

Caregiver Bill of Rights



I HAVE THE RIGHT TO:



◆ TAKE CARE OF MYSELF

This is not an act of selfishness; it will allow me to take better care of my family member.

◆ SEEK HELP FROM OTHERS

Even though my family member may object, it is reasonable for me to acknowledge and deal with the limits of my own strength and endurance by accepting help.

◆ MAINTAIN PARTS OF MY OWN LIFE

It is important for me to do some things for myself that do not include my family member, just as I would if they were healthy.

◆ HAVE INTENSE EMOTIONS

It is normal for me to have intense emotions related to the caregiving process. It is necessary for me to find healthy ways to express emotions like anger, frustration, and sadness.

◆ REJECT MANIPULATION

It is important for me to resist attempts by my family member to manipulate me, whether those attempts are intentional or not.

◆ TAKE PRIDE

It is acceptable for me to take pride and applaud the courage it takes for me to meet the needs of my family member.

◆ PROTECT MY INDIVIDUALITY

It is reasonable for me to make a life for myself that will help me after my family member no longer needs my help.

(Adapted from the *Caregiver Fact Sheet*, Bulletin #4206, University of Maine Cooperative Extension)