

How My Mom Being Diagnosed With MS Made Me a Better Person



Writing this blog post has been so hard for me.

Trying to think of all the positives of taking care of someone with MS when you're 17 is not an easy feat. So I won't lie to you: It's not easy. It's not easy at all. It's not easy going from child to caretaker, it's not. Having to constantly take care of someone takes a huge toll on you. Now, I'm not the most experienced at being a caretaker or even at life, but I wanted to share with you some of the best tips that I have in being a caretaker and how to avoid not letting yourself have a life.

Manage Your Time

For most teenagers, you kind of have this instinct to want to go out with your friends and kind of leave your parents and not have to worry about them. But when you're constantly taking care of your parents, you don't really have time for yourself, and you kind of forget to take care of yourself. And for me, when I'm taking care of others, I forget that I need to be doing laundry, or I'm supposed to finish that assignment for school, or I made plans to hang out with XYZ, etc. And when I'm taking care of my parents and not doing those things, my parents get upset with me, and it really sucks.

So the **biggest** thing I'm going to tell you is you need to manage your time. Because taking care of others is very time consuming, so you need to make sure that you're getting everything you need to do done. As someone with ADHD, this was even more important because I get scatterbrained easily, and I tend to hyper focus on things, such as taking care

of others and not myself (I also blame my personality). So maybe you can look into getting a planner or a bullet journal. There are plenty of helpful videos to help get you started in using them practically. For me, I use a bullet journal, and I force myself to sit down and think ahead of everything I need to do that week and write it down. Then at a certain time, my phone will tell me to check my planner to make sure I've gotten things done. That way I won't forget to get those things done.

Take Care of Yourself

I'm sure you hear this all the time, but it is so important to take care of yourself. If you're trying to take care of other people without taking care of yourself, you're going to burn yourself out. For me, I would constantly help my mom with what she needed and then not do anything I needed to do, which would cause a chain reaction in my helping her (would not be helpful) and then we'd both be upset with one another. So, it's so important that you take care of what you need to do that way neither of you will be burned out.

Your Way is Not the Highway

Just because you do things a certain way doesn't mean that your parents/whomever you're taking care of wants it that way. You're supposed to be helping them, not causing them more trouble, and if you insist on your way, you're doing more harm than good. So just do things the way they ask, and you'll both stay sane (hopefully).

Listen to Them

They may just need someone to talk to. I know with my mom, whenever she had her MS attacks in the middle of the night, I would sit with her and talk. It didn't matter what it was, we just talked, and I really listened to what she said. It's such a seemingly small thing, but it's so big.

Don't Blame Them

I've learned so much from taking care of my mom about how MS attacks someone. A lot of times, we say how unfair it is to us. While that's true, it is unfair that MS puts my mom through all that she's been through. She had to go through doctor's appointments on top of doctor's appointments just to know what was wrong with her, all the while getting sicker and sicker. Her children were upset because they couldn't do the same things they used to be able to do, like going to the library every week, or going to people's houses to hang out, or getting a snow cone every Friday for celebrating a good school week. They didn't get to do that anymore. But that not only affected the children, it affected her a great deal because she literally couldn't do those things. When you get diagnosed with MS, it doesn't just take away your physical health, but most importantly, your mental health. So, if they aren't able to do the same things they did before and you blame them, it damages them. It's your right to be upset that a person can't do the same things they used to do. Be as mad as you want.

But do not ever think it's okay to take out the fact they can't do those things on them. They didn't choose to get sick, so you blaming them is out of the question. Don't do it.