



Caregiver Bill of Rights

- I have the right to take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the capability of taking better care of my relative.
- I have the right to seek help from others even though my relatives may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.
- I have the right to maintain facets of my own life that do 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 some things just for myself.
- I have the right to get angry, be depressed, and express other difficult feelings occasionally.
- I have the right to reject any attempts by my relative (either conscious or unconscious) to manipulate me through guilt and/or depression.
- I have the right to receive consideration, affection, forgiveness and acceptance from my loved one for what I do, 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 has sometimes taken to meet the needs of my relative.
- I have the right to protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me in the time when my relative no longer needs my full-time help.
- I have the right to expect and demand that as new strides are made in finding our resources to aid physically and mentally impaired persons in our country, similar strides will be made towards aiding and supporting caregivers.

— Jo Horne, author of *Caregiving: Helping an Aging Loved One*