Give the 'Gift' of Self-Care This Thanksgiving

Life & Work Connections
November 2017

With Thanksgiving approaching, you may be planning gatherings and travel with family and friends. This time of giving can be challenging for some caregivers, who are already contributing so much.

Life & Work Connections [1], a unit of the Division of Human Resources, encourages caregivers to incorporate self-care this holiday season.

Give Thanks

What are you grateful for this season? Having a positive outlook promotes a wellness mindset. This attitude is modeled in the November “WellBeing in Action” [2] video, which features Cynthia Thomson, professor in the Department of Health Promotion Sciences at the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health. “I manage stress by reflecting on how much I need to be grateful for,” Thomson says in the video.

Ask for Help

In an effort to support caregivers in their wellness goals, campus colleagues can request a personalized elder care consultation [3]. Related services might include employee assistance counseling [4], wellness and health promotion [5], and work/life integration [6] support. Life & Work Connections’ child care and family resources [7] help those caring for children and adults at the same time. Lotsa Helping Hands [8] is another caregiver tool to build community and elder care support. This private calendar brings family, friends, colleagues and neighbors together to assist those in need.

Give the Gift of Wellness

Wellness is not simply the absence of disease, but a state of physical, mental and social well-being. Remember to replenish your energy with adequate sleep, mindfulness, proper nutrition and regular exercise.

Let Go of Guilt

Caring for yourself may evoke feelings of guilt, or inaccurate perceptions of "selfishness." However, to accomplish daily goals, caregivers should remember to look out for their personal welfare. Recall the airline safety instructions that direct passengers to "place the oxygen mask on yourself before helping others." Take care of yourself in order to better serve others.

Caryn Jung is a senior coordinator for child and elder care assistance and work/life integration. Lourdes Rodriguez is a coordinator for child care and family resources.