

# **The Fearless Caregiver Manifesto**

**By Gary Barg**

I will fearlessly assess my personal strengths and weaknesses, work diligently to bolster my weaknesses and to graciously recognize my strengths.

I will fearlessly make my voice be heard with regard to my loved ones care and be a strong ally to those professional caregivers committed to caring for my loved one and a fearless shield against those not committed to caring for my loved one.

I will fearlessly not sign or approve anything I do not understand, and will steadfastly request the information I need until I am satisfied with the explanations.

I will fearlessly ensure that all of the necessary documents are in place in order for my wishes and my loved ones wishes to be met in case of a medical emergency. These will include Durable Medical Powers of Attorney, Wills, Trusts and Living Wills.

I will fearlessly learn all I can about my loved one's healthcare needs and become an integral member of his or her medical care team.

I will fearlessly seek out other caregivers or care organizations and join an appropriate support group; I realize that there is strength in numbers and will not isolate myself from those who are also caring for their loved ones.

I will fearlessly care for my physical and emotional health as well as I care for my loved one's, I will recognize the signs of my own exhaustion and depression, and I will allow myself to take respite breaks and to care for myself on a regular basis.

I will fearlessly develop a personal support system of friends and family and remember that others also love my loved one and are willing to help if I let them know what they can do to support my caregiving.

I will fearlessly honor my loved one's wishes, as I know them to be, unless these wishes endanger their health or mine.

I will fearlessly acknowledge when providing appropriate care for my loved one becomes impossible either because of his or her condition or my own and seek other solutions for my loved one's caregiving needs.

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