

Caregivers #MyIndigenousselfcare tips



The following tips were given to the National Indian Council on Aging as part of NICOA's outreach to caregivers who do so much for their families and elders. This is a reminder to take a break and take care of yourself as we cannot give or care when we feel depleted or rundown.

- Remembering to take care of yourself. Exercise can be a great stress reliever and can be as simple as taking a walk.
- I usually go for drives with my kids and enjoy ice cream or some sort of snack to get away from things. I enjoy going to yard sales or flea market because usually it helps to just enjoy yourself; also take in a movie with the family.
- I like to calm down working with my cedar beads after having an eventful day with a little bit of stress. For some reason, it really calms me down; it's my therapy.
- Feeding and caring for my livestock. Getting my head clear by inhaling in and out. In the house, I use scented candles and music to clear my head and body to relax.
- My mom is at the age of forgetting some things and I look at her and tell her the correct way or a story ... Her diet is always in portions of what she wants and there are times I have to ask why she wants to eat in her room and she laughs. ... My Mom is a retired LPN and she knows a lot yet today.
- Learn to say "No." It will change your world. It is a new sound in our ever-changing world. NO makes your younger generation stop in their tracks.
- I take time to care for myself by taking dance classes, walks at the beach, relaxing outdoors, taking deep breaths and enjoy the country scenery.
- They say laughter is the best medicine. So I will often get onto Snapchat and take turns with my parents going through the different lens. We laugh, laugh at ourselves and each other. Just to hear them laugh puts a smile on my face that lasts all day.
- Listen to my music and a hot bath.
- We both have memory problems and have both agreed not to criticize one another if we forget what each of us has told the other. During each of our doctor visits, we both go into the doctor's office for the consultation in case the spouse may have questions that the spouse seeing the doctor may have forgotten. Make list(s) of chores, shopping items, etc., so we don't forget what we need to do or shop for.
- Every morning when I make coffee I stand in front of it and breathe in the aroma and think relaxing thoughts. I also meditate 3-4 times daily when mother is watching TV and I post on Facebook a snippet of our day. Also write down 3-5 things that I am grateful for.
- I have less time for self-care these days. I love to work in the yard and on the garden. Digging in the dirt seems to calm my nerves. It helps me get my thoughts back to myself and feel like I accomplish something when I see things grow.
- Pray. Drink plenty of water.



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