

MY TURN: A StrokeSmart Magazine Discussion Guide

Article: “Bonnie Franklin’s Life As A Caregiver”

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There is no way around it. Stroke has a significant impact on the survivor as well as the caregiver and family. The added responsibilities can make you feel alone at a time when more support is needed than ever before. It’s important to find ways to cope with this.

Bonnie Franklin offers tips to caregivers from her own experiences caring for her father after his stroke. Which tips have you used already and which ones do you have trouble with? If you have trouble doing them, why is this so?

- Asking for help
- Finding resources
- Sharing with other caregivers
- Taking it one day at a time

What do you, as a caregiver, need most right now? Is it information, resources, support, or something else? How can you meet those needs? Share your needs with another caregiver or support group members and brainstorm with each other on how you can meet your needs.

If you can give yourself a break from caregiving, you’ll be helping both yourself and your loved one. This can be as little as 5 minutes, 1 hour or 1 day. Taking care of yourself and getting the support you need is essential to being the best you can be – for yourself and for your loved one. What are different ways you take care of yourself now? Share your ideas with friends or a support group. Write down ideas that you would like to use in the future.

Finding resources to help take care of your loved one or yourself is very important. Discuss where you have found helpful resources and share these within your support group or with other stroke caregivers you may know.

Bonnie Franklin and her family came to clearly see what’s important in life. She says, “We all learned greater empathy, admiration for the courage and achievements of anyone who is struggling with any disability. Most importantly, we learned the joy of making time to create true, deep human connections.” What is important to you now that you have experienced stroke in your family?

How can you share what you have learned from your experience?



Resources

National Family Caregiver Alliance

<http://www.nfcares.org/>

Stroke Support Group Listings

http://www.stroke.org/support_groups

Video: Caregiver Involvement in Post-Stroke Care

http://strokensa.healthology.com//hybrid/hybrid-autodetect.aspx?focus_handle=stroke&content_id=2998&brand_name=strokensa

Lots A Helping Hands Program

<http://www.stroke.org/Strokelinks>

CarePages Program

<http://www.stroke.org/carepages>