

BEGIN AGAIN LIVING MINISTRIES

A Caregiver's Emotional Wellness Checklist

A brief self-check for recognizing strain and making room for support

A COMPLIMENTARY GUIDE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

Compassionate guidance for caregiving, grief, and end-of-life transitions.

From Diagnosis to Goodbye™

Caring for the Caregiver

Caregiving can be meaningful and deeply loving, but it can also bring exhaustion, uncertainty, isolation, and anticipatory grief. This checklist is not a test. It is a compassionate pause to help you notice what your mind, body, relationships, and spirit may be asking for.

Your needs matter, too. Caring for yourself supports your ability to remain present without losing yourself in the role.

During the Past Two Weeks, Have You Noticed...

- ☐ Feeling emotionally drained, overwhelmed, or frequently tearful
- ☐ Difficulty sleeping, even when you have an opportunity to rest
- ☐ Irritability, guilt, resentment, numbness, or persistent worry
- ☐ Skipping meals, appointments, medications, exercise, or basic personal care
- ☐ Withdrawing from people or activities that usually support you
- ☐ Feeling that everything depends on you and you cannot step away
- ☐ Trouble concentrating or making ordinary decisions
- ☐ Physical tension, headaches, stomach discomfort, or worsening health concerns
- ☐ A loss of spiritual connection, meaning, hope, or inner steadiness
- ☐ Using alcohol, medications, food, spending, or other behaviors to escape distress

Checking several items does not mean you have failed. It may mean that your caregiving demands have exceeded the support currently available.

Small Steps You Can Take

1. Name one immediate need

Choose the most urgent need today: sleep, food, information, relief, reassurance, or someone to listen.

2. Ask for one specific form of help

Instead of “I need help,” try “Can you stay for one hour Thursday?” or “Could you bring dinner tomorrow?”

3. Use the care team

Ask the nurse, social worker, chaplain, physician, or other care professional what support and respite options are available.

4. Create a five-minute reset

Step outside, breathe slowly, stretch, pray, listen to music, drink water, or sit without completing another task.

5. Protect one sustaining connection

Keep contact with at least one trusted person, community, faith group, counselor, or caregiver-support resource.

6. Release impossible standards

Good caregiving does not require doing everything alone or responding perfectly to every moment.

My Support Plan

[] One person I can call: _____

[] One task I can share: _____

[] One question for the care team: _____

[] One restorative practice I can do this week: _____

[] One boundary I need to communicate: _____

When Additional Help Is Needed

Contact a healthcare or mental-health professional if distress is persistent, worsening, affecting your safety, or preventing daily functioning. If you are thinking about harming yourself or feel unable to stay safe, call or text 988 in the United States and Canada, call 911, or go to the nearest emergency department.

You do not have to carry this journey alone. Support is available, and asking for help is an act of care.

About Begin Again Living Ministries

Begin Again Living Ministries offers compassionate education and support for individuals, families, caregivers, churches, and organizations navigating grief, caregiving, stress, and end-of-life transitions.

Visit: balministries.org

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