

THE CAREGIVER'S BILL OF RIGHTS

Even as a caregiver I have the right:

To take care of myself. I affirm that as I care for myself, I gain the strength and will to care for others.

To seek help from others even though my loved ones may object. I recognize that there are limits of my endurance and strength.

To maintain parts of my own life that do not include the person for whom I care, just as I would if he or she were healthy.

To get angry, be depressed, and express other difficult feelings occasionally.

To reject (or ignore) any attempts by my loved one (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me through guilt, and/or depression.

To receive consideration, affection, forgiveness, and acceptance for what I do. I recognize that the person for whom I care may not be able to provide these, and I look to my loved ones for these qualities, and I give them in return.

To take pride in what I am accomplishing and celebrate the courage, wisdom and tenacity that I express in fulfilling my role as caregiver.

To protect my individuality and the life style I choose which will sustain me after my loved one no longer needs my care giving energies.

To expect and demand that resources dedicated to aiding physically and mentally impaired persons in our country include aiding and supporting caregivers.