Soothing the Weary Caregiver Soul with Simple Wellness Steps

A. Building My Caregiving Team

Caregivers for people with dementia often feel isolated and can experience burnout. Building a strong support team is key to preventing this. Your team can be made up of people who live nearby or far away, and each person can fill a specific role based on their abilities and availability.

Category	Name	Role
Family**:** Blood or Bond		
Neighbors & Friends		
Professional Healthcare Providers		
Faith-based Organizations		
Caregiver Support Groups		
Technology Advisors		

Here are some examples of roles that can help support you:

- **The Lifeline:** This is a vital role. In case of an emergency with the primary caregiver, this person can be called upon to provide immediate assistance or take over caregiving duties temporarily.
- **The Relief Captain:** A person who steps in to handle caregiving duties for a few hours or a full day. This gives you time to rest, run errands, or attend appointments.
- **The Companion:** This person provides social interaction and engagement. They might lead stimulating activities like puzzles or art projects, or simply spend time together watching a movie, listening to music, or taking a short walk.
- **The Sounding Board:** This trusted confidant provides a non-judgmental outlet for you to share your feelings on a regular basis. They listen to you vent and offer a safe space to process emotions without offering unsolicited advice.
- **The Helping Hand:** A person who focuses on tangible acts of kindness, like dropping off a home-cooked meal, doing a load of laundry, or picking up groceries.
- **The Tech Wiz:** This person helps research, select, and set up technology solutions to enhance caregiving, includes helpful apps, smart home devices, or communication tools.

B. My Personalized Wellness Action Plan

The list below offers an array of simple wellness steps for caregivers. The most important thing to remember is that there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

The 21-Day Wellness Cycle: Your Personal Experiment

Your path to wellness is built through experimentation and self-discovery. To start, commit to integrating two to three daily practices for 21 consecutive days. Use the list as your starting point, not your limit! If, after three weeks, your chosen practices haven't improved your strength, wisdom, or courage, switch them out. Continue this cycle of personal experimentation until you discover the unique combination of practices that sustains your soul and supports your growth.

Place a check mark next to the two or three practices you choose to focus on first.

☑	Daily Practice
	Read at least one page from a book about dementia.
	Watch at least 5 minutes of a video of your choice about dementia.
	Listen to a podcast about dementia for at least five minutes.
	Spend five minutes studying uplifting texts (poetry, philosophy, or religious writings).
	Pause for one minute to quietly reflect on what feels right in this moment to strengthen inner knowing.
	Sit quietly for one minute, eyes closed and inhale sweet peace, exhale pesky worry.
	Validate your feelings by saying aloud, “I’m feeling [fill in the blank] right now and that’s okay.”
	Gaze into the mirror, high-five your reflection and exclaim, “I got this!”
	For individuals of faith, take time to pray.
	Rest in legs-up-the-wall, begin with one minute and gradually increase to 5 minutes.
	Move your body in a way that feels good for 5 minutes (walk, stretch, or dance to your favorite song.)
	Spend 5 minutes enjoying nature (walk, sit on the porch, or tend plants).
	Start a task you've been putting off. Spend just five minutes a day on it until it is complete. Then, move on to the next task on your list.
	Spend 5 minutes each day unfollowing social media accounts that don't serve you and actively adding accounts that bring joy and inspiration.
	Spend 15 minutes doing something that feeds your soul.
	Jot down three things you nailed today and pat yourself on the back.
	Listen and connect without correcting your loved one's reality.
	Share a moment of connection by listening to one song from your loved one's favorite music from their younger years.
	Sit together and look at a garden, a sunset, or a photo album.
	Take a 5-minute walk together, focusing on what you see and hear around you.