Caregiver Self Assessment

Learn how to identify areas of self-care you want to work on and develop a plan to address these healthy habits.

NATIONAL OVARIAN CANCER COALITION®

How to use this assessment

When caregiving, we often are so focused on our loved one's needs that we may neglect our own well-being. Checking in with your mental, emotional, and physical needs is a good way to ensure that you are taking care of yourself so you can better support the ones you love.

This guide will ask you a series of questions about various dimensions of wellness. Please take some time to respond to these questions, review the self-assessment, and use the journal prompts to develop goals that support your health and well-being.

Mental Health

Mental health focuses on your ability to make good decisions and think clearly about situations in your life that may be stressful. Caring for your mental health helps to also care for your physical health, as many mental health issues such as anxiety and depression can increase the risk for conditions like diabetes, stroke, or heart disease. Your mental health can change over time based on many factors and stressors present in your life.

Take some time to answer the below questions to asses your current mental health.

In the past week, I have..

	Yes	No
had difficulty focusing on daily tasks	☐	☐
been pulling away from family and friends	☐	☐
been sleeping too much/not enough	☐	☐
had thoughts about hurting myself or others	☐	☐
have had little interest in doing things I enjoy	☐	☐

Mental Health Assessment

If you checked **yes** to any of the mental health questions, you may want to consider developing a plan to address your mental health needs. Using the journal prompts below, write responses to the questions.

Journal Prompts

When I feel distant and sad, how does that affect me? How does it affect my role as a caregiver?

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What do I consider barriers to taking care of my mental health?

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_____

How do I envision my life getting better as a result of taking care of my mental health?

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Emotional Health

Emotional health is all about how we feel about ourselves, the various relationships in our lives, and dealing with difficult emotions in daily situations. Having good emotional health is knowing that emotions are a natural part of life, but not allowing yourself to be controlled by them. Caring for your emotional health can help you overcome many of the challenges that caregivers face and can help support your loved ones when they may be overcome with emotion.

Take some time to answer the below questions to asses your current emotional health.

In the past week, I have..

	Yes	No
felt as though my mind was in a fog	☐	☐
felt hopeless and/or sad	☐	☐
had anxiety about the future	☐	☐
felt overwhelmed with life	☐	☐
been irritable or harsh towards others	☐	☐
thought I had no one to talk to about my feelings	☐	☐
felt as though my feelings were unimportant, given the difficulties that my loved one is going through	☐	☐

Emotional Health Assessment

If you checked **yes** to any of the emotional health questions, you may want to consider developing a plan to address your emotional health needs. Using the journal prompts below, write responses to the questions.

Journal Prompts

When I let my emotions control my daily life, how does it affect me? How does it affect my loved ones?

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What kind words or phrases do others use to describe me?

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How do I envision my life getting better as a result of taking care of my emotional health?

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Physical Health

Physical health focuses on a variety of things related to your physical body. Factors like nutrition, physical activity, preventative health care, and rest make up your physical health status. Taking care of your body can help decrease stress and increase energy, which in turn, can help you support others.

Take some time to answer the below questions to asses your current physical health.

In the past week, I have..

	Yes	No
• **had back pain**		
• **sat or stayed stationary for 30 minutes or longer (*not including sleeping*)**		
• **felt sick (*headache, stomach ache, etc.*)**		
• **attended or scheduled to attend a preventative health care visit (*Primary care, dentist, etc.*)**		
• **eaten at least one meal a day with fruits and vegetables**		
• **been active for at least 10 minutes (*walking, biking, taking an exercise class, etc.*)**		
• **been able to sleep between 6-8 hours**		

Physical Health Assessment

If you checked **yes** to any of the physical health questions, you may want to consider developing a plan to address your emotional health needs. Using the journal prompts below, write responses to the questions.

Journal Prompts

When I feel sick or tired, how does it affect me? How does it affect my loved one?

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What do I consider my barriers to taking care of my physical health?

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How do I envision my life getting better as a result of taking care of my physical health?

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Self-Care Goals

After some self assessment and reflection, its time to focus on small, actionable ways that you can begin to take care of yourself. Take some time to write down three goals for your mental, emotional, and physical health to focus on for the next 30 days.

Goal Setting

When setting your goals, think **SMART:**

- Make your goals **S**pecific *"I will join the YMCA"* versus *"I will get active"*

- Make your goals **M**easurable *"I will add veggies to 3 meals a day"* versus *"I will eat veggies"*

- Make your goals **A**ttainable *"I will lose one pound a week"* versus *"I will lose 100 pounds in one month"*

- Make your goals **R**elevant *"I will become CEO to support my mental health"* versus *"I will make an appointment to see my doctor to discuss my depression symptoms."*

- Make your goals **T**ime-bound *"I will lose four pounds in one month by August 9th, 2022"* versus *"in a few months"*

My goals..

Mental health goal example: ***"I will find a therapist to connect with once a week by February 1st, 2022."***

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Emotional health goal example: ***"I will join the NOCC's TEAL Cares Network to connect with other caregivers in a safe space by March 2nd, 2022."***

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Physical health goal example: ***"I will walk or bike three times a week for 20 minutes by April 3rd, 2022."***

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