

Caregiver Bill of Rights

By Jo Horne, Author of [Caregiving: Helping an Aging Loved One](#)

I have the right...

To take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will enable me to take better care of my loved one.

I have the right...

To seek help from others even though my loved one may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.

I have the right...

To maintain facets of my own life that does not include the person I care for, just as I would if he or she were healthy. I know that I do everything that I reasonably can for this person, and I have the right to do things for myself.

I have the right...

To get angry, to be depressed and to express other difficult emotions occasionally.

I have the right...

To reject any attempt by my loved one (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me through guilt, anger or depression.

I have the right...

To receive consideration, affection, forgiveness and acceptance from my loved one for as long as I offer these qualities in return.

I have the right...

To take pride in what I am accomplishing and to applaud the courage it sometimes takes to meet the needs of my loved one.

I have the right...

To protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me when my loved one no longer needs my full-time help.

I have the right...

To expect and demand that as new strides are made in finding resources to aid physically and mentally impaired persons in our country, similar strides will be made toward aiding and supporting caregivers.