

Planning Rest, Respite, and Support for Yourself

Caregiving for someone with Functional Neurological Disorder can involve ongoing responsibility, unpredictability, and emotional presence. Over time, this can place sustained demands on caregivers and family members.

This planning resource focuses on **how caregivers can plan for rest, respite, and support** in ways that are realistic and sustainable. Planning for your own needs is not separate from caregiving. It helps make caregiving possible over time.

Why Planning for Rest and Support Matters

Caregiving often expands gradually, leaving little space for recovery.

Planning for rest and support can:

- reduce cumulative exhaustion
- help prevent burnout
- support clearer thinking and decision-making
- make caregiving more sustainable

Planning acknowledges that capacity is not unlimited.

Identifying What Rest Means for You

Rest looks different for different people.

It may involve:

- physical rest or sleep
- time without responsibility
- quiet or reduced stimulation
- engaging in non-caregiving activities

Identifying what actually restores you helps make planning more effective.

Recognizing When Respite Is Needed

Respite is not only for emergencies.

It may be helpful to plan respite when you notice:

- ongoing fatigue that does not improve
- increased irritability or frustration
- difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- reduced enjoyment in daily life

Recognizing early signs allows for proactive adjustment.

Planning Practical Support

Support does not need to be all-or-nothing.

Planning may include:

- identifying people who can help occasionally
- using formal supports when available
- clarifying what help you are willing to accept

Small, planned support can reduce ongoing strain.

Communicating Needs and Limits

Planning works best when needs are communicated clearly.

This may involve:

- stating when you need time or support
- clarifying what you can and cannot manage
- revisiting plans as circumstances change

Clear communication helps prevent misunderstanding.

Reviewing and Adjusting Plans Over Time

Caregiving demands may change as symptoms, roles, or life circumstances shift.

It can be helpful to:

- revisit plans periodically
- adjust support as capacity changes
- recognize when additional help is needed

Review supports sustainability rather than failure.

Supporting Caregiving Over Time

Planning rest, respite, and support for yourself is an essential part of long-term caregiving for Functional Neurological Disorder. When caregivers plan realistically and protect their own capacity, support is more likely to remain steady, respectful, and sustainable.

This resource is intended to support caregivers in maintaining their own wellbeing while continuing to care for others.

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