

# *A Caregiver's* Bill of Rights

## *I have the right...*

**To take care of myself.** This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the capacity to take better care of my relative.

**To seek help from others** even though my relative may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.

**To maintain facets of my own life** that do not include the person I care for, just as I would if he or she were healthy. I know that I do everything that I reasonably can for this person, and I have the right to do some things for myself.

**To get angry, feel sad,** and express other difficult feelings occasionally.

**To reject any attempt** by my relative (either conscious or unconscious) to fill me with guilt, anger or sadness.

**To receive consideration, affection, forgiveness and acceptance** for what I do for my loved one for as long as I offer these qualities in return.

**To take pride** in what I am accomplishing and to applaud the courage it has sometimes taken to meet the needs of my relative.

**To protect my individuality** and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me in the time when my relative no longer needs my full-time help.

**To expect and demand** that as new strides are made in finding resources to aid physically and mentally impaired older persons in our country, similar strides will be made toward aiding and supporting caregivers.

