

Ways to Avoid Carer Burnout*

1. Set boundaries. As a carer, you have enough to do already. Don't feel as though you have to say "yes" to the requests of others.
2. Set realistic limits. Accept that you cannot do it all—no one should expect you to and you should not expect it of yourself.
3. Delegate responsibility and create a care team. If you have others around you who are willing help, take advantage of it.
4. Seek and accept help. If you have realistic limits, you'll know when it is time to ask for help—*before* you find yourself in a crisis. If someone offers help, take advantage of it.
5. Celebrate success. Celebrate your own and those of your loved one—no matter how seemingly small.
6. Take breaks. Taking periodic breaks to do something that gives you enjoyment and peace—even if only for 10-minutes—can help recharge you for the rest of the day.
7. Utilize respite care and adult day care options. Accept that getting away from the caregiving situation helps you *and* your loved one. If you feel guilty about this, talk your feelings over with someone.
8. Investigate what external resources are available, including carers' training courses and physical aids.
9. Resources for people dealing with MS day-to-day will vary from city to city and state to state. In each case, the National MS Society will be able to help you identify what is available.

*Adapted from The Well Spouse Foundation website, 2000. <http://www.wellspouse.org/>
Miller D. Caring for the carers. *MS in Focus*. 2004, 3:12-16.