

BILL OF RIGHTS FOR CAREGIVERS

PROVIDED BY CAREGIVER JO HOREN, AUTHOR OF
CAREGIVING: HELPING AN AGING LOVED ONE
(AARP BOOKS, 1985) AND PARKINSON'S DISEASE FOR
DUMMIES (2ND EDITION)



I HAVE THE RIGHT TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF. THIS IS NOT AN ACT OF SELFISHNESS. IT WILL GIVE ME THE ABILITY TO TAKE BETTER CARE OF MY LOVED ONE.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO SEEK HELP FROM OTHERS EVEN THOUGH MY LOVED ONE MAY OBJECT. I RECOGNIZE THE LIMITS OF MY OWN ENDURANCE AND STRENGTH.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAINTAIN FACETS OF MY OWN LIFE THAT DO NOT INCLUDE THE PERSON I CARE FOR JUST AS I WOULD IF HE OR SHE WERE HEALTHY. I KNOW THAT I DO EVERYTHING THAT I REASONABLY CAN DO FOR THIS PERSON AND I HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO SOME THINGS JUST FOR MYSELF.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO GET ANGRY, BE DEPRESSED, AND EXPRESS DIFFICULT FEELINGS OCCASIONALLY.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY ATTEMPT BY MY LOVED ONE (EITHER CONSCIOUS OR UNCONSCIOUS) TO MANIPULATE ME THROUGH GUILT OR ANGER.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO RECEIVE CONSIDERATION, AFFECTION, FORGIVENESS, AND ACCEPTANCE FOR WHAT I DO FOR MY LOVED ONE AS I OFFER THESE ATTRIBUTES IN RETURN.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO TAKE PRIDE IN WHAT I AM ACCOMPLISHING AND TO APPLAUD THE COURAGE IT HAS TAKEN TO MEET THE NEEDS OF MY LOVED ONE.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO PROTECT MY INDIVIDUALITY AND MY RIGHT TO MAKE A LIFE FOR MYSELF THAT WILL SUSTAIN ME IN TIMES WHEN MY LOVED ONE NO LONGER NEEDS MY FULL-TIME HELP.

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO EXPECT AND DEMAND THAT AS NEW STRIDES ARE MADE IN FINDING RESOURCES TO AID PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY IMPAIRED PERSONS IN OUR COUNTRY, SIMILAR STRIDES WILL BE MADE TOWARD AIDING AND SUPPORTING CAREGIVERS.

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