

TIPS FOR MILITARY AND VETERAN CAREGIVERS DURING THE PANDEMIC



CAREGIVERS

Caregivers, often behind the scenes and with little recognition, shoulder a broad spectrum of responsibilities ranging from everyday home tasks to managing total emotional, mental, and physical care of their loved one as they navigate a complex medical system. Now, during the COVID-19 pandemic, caregivers find themselves working beyond their limits to provide care and stay connected in a time when traditional, face-to-face support is limited. While you're going above and beyond during this uncertain time, it's important to take care of yourself.

Not a Military or Veterans Caregiver?

Learn about how you can support Military Caregivers in the Guide "Caring for the Military Caregiver: A Guide to Providing Mental Health Care to America's Hidden Heroes" www.giveanhour.org

SELF-CARE

- Build time for self-care into your calendar. Make a list of your top 3 self-care activities and practice one a day.
- Give yourself grace. While military caregivers are resilient, resourceful and strong, it is NORMAL to have feelings of guilt, irritability or anxiety.
- Move your body each day. Go for a walk, if the weather allows. If not, move about indoors and stretch for 10 minutes a day.
- Take a time out. Limit your media and social media consumption.

COPING WITH UNCERTAINTY

- Establish a new routine. Set small daily goals and aim for consistency rather than perfection.
- Seek out humor. Laughing is a good prescription for an anxious mind.
- Fact check your thoughts. Recognize thinking that causes you unnecessary stress or anxiety.

STAY CONNECTED DESPITE ISOLATION

- Recruit a "pandemic buddy". Schedule virtual happy hours, game nights and hangouts with friends and family to help keep your spirits high.
- Connect with online caregiving support. Talking with others who are in caregiving roles can generate ideas and provide a sense of support or community.
- Take advantage of telehealth opportunities for yourself and your loved one. Give an Hour is here to help. Confidential, free, mental health support is a click and a phone call away at givenahour.org.