

Caregiver Survival Tips - Based on Lessons Learned from Madelyn, Chronicles of a Caregiver

- **Set aside some time each day for yourself:** *Having something to look forward to will help ease your emotional stress.*
- **Get the right equipment:** *As with any job, getting the right tools will protect you from unnecessary physical strain and injuries.*
- **Get out in nature:** *Let the sights, sounds, and smells of the outdoors lift your spirits.*
- **Learn something new:** *Even if you are confined physically, there is no limit to how far your mind can go.*
- **Stay connected socially:** *Participating in respite care programs and visiting with friends and family can help avoid depression and illness brought on by isolation.*
- **Look for humor in absurd situations:** *When faced with a difficult or frustrating circumstance, ask yourself, "Is there anything funny about this?"*
- **Savor happy memories:** *Recall a specific happy occasion. Focus on recapturing the positive, loving feelings and the joy you experienced as you remember the event.*
- **Redefine fun:** *Seeking new ways to bring joy and interesting activity into your life can bring unexpected pleasure.*
- **Find a safe release for negative emotions:** *Accept the fact that you will not always feel and act as loving and kind as you would like. When you are experiencing extreme stress, get active . . . Exercise, breathe deeply, write a rant, listen to music, call a friend, or scream into a pillow. Letting off a little steam can be a very good thing.*
- **Accept help:** *It is often much easier to give than it is to receive. If someone offers to help, understand that they are giving you a gift. Accept it graciously.*
- **Develop your spiritual nature:** *You may find comfort in faith. You may find it in music, meditation, or nature. If there is something that ignites your spirit, explore it, and let your soul soar.*
- **Accept that death is a part of life:** *Talking openly about death can help relieve fear & give you the opportunity to express everything you want your loved one to know. Then when the end comes, you will grieve his/her loss, but you will not have regrets about things left unsaid.*
- **Control your attitude:** **Remember Madelyn's words:** *"As long as I have the ability to reason and think, I have the power to control my attitude toward any person, thing, or event."*

To sign up for Elaine's free e-newsletter, visit her website at: www.ElaineKSanchez.com