

Caregivers spend most of their time giving to others and usually put themselves at the bottom of their “to-do” list. Many caregivers are so in tune with the emotions of those they are caring for that they forget to notice their own. Journaling is a great way to sort out your feelings, track trends and develop ideas for coping with stress.

This Well-being Chart guides you through getting those thoughts down in writing. It is designed to be flexible, so do not feel like you have to make an entry every day! The chart is divided into 5 sections:

- *Date – Dating your journal entry helps you to be able to track changes over time*
- *Today I feel – How would you describe your feelings or mood right now?*
- *What happened today – Is there a single event that has led to what you are feeling?*
- *Peaks and pits – What was the best thing (peak) about today? What was the worst thing about today (pit)?*
- *Tomorrow I will – How can you positively deal with stressful feelings? What would make you feel better?*

We have also provided a sample chart to get you started.

CAREGIVER WELL-BEING CHART

DATE	TODAY I FEEL...	WHAT HAPPENED TODAY...	HIGHS AND LOWS	TOMORROW I WILL...
8/18/2014	Unappreciated	Went over to Mom's and tried to help her downsize. Did not go as smoothly as I wanted.	Peak: Spending time with Mom going through old memorabilia. Pit: Mom got really impatient with me and rejected all of my help.	Rest and recharge. Spend some "me" time.
8/18/2014	Scared	Mom ended up in the ER last night.	Peak: Mom will be OK, it's just a UTI. Pit: I couldn't get anyone to tell me what was going on when I arrived at the ER.	Take mom home. Relax and enjoy her company.
8/23/2014	Overwhelmed	Mom had two different doctor appointments today, daughter has a school project due tomorrow that she wants help with.	Peak: None. Pit: Daughter yelling that I loved Mom more than her which lead to a big argument.	Not let a teenagers moodiness throw off my whole day. Get up early and go for a walk.
8/30/2014	Impatient	Mom keeps telling me the same story over and over while I am trying to finish a report for work.	Peak: I was chosen to work on this special assignment for work. Pit: I don't have enough alone time to organize the project.	Ask my sister to take mom out for lunch and shopping so that I can put the final touches on the report I'm writing.
9/1/2014	Content	The whole family went on a picnic and the kids paid attention to an enjoyed listening to Mom telling about her childhood.	Peak: Noticing how much alike my daughter and her grandmother are, hearing the kids laugh at Mom's stories.	Ask Mom to help me out the pictures from today into albums so that she can have one and the kids can each have one.

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