

Making Every Day Count

Focusing on What Is Important

You are busy with so much. Have you had a chance to think about what is important to you right now? What is important to the person who receives your care? What is important about this time you have together? What would you like to be doing with or for this person?

Caregivers often tell us that the illness has required so much time and attention that they and the person the care for have lost track of who they are as people. Your hospice care team would like to provide care that helps you reconnect as individuals, spouses, siblings, friends, partners, parents, or families.

Knowing what is really important to you and the person you are caring for can help you find ways to make this time more meaningful. Doing what is most important starts with finding out what matters. If you don't know what is important to the person you are caring for, ask them to think about it and share their ideas with you. If they are unable to answer, ask other people who know them well or close your eyes and imagine what their response might be. What did you enjoy doing together?

There is no right or wrong. Making time for some things may mean giving up others for now. It is OK to say no to things that aren't important right now. You may want to spend more time with friends or family or take a trip or play a favorite game or be alone. You may feel the need to get practical matters in order before you feel you can enjoy more pleasurable pursuits. If so, make a plan to complete those tasks, or get help in completing them, so that you can spend time on what is most important to both of you.

Sometimes just having these conversations can change the way you see your job as a caregiver. You have many responsibilities. No one can do everything. Let your answers guide you in making the many decisions you face as a caregiver. Most importantly, let them help you focus your energies on those things that make life meaningful for both of you.

| Important to Me | Important to the Person I Care For |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |



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Now that you've given it some thought, you might want to...

- Share your thoughts with close friends and family.
- Go back to your answers when making decisions or feeling overwhelmed.
- Identify those things are keeping you from doing what is important.
- Talk to your hospice team about how they can help you do what matters most.

Suncoast Hospice can offer guidance and support as you adjust to the changes in your life. In addition to a listening ear, we can provide information about services and resources available to help you. Call Suncoast Hospice at (727) 586-4432.

To find a hospice near you, contact the National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization help line at (800) 658-8898, or visit www.nhpco.org.

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