A Woman’s Work is Never Done: Finding Time to Take Care of Yourself

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Introduction
- Caring for a person with Alzheimer’s disease is exhausting
- Women are natural caregivers
- Most caregivers are women
- Women perform more caregiving tasks
- Women spend more time in care work and less time caring for themselves

What is Time for Self?
- Time for YOU
- Time to do what you want to do
- Minutes, hours or days
- Time to step back
  - to renew yourself
  - to re-focus your attention
  - to restore you energy
  - WITHOUT feeling guilty

Why is it Important?
Taking time for you restores the balance and energy needed to maintain a healthy mind, body and spirit.

Where do I begin?
- Think about You
- Do I have enough help?
- Do I ask for help?
- Where can I find help?
- How am I feeling?
- Is it hard to make or keep appointments?
- When was my last doctor’s appointment?
- How much time do I spend with family & friends?
- When was the last time I had a vacation?

Take an inventory
- Make a list
- Write down everything you do during a 24 hour day
- Include interruptions and rest periods
- Do this for a week
- Review your list
Check for Barriers
- You may believe that thinking of yourself is selfish
- Thinking of your own needs may frighten or frustrate you
- It may be hard for you to ask for what you want or need from your friends or family
- Asking for help may make you feel like you are not doing a good enough job
- You may feel personally responsible for your loved one’s health

Complete this sentence…
I feel relaxed and refreshed when I…
meditate watch a sunset
journal sing
practice yoga talk to my friends
exercise dance
listen to music pray
eat healthy food watch old movies
spend quiet time alone go fishing

I feel relaxed and refreshed when I…
get a hug play an instrument
read a good book window shop
go for a picnic paint
swim play tennis
ski play cards
take a long walk play chess
take a nap get a pedicure
have my hair done cook a new recipe

Set Goals
Sample Goal: Focus on my health
✓ Make an appointment for a physical exam
✓ Take one 20 minute nap each day
✓ Walk 10 minutes three times each week
✓ Identify 2 formal caregiver resources

Summary
- Think about you
- Take an inventory
- Check and remove barriers
- Identify ways to relax
- Set goals and get started!

Source: http://caregiver.org/caregiver/jsp/print_friendly.jsp?nodeid=847