

Checklist for Bringing Relief to Caregivers

Asking **FOR** help is difficult for some. Asking **TO** help may be equally as difficult when the thought of rejection looms.

Knowing that rejection could be an outcome of offering to help, it's a good idea to remember not to take the decline of your offer personally.

One guaranteed way to have success when offering to help is to recall how good it feels when others allow you freedom to choose if you'll accept their 'loving-kindness' or not. Another way of saying this: make an effort to respect the boundaries of the person you'd like to help. If in doubt about how, when, who, and where to help out, make it your habit to ASK FIRST! Why? Unexpected, perhaps unwanted kindnesses may cause further distress.

It's usually safe to volunteer by offering a skill that is comfortable to and for you to perform. Perhaps driving, baking, organizing, lifting heavy items, errands, cooking etc. comes easy to you. If so, that may be the skill that you'd offer a person in need. Serve **how**, and serve **where you** serve best!

An ABC list of options for serving others may be helpful to keep on hand. The following list is simply a **starter list** or a cheat sheet for those who may need a nudge.

A. Arrange to help with a surprise event by setting up tables and chairs or straightening up.

Your idea _____

B. Be a go getter at: Post Office, dry cleaners, grocery store, car repair, general errands.

Your idea _____

C. Carry note cards, thank you notes, books for children, puzzles for children.

Your Idea _____

D. Drive /chauffeur caregivers to their errands.

Your Idea _____

E. Electronically send encouraging words via text, tweets, emails, etc.

Your Idea _____

F. Feed pets or pet sit for them.

Your Idea _____

G. Get daily mail from the mailbox; write the date the mail was received on the outside of the envelope, leaving the envelope sealed, unless asked by caregiver to do otherwise.

Your Idea _____

H. Hand hold a sign at an airport should you agree to transport a family member of the caregiver.

Your Idea _____

I. Iron clothes or fold laundry.

Your Idea _____

J. Just listen to the caregiver; no need to say more than an occasional, "Oh, I see." Asking questions may also add to their stress.

Your Idea _____

K. Keep plants if you have a green thumb

Your Idea _____

L. Learn another language, though it may require 12 to 24 months, if you tend to be skilled with languages. Learn basic greetings for interacting with caregivers or visiting family members.

Your Idea _____

M. Mend clothing

Your Idea _____

N. Neighbor is out of town? Bring refuse / recycle bins from the curb to the house.

Your Idea _____

O. Organize a team of people to sit with someone who is homebound, while the caregiver goes out

Your Idea _____

P Pray audibly on the phone or in person.

Your Idea _____

Q. Quiet a new mother's fears by sharing positive early parenting experiences.

Your Idea _____

R. Read to children, seniors, blind, etc.

Your Idea _____

S. Send a gift from a florist to a young person, who may be away for summer at camp, or at university away from home.

Your Idea _____

T. Treat yourself to a class that will improve your helping skills and abilities.

Your Idea _____

U. Understand that whatever you have to offer is usually always needed when there's a crisis

Your Idea _____

V. VOLUNTEER in a setting in which you're capable.

Your Idea _____

W. Wake a friend with a phone call, if you're certain the person would like to be awakened.

Your Idea _____

X. 'X' marks the spot! Find a spot for a framed picture and hang it for a friend, if okayed.

Your Idea _____

Y. Your free choice/ something that you enjoy.

Your Idea_____

Z. Zzzzz - Sleep. Rest. Repair yourself.

Your Idea_____

‘Love thy neighbor as thyself.’

Caregivers may need your love, caring, kindness, and willingness to give of your time to their otherwise difficult schedule.

As you love yourself, remember that others aren’t exactly like you, but certainly we all value respect shown for our preferences and privacy, too.