

Welcome!

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Welcome!



Josiah in Times Square



Webinar Goals

Today's Focus

- Define caregiver burnout and its impact
- Identify common signs of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion
- Recognize risk factors and stressors
- Distinguish healthy vs. chronic stress
- Explore emotional and psychological impacts
- Learn tools for wellness and resilience
- Discover community and professional support
- Encourage proactive wellness planning



Understanding Caregiver Burnout

What Is Caregiver Burnout?

- A state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged caregiving stress
- More than “feeling tired” — it affects health, relationships, and care quality



Specific to Down Syndrome Caregivers

- Long-term responsibilities into adulthood
- Unique challenges with independence, health, and daily support
- Often balancing multiple roles with little relief



Understanding Caregiver Burnout

The Toll of Caregiving Stress

- Decreased patience and energy for daily tasks
- Strained relationships with loved ones
- Higher risk of stress, anxiety, or depression
- Less ability to provide consistent care
- A cycle where both caregiver and loved one feel the impact

Caregiver well-being directly shapes the well-being of loved ones.



Signs, Stressors & Emotional Impact

Recognizing Burnout

- Constant fatigue, even after rest
- Irritability, mood swings, or emotional numbness
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Loss of joy and motivation
- Physical strain: headaches, poor sleep, or stomach issues



Which of these signs have you noticed in yourself recently?



Signs, Stressors & Emotional Impact

Risk Factors & Stressors Poll

1. Limited respite or support options
2. Balancing caregiving with work and family
3. Financial strain or lack of resources
4. Emotional toll of long-term caregiving
5. Pressure to “do it all” without help

Which one of these stressors feels most familiar to you right now?



Signs, Stressors & Emotional Impact

Healthy Stress vs. Chronic Stress

- **Healthy Stress:**

- Motivates action
- Short-term
- Manageable

- **Chronic Stress:**

- Constant
- No recovery
- Leads to burnout

Chronic caregiver stress can feel “normal” – but it takes a toll over time.



Signs, Stressors & Emotional Impact

Emotional & Psychological Impacts

- Anxiety, worry, or feeling constantly “on alert”
- Guilt for needing breaks or personal time
- Depression or sense of isolation
- Strained family and personal relationships



Research shows 40–70% of caregivers report symptoms of anxiety or depression due to stress (Caregiver.org)



Tools & Strategies for Resilience

Practical Tools for Wellness

- Breathing exercises or 2–5 min mindfulness breaks
- Journaling to process emotions and track progress
- Physical activity: stretches, walks, or light strength exercises
- Setting boundaries: say “no” without guilt
- Celebrate small wins: acknowledge daily efforts and successes



Tools & Strategies for Resilience

Building Resilience

- Daily self-check-ins: monitor mood, stress, and energy
- Replace unhealthy coping (overeating, avoidance) with positive habits
- Create personal rituals: quiet time, music, hobbies
- Gratitude practice: focus on small joys or achievements



Tools & Strategies for Resilience

Moving from Overwhelm to Empowered

- From **surviving** → **thriving**:
focus on daily wins, not just responsibilities
- From **silence** → **community**:
share your story and connect with others
- From **self-neglect** → **self-care**:
prioritize rest, health, and joy without guilt
- From **guilt** → **grace**:
release perfection, accept that “good enough” is still love
- From **burnout** → **resilience**:
use small, consistent practices to build strength over time



Community Support & Planning

Support Resources

You Don't Have to Do It Alone

- **NDSS Support:** Caregiver webinars, advocacy groups, peer connections
- **Community Programs:** Respite care, adult day services, local centers
- **Professional Help:** Counseling, therapy, social workers
- **Online Networks:** Caregiver.org, peer groups, social media communities

Reaching out for help strengthens both you and your family.



Community Support & Planning

Proactive Wellness Planning

- 🕒 Schedule regular self-care and “me-time”
- 👥 Build a dependable support system of friends/family
- ⚠️ Recognize early signs of burnout: fatigue, irritability, detachment
- 📝 Create a personal wellness plan with realistic, actionable steps
- 🌱 Commit to one self-care action weekly



Community Support & Planning

Time for a Poll

Which area do you find hardest to maintain consistently?

- A. Scheduling self-care
- B. Asking for support
- C. Recognizing burnout signs
- D. Following a wellness plan



Key Takeaways

- **Burnout is real** – common among long-term caregivers; early recognition is key
- **Watch for warning signs** – fatigue, irritability, loss of joy, emotional detachment
- **Healthy vs. chronic stress** – short-term stress can motivate; chronic stress drains
- **Daily habits build resilience** – mindfulness, journaling, short walks, small self-care steps
- **Community matters** – peer support, therapy, and networks reduce isolation
- **Self-care is essential** – taking care of yourself improves care for others



Questions?



Thank you!

Head to www.ndss.org for more
information and additional resources.

