

## Where is my exhaustion-meter?

### Where is my exhaustion-meter?

Even though it can be difficult to self-evaluate our level of exhaustion, it is important to question ourselves when we first see symptoms of exhaustion appear. Know that you can always contact the helpline if you wish to talk to a worker about your exhaustion. We are there for you!

#### Signs and symptoms:

- Irritability and impulsiveness
- Desire to cry often
- Loss or increase of appetite
- decrease of your immune defenses
- Increase in medication, alcohol or drug consumption
- Trouble sleeping which brings fatigue
- Body pain (back pain, digestive problems, ect.)
- Difficulty to focus
- Self withdrawal
- Loss of the joy of living
- Anxiety and nervousness
- Desire to give up

Source: L'Appui (2015). Le guide d'accompagnement et d'informations pour les proches aidants d'aînés. col. CISSS des Laurentides.

#### Score :

Never = 0 points  
Sometimes = 1 point  
Often = 2 points  
Always = 3 points

#### Questions to evaluate my exhaustion level :

1. Do you sometimes resent your relative because they refuse your help?
2. Do you sometimes feel like you are not doing enough for the person you're taking care of?
3. Does the fact that you are taking care of this person cause conflicts with people around you?
4. Do you tell the people in your life you're doing well when you are not.
5. Do you call off from work to take care of your relative?
6. Do you decline or cancel opportunities to go out with friends?
7. Do you experience symptoms of stress, insomnia or headaches that you did not have previously?
8. Is your daily schedule modified in order to take care of that person?
9. Do you feel unhappy that the health situation of your relative is not improving?
10. Do you sometimes come close to getting angry at the person you take care of?



## Where is my exhaustion-meter?


### Evaluation scale:

#### SCORE BETWEEN 0 AND 10

You have some difficulties in your role as a caregiver. You manage well some aspects related to your caregiving role but you are at risk of exhaustion. What could you put in place to prevent this from happening?

#### SCORE BETWEEN 10 AND 20:

You have some difficulties in your role as a caregiver. You manage well some aspects related to your caregiving role but you are at risk of exhaustion. What could you put in place to prevent this from happening?

Source : evaluation tool « Suis-je un aidant? » « Suis-je en danger d'épuisement? », Regroupement Soutien aux Aidants de Brome-Missisquoi 

#### SCORE BETWEEN 20 AND 30:

If you are not already exhausted, you are on your way. Guilt, stress, isolation and fatigue are part of your daily life. React, it's a life matter. Call us!

### The 5 essentials dimensions of care

There are existing ways that allow you to keep taking care of your relative while also preserving your well-being. They are split in dimensions :

- 1- Promoting the feeling of safety
- 2- Promoting calmness and relaxation
- 3- Promoting creation and maintenance of rewarding social relations.
- 4- Promoting the feeling of efficiency and an optimistic vision (to counter helplessness)
- 5- Nourish hope continuously

### Ways to prevent exhaustion

#### PROMOTING THE FEELING OF EFFICIENCY AND AN OPTIMISTIC VISION

- Dress a realistic tasks list.
- Look for the positive in every situations (glass half full)
- Make informed choices based on pros and cons

#### PROMOTING CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF REWARDING SOCIAL RELATIONS

- Greet your neighbors, talk to the cashier at the store, join a virtual community according to your interests.
- Participate to support groups
- Call your friends, relatives, social workers, etc.

#### PROMOTING THE FEELING OF SAFETY

- Take control of aspects we have control over.
- Inform yourself through reliable sources

#### NOURISH HOPE CONTINUOUSLY

- Remember happy moments lived with your relative
- Remember you are not alone

#### PROMOTING CALMNESS AND RELAXATION

- Yoga and relaxation
- Take a nap
- Take a bath
- Open a window: breath



Taking care of our well being also means taking care of our diet, hydration, physical activities, relaxation strategies and stimulating our self esteem.