

Respite Care Checklist for Caregivers

By Montevia Buffon

Acknowledge Your Needs

- Recognize that rest is essential, not selfish.
- Remind yourself: caring for yourself is part of caring for your loved one.

Overcome Common Fears

- Fear of Missing a Moment: Many people pass when loved ones briefly step away.
- Fear of Others Caring Differently: Communicate instructions; hospice staff and volunteers are trained to help.
- Guilt of Resting: A rested caregiver offers more patience and compassion.

Practical Steps for Breaks

- Ask family or friends to take a shift.
- Use hospice volunteers for vigil support.
- Explore community or church respite programs.
- Step outside for fresh air, a walk, or quiet reflection.

Signs You Need Respite

- Emotional exhaustion or irritability
- Physical fatigue, headaches, or sleep disruption
- Feeling overwhelmed or unable to focus
- Loss of patience or increased sadness

Simple Self-Care During Respite

- Rest or nap
- Take a short walk or stretch

- Eat a nourishing meal
- Journal, pray, or meditate
- Connect with a trusted friend