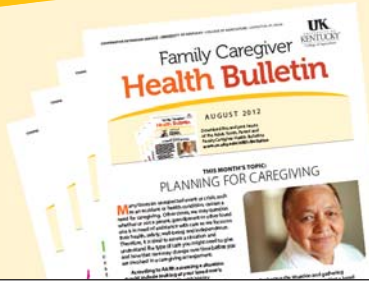


# Family Caregiver Health Bulletin



JANUARY 2015

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913-833-5450

## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

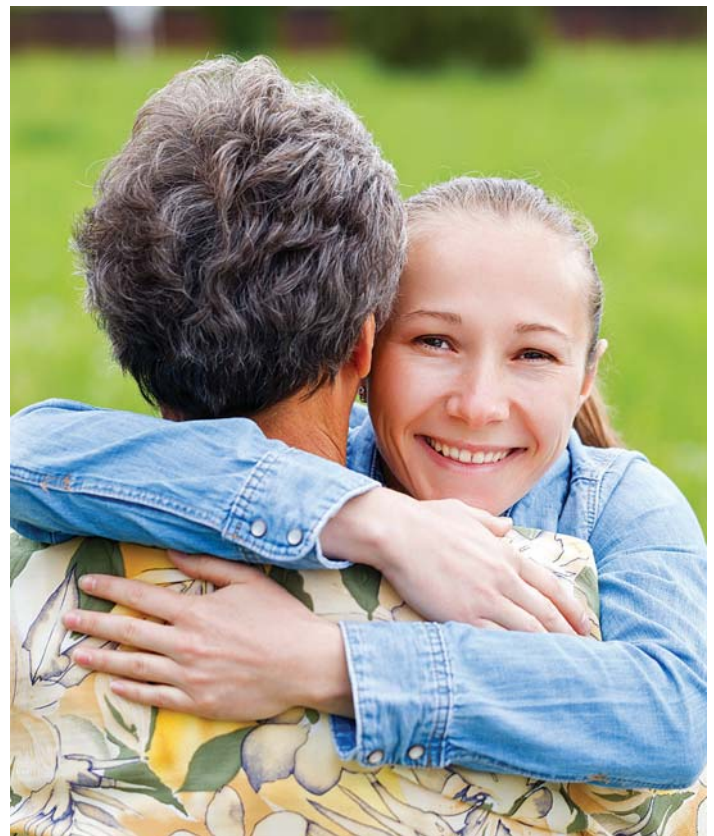
# A CAREGIVER'S RESOLUTIONS

**T**he beginning of the year is associated with a clean slate and fresh start. Many people are motivated toward self-improvement and use the New Year as a time to prepare for and make changes. This year, take time to reflect on your role as a caregiver and use the tradition of a New Year's resolution to make realistic lifestyle changes. Incorporate healthy behaviors to make you a better caregiver and the caregiving process more rewarding.

### As a caregiver in this New Year, I will:

- **Take one hour each day for me.** (Things I might do include: exercising, reading, spending time with family or friends, taking time for my favorite hobby, soaking in a hot bath or doing nothing at all.)
- **Attend a caregiver support group or workshop** so that I understand that I am not alone and that I can learn from others.

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# *If you do not take time to take care of yourself, it will be difficult for you to provide others the care they need.*

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- **Find the joy in caregiving**, even if it is in the small things, such as a hug, a knowing smile or a shared laugh.
- **Adapt, as needed, the things I like to do with my loved one and do them with some adjustments.** (for example: Start going to the movies, if the theatre becomes too challenging to navigate. Make Italian night at home with pasta and music and photos, if traveling is no longer possible. Rather than dance, hold hands and listen to music.)
- **Tell my loved one what they mean to me.**
- **Make my own health a priority.**  
I am going to exercise, eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, balance my stress and visit my health care provider at least once this year for a physical checkup.
- **Use respite services** so that I can receive a break from the physical and emotional demands of caregiving.
- **Exercise.** Over the course of a week, I will try to get at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity, 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity or a combination of both. I will also try to strength train twice a week.
- **Eat a balanced diet.** I will be conscious of eating the right amount of food for my activity level and a variety of food that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, some milk and dairy foods, some protein such as meat, fish, eggs and beans and a small amount of food high in fat and sugar.
- **Be strong, smart and brave enough to ask for help.**

*Caregivers should take an hour each day for themselves to exercise, read, spend time with family or friends, enjoy a hobby, etc.*



- **Use humor.** I will recognize and appreciate humorous stories and moments because they are not only helpful, but they are therapeutic and necessary. I will brighten my day with the unprompted, unintentional remarks and antics of my loved one. I will laugh, not at the person I love, but at the moment because it is funny and I will hold that moment in my heart.

Remember, if you do not take time to take care of yourself, it is unlikely that you will be able to provide care without frustration, resentment and stress. Making it a priority to find ways to take time for you without feeling guilty, provides relief and more positive caregiving in the long run for you and the person you are helping.

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**Health Bulletin**

**Written by:** Amy Hosier, Ph.D.  
Extension Specialist for Family Life  
**Edited by:** Connee Wheeler  
**Designed by:** Rusty Manseau  
**Stock images:** 123RF.com

