

A woman with dark hair is shown in profile, looking out a window. She is holding a dark mug. The window has string lights hanging in front of it, and the view outside is blurry. The text 'THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CARE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS' is overlaid in white.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-CARE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS



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Caring for elderly family members is a responsibility that many of us take on at some point in our lives. However, in the process of caring for others, we often neglect our own needs. Whether caring for an elderly spouse, parent, or grandparent, it's essential to prioritize self-care to sustain our caregiving duties.

Maintaining healthy boundaries is critical to avoid burnout. If we don't balance caregiving tasks with other important aspects of our lives, such as work or leisure, we risk becoming exhausted and unable to continue providing care. Engaging in self-care, including respite care, benefits both the caregiver and the loved one receiving care.

## Caregivers In Distress

In British Columbia, family caregivers play a crucial role in supporting seniors to age in place. In fact, for every hour of care provided by the health authority, caregivers provide five hours of unpaid care. However, this often comes at a cost. Over one-third of caregivers report feelings of distress, anger, or depression, and many feel overwhelmed by their responsibilities.

As caregiver burnout increases, the strain on the healthcare system grows, especially with the existing shortage of healthcare workers. Supporting family caregivers through resources like respite care is essential in preventing premature transitions into long-term care facilities for seniors who want to remain at home.

## **Creating A Caregiver Support Plan**

To thrive as a caregiver, it's important to have access to the right tools and resources. One helpful tool is a [caregiver support plan](#), offered by organizations like the Family Caregivers of BC.

A caregiver support plan helps identify the resources needed to balance caregiving tasks with personal self-care. Every plan is unique, as each caregiver's needs vary and evolve over time. Having a clear plan can help maintain your well-being throughout your caregiving journey.

## **Respite Care: A Vital Form Of Self-Care**

No matter your caregiving experience, everyone needs a break from time to time. Respite care provides family caregivers with an opportunity to recharge, both physically and emotionally. Taking time for yourself reminds you that your well-being matters, too.