

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If being **organized** energizes you...*

- Seek responsibilities on the caregiving team that optimize your talent and capacity for things like medication management, housekeeping, record filing systems, rotating or re-sorting toys, maintaining therapeutic equipment, periodic closet and pantry purging, etc.
- Facilitate discussions about routines and schedules that will keep everyone safe, efficient and well cared for
- Help others find satisfying roles on the caregiving team (e.g., facilitate family/team meetings exploring the interests and strengths of each person)
- Find a peaceful place in your home to be away from the pressures of the day and organize your thoughts (in cooperation with the needs of others)
- Look for new opportunities for delegation
- Express compassion toward those who aren't as attentive to details as you are
- Learn to seek Jesus in your priorities and strategies

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If you're energized by **task-oriented** activities....*

- Serve your family and caregiving team by identifying efficient and caring ways to be involved
- Consider being the point person on scheduling
- Delegate relationally demanding aspects of caregiving so that each person on the care team can experience satisfying balance between tasks and people
- Monitor and maintain lists and records (e.g., emergency contacts, nutritional priorities, finances, healthcare, IEP, social security and/or disability benefits, guardianship, scriptures on disability theology)
- Create a daily checklist of essential caregiving activities that keep team members focused and motivated (get input from others about a format that will work for them)
- Have quiet time every day to organize your thoughts
- Be sensitive about making others feel like they are one of your projects
- Learn to rely on Jesus for discernment about priorities and what tasks to release

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If you're energized by a sense of **casual connectedness in your broader community**...*

- Seek a role on the caregiving team that allows you to be among people as much as possible (e.g., take your loved one to appointments, do the grocery shopping, run errands, go for walks together, attend sporting events such as Special Olympics, volunteer to help with a fundraiser)
- Identify people willing to connect spontaneously when you're feeling isolated, lonely or disconnected
- Listen to talk radio or podcasts if forced to be away from people for long periods of time
- Put yourself in situations where you can interact with people when performing mundane duties (e.g., talk to a friend on speaker phone)
- Complete a task before indulging in pleasures
- Learn to deal with anger constructively and in ways that are pleasing to God

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If you're energized by a sense of **deep connectedness in your close relationships**...*

- Serve your family and caregiving team with frequent expressions of love, affection, appreciation and affirmation
- Maintain adequate pacing of rest and refreshment
- Keep fun activities, social dates and respite on the calendar so you can look forward to them on hard days
- Recognize your tendency to fill life with activities that bring attention to you or make you feel valued
- Learn to deal with intense emotions constructively and in ways that are pleasing to God
- Ask questions and learn about what matters to the people you care about
- Ask God to grow your bond with the person who has extra needs
- Develop intimacy with Jesus to meet your deepest needs for love and security
- Learn to experience a tangible sense of God's nearness through prayer, scripture and worship music when feeling afraid or lonely

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If you're energized by **giving encouragement or help** to others...*

- Serve your family and caregiving team by frequently reminding them they are seen, valuable, loved and appreciated by you and by God
- Pray for opportunities to give spiritual, emotional or practical encouragement where it is needed
- Be specific with your words of love, affection, appreciation and affirmation
- Learn to be compassionate and patient with those who demand a great deal of attention
- Help others learn to rely more on Jesus to feel loved and secure than on anyone else
- Cultivate intimacy with Jesus to meet your own deepest needs for love and security

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If you're fueled by receiving **affirmation, appreciation and affection**...*

- Explain your need for more positive feedback to those you are close to
- Spend time with people who are expressive and encourage you toward a godly life
- Acknowledge expressions of love and appreciation from others with words of gratitude
- Remember you are valued by the loved one(s) you serve (even if they don't express it well)
- Learn not to be jealous of time and attention your deep relationships spend with others
- Recognize when you are feeling rejected and renew your mind with truth about your value as God's son/daughter
- Cultivate intimacy with Jesus to meet your deepest needs for love and security

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If you're energized by being **independent**...*

- Seek a role on the caregiving team that prioritizes responsibilities in areas where you can control your own circumstances, time and decisions
- Work together with loved ones to clearly define each person's responsibilities in running an effective household
- Develop a servant's heart in your responsibilities
- Be faithful to your own commitments without competing with others
- Learn to show interest in what matters to others
- Learn to be attentive and respectful to the needs and rights of others
- Communicate daily with loved ones to keep from overstepping their boundaries
- Create a safe space in your home where you can spend some time alone every day
- Determine areas in your routines where you can take back some control
- Learn to yield to Jesus' authority first

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If you tend to **think deeply**...*

- Seek a role on the caregiving team where your keen observation and analytical skills are needed
- Work toward an adequate balance of work, exercise, diet and relaxation
- Learn to keep your mind more present in the activities and relationships of the moment (less on past and future)
- Express appreciation to others frequently and specifically
- Resist analysis and criticism that can feel discouraging to others
- Release others and yourself from unreasonable expectations
- Allow flexibility to work at your own pace whenever possible
- Learn to slow down, letting your moods and thinking patterns rest with Jesus

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If being **creative or expressive** energizes you...*

- Seek a role on the caregiving team that optimizes your gifts for things like designing the activity calendar, facilitating artistic activities, decorating for birthdays/holidays, overseeing home and bedroom modifications/remodeling/adaptations
- Process your situation artistically (e.g., journal, blog, music, dance, poetry, painting, baking)
- Initiate conversations and activities that keep atmosphere, perspectives and ideas flowing and fresh (e.g., birthday parties, vacations, staycations)
- Alternate between tasks and people
- Plan opportunities for spontaneity and teambuilding
- Learn to balance personal catharsis with being servant-hearted like Jesus

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If you are energized and **inspired by charismatic leaders**...*

- Seek a role on the caregiving team that surrounds you with healthy, wise and kind people to guide and help you
- Use your servant-heartedness and intuitiveness to meet needs around you
- Be direct about your own needs, preferences and boundaries
- Find people who will collaborate with you in decision-making and respect your values
- Maintain your individuality and a clear sense of your purpose on the team
- Learn to seek Jesus for comfort and support when others are reliant on you

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If you are energized by **leading and inspiring others**...*

- Be involved with setting goals, planning, making decisions, delegating responsibilities, supervising and motivating the caregiver support team
- Offer to be the point-person in situations that require persuasion (e.g., insurance companies, funding sources) and optimism
- Learn to be a servant-leader who is attentive to needs and respects others' rights, feelings, thoughts, plans
- Learn to motivate others without manipulating or dominating them (never use threats, anger, force or violence)
- Delegate obligations where others could be encouraged and helpful (e.g., research)
- Invest time and energy in activities your loved one enjoys (e.g., adaptive bike, swimming, wrestling/roughhousing, cooking, hiking, fishing)
- Learn to give much-needed recognition for the contributions and accomplishments of others
- Learn to look to God in your own needs for recognition and approval

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*When you are feeling **inadequate, incompetent or criticized**...*

- Get clear information about what is needed and expected of you
- Focus your responsibilities in areas where you feel familiar or confident
- Establish respectful boundaries where you feel pressure to perform outside of your capabilities (consider delegating, learn, grow)
- Find areas where there is freedom to work at your own pace
- Learn to be more direct in expressing your needs
- Learn to deal constructively with anger
- Develop trust in the Holy Spirit to equip you for every good work and be perfect in your weaknesses
- Learn to trust God with your life and your future to reduce fears of unknown

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If you tend to be **laid back or need a lot of rest...***

- Seek a role on the caregiving team that maximizes your natural motivations and mutual interests with the person who has extra needs (e.g., reading books, watching movies, going for car rides, listening to music)
- Frequently alternate time between doing task-oriented things and spending time with people
- Take frequent breaks, even short ones, to rest your mind and body
- Ensure for yourself an adequate balance of work, exercise, diet and relaxation
- Maintain a clear definition of your value and purpose on the team
- Learn to recognize Jesus' promptings and follow Him one step at a time

TAP YOUR CAREGIVING STRENGTHS

*If you tend to be **pragmatic and well-reasoned** in your thinking...*

- Serve your family and caregiving team by contributing in conversations that involve decision-making and strategy planning (e.g., education/vocation transitions, guardianship roles, long term care)
- Optimize your role as mediator and consensus builder in team discussions
- Recognize that your passions for "the cause" may become a source of pride or inflexibility
- Respect the rights, feelings, thoughts and plans of others
- Help give voice to the value of varied perspectives
- Learn to rely on Jesus to guide your own values, reasoning and humility