



Vital Connections: Restoring Balance in the Most Challenging Times Handout

Caregivers place a significant amount of energy and attention focusing on the needs of others. An unintended consequence of this outward focus on others is the risk of losing sight of your own needs and becoming depleted. The thing that keeps you resilient and engaged in living is the connections that you maintain.

How do you recognize that you have lost your attention to you?

What are your warning signs that you are becoming depleted?

Vital Connections

If you can refocus your attention back to you, your feelings, your needs and reconnect to the people, places, and activities that support your health, restore your energy, and bring the joy back into your day, it will get you back on the road to feeling good. Consider the potential sources you might turn to reconnect to your vitality.

Connect to Your Feelings

- Slow down
- Pay attention to your feelings
- Identify, name, and express your feelings
- Don't amplify or hold on to your feelings
- Don't resist or deny your feelings
- They will pass naturally
- Use them to help inform you about what you need to do

What feeling or feelings are you experiencing right now?

Is there something you might do to let the feeling go, or to release it? (breathe in deeply, share it with someone)

What would help you pay closer attention to your feelings? (a daily check in, a journal)

Connect to Your Physical Body

How might you pay closer attention to your physical wellbeing? (eat healthy food, regular medical care)

What movement can you invite into daily life? (stretch, dance, walk)



Connect to Your Five Senses

How will you enjoy your sense of hearing? (music, sounds of nature)

What visual sights will you spend time appreciating? (art, night sky)

How can you appreciate your sense of taste? (take time to enjoy a meal)

How might you connect to your sense of touch? (cozy clothes, hugs)

How might you connect with your sense of smell? (sit in a garden, bake)

Connect to Your Mind or Creativity

Is there something you have always wanted to learn or a new book you want to read?

Is there a creative outlet you enjoy or a talent you wish to develop?

Connect to Others

Are there family or friends you can reach out to? (make a call, write, visit)

How might you reach out and build new social connections? (a support group, church, community connections)

Connect to Nature

How might you connect with and appreciate nature? (notice the changing seasons, a walk in the woods, watch the birds)

Connect to Your Meaning, Values, Beliefs

What rituals, spiritual practices, activities, remind you of your values, and beliefs?
Remember how your presence in the world matters? (giving to others, tending a garden, contributing at work, your loved ones)