



A FAMILY'S BILL OF RIGHTS*

I have the right to take care of myself. If I feel this is being selfish, I'll remember that this gives me the ability to improve my relationship with my parent.

I have the right to seek help and guidance from others, even if my parent objects. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.

I have the right to continue to live my own life, just as I would if my parent were not in long-term care. I know that I do everything I reasonable can for my parent, and I have the right to do some things just for myself.

I have the right to get angry, to be depressed, and to express these and other difficult feelings when I need to.

I have the right to refuse to be manipulated by others' difficulty in managing their own feelings. Instead, I give my parent the right to own his or her own feelings, just as I own mine.

I have the right to receive consideration, affection, forgiveness and acceptance for the things I do as long as I offer these feelings in return.

I have the right to take pride in what I have accomplished and to applaud the courage it has sometimes taken to do what I know is best for my parent.

*Adapted from "A Caregiver's Bill of Rights" in
Caregiving: Helping An Aged Loved One,
an AARP book by Jo Horne.