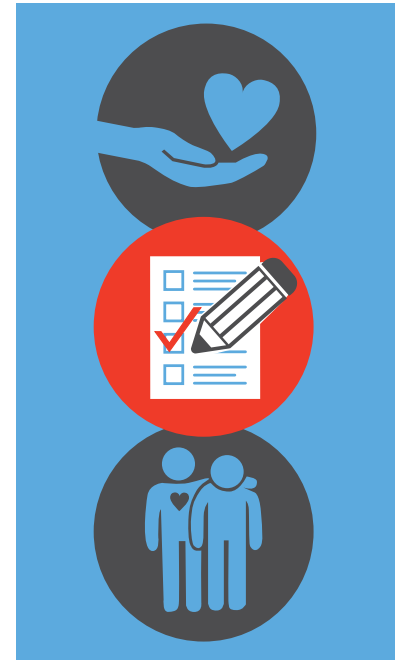


ADVICE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS: The Six M's for Caregiver Self-Care During the Coronavirus Outbreak

For millions of family caregivers, caring for loved ones in “quarantine” has added a new layer of stress. As they struggle to provide and manage care, find services and resources and protect their loved ones, self-care can be even harder than usual.

In a recent AARP tele-townhall, Donna Benton, Ph.D., director, University of Southern California Family Caregiver Support Center, shared her thoughts about how family caregivers can work self-care into their days as they care for loved ones during the coronavirus outbreak.

“This is a time when we have to use our “Six M's” toward self-care” says Dr. Benton.



The 6 M's of Caregiver Self-Care

By Dr. Donna Benton, USC Family Caregiver Support Center

#1 | Mail

Stay connected; use email or old-fashioned “snail mail.”

#2 | Music

Pick up your music collection. Fill your home with music. Sometimes music gives us a different feeling in our body and helps us feel good.

#3 | Movies

Watch movies at home. Find movies that make you laugh for stress relief. Take breaks from watching the news about COVID-19; don't watch it 24/7.

#4 | Meals

Be creative about meals. Depending on your diet, whip something up that you really enjoy. You can even have a cup cake (or a whole cake) delivered!

#5 | Mindfulness

Practice mindfulness. Now more than ever, yoga and meditation classes are available online at little or no cost.

#6 | Movement

Look for ways to move your body each hour just for a few minutes. Dancing, stretching, and chair exercise can keep our bodies healthy, and our minds sharp.

“If you keep in mind that you can do things to keep yourself energized, relaxed, and in good humor, I think this will help us through these stressful times.”

– Donna Benton, Ph.D.

RESOURCES

Find more self-care ideas for caregivers at:

www.aarp.org/caregiving

AARP's *Prepare to Care* guide is free and available to all at:

www.aarp.org/preparetocare

Find local caregiving resources at:

www.aarp.org/crf

Visit AARP's coronavirus resources:

www.aarp.org/coronavirus