care practices.

1. ***Pre-make meals*** - Weekends tend to be a little less hectic so pick one day and prepare all or some of your meals for the week. You can freeze them and pull them out for easy preparation.
2. ***Use alternative transportation***- If you are a working caregiver making use of alternative transportation can save you from having to take extra time off work. Arrange for transportation to the appointment and you can meet them there. If you are a part of the ever growing “Sandwich generation” become a part of car pooling to and/or from school and practices with other parents. Taking one or two trips off your plate can add a good 30 minutes to your day. You can contribute by driving every other time or offer a gas card or babysitting.
3. ***Use a pill organizer***- If your loved one takes more than one pill per day this is a good way to save 5 to 10 minutes a day, especially when each day can be different.
4. ***Make lists***- By organizing your week/day it helps you stay on task and time is not wasted with extra trips to the store.
5. ***Stay focused and set time limits***- As caregivers we are often researching the newest information to help care for our loved one. Although very important it is easy to lose focus and before you know it hours have passed and you have forgotten your original purpose. Set a time limit and have a “parking lot” (add link/description) list for interesting discoveries. This way you have a list to refer back to, for research on another day.
6. ***Prepare a Care Plan***- Although time consuming at first once completed it will save time. When leaving your loved one in the care of someone else reviewing a completed Care Plan should take only a few minutes versus having to go over everything you do which can take up to 30 minutes, taking time away from your respite.
7. ***JUST SAY YES***- This can be the hardest thing of all! When anyone offers to help in any way accept the offer or say thank you and offer an alternative.