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Finding Your Caregiver Zone

This chart can help you identify where you need help. You'll find yourself moving between zones, which is completely normal. Track this monthly and keep track and share this with close friends and family so they too can recognize signs of burnout.

	Thriving	Surviving	Struggling	Crisis
Emotion	Emotions are steady with only minor swings.	Increased emotional fluctuations – nervous, sad, anxious, etc.	Constant thoughts of intense emotions – fear, panic, sadness, anger, hopelessness, etc.	Unable to regulate any emotions. Numbness, complete loss of control, easily aggressive or emotional.
Focus	Able to focus on and execute plans.	Inconsistent focus but still able to execute plans.	Decision fatigue, unable to focus or make decisions.	Extreme inability to focus on any decisions for yourself or others.
Social	Able to communicate effectively and adjust to changes within reason.	Difficult to communicate and adjust plans, easily overwhelmed, irritated or emotional.	Increased difficulty with communication and adaptation. Avoidance of friends, family, work, etc.	Unable to communicate or adapt. Frequent isolation from others – emotionally and/or physically.
Appetite	Normal appetite.	Inconsistent appetite.	Emotional eating or restriction.	Out of control eating/restriction.
Sleep	Normal sleep habits.	Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep.	Frequent restlessness and disruption of sleep (more often than not)	Complete inability to sleep with restlessness and disrupted sleep nightly.
Daily Activities	Feeling consistent with daily performances.	Inconsistent with daily performances but still able to achieve most on your "to-do" list. No time for hobbies.	Increased inconsistency, more frequently unable to achieve daily tasks, no time for hobbies.	Complete inability to get any daily tasks done. Withdrawn from friends/family and tasks/hobbies.
Self-Care	Providing daily self-care.	Inconsistent but still providing self-care a few days a week.	Increased inability for self-care, except for very randomly throughout a month.	Inability to perform any self-care or meet basic needs to oneself or others. Self-medicating with drugs, alcohol, prescription medications, food, or other stimuli.

Recommendations and table adapted from:

1. *https://www.caregiver.org/resource/taking-care-you-self-care-family-caregivers/*
2. *https://njnew.org/programs/stress-first-aid/*
3. *https://firefightermentalhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Stress-First-Aid-Student-Manual.pdf*

Hope no matter how complex