

CAREGIVER'S COMPASS

ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR BALANCING SELF-CARE AND COMPASSION

Being a family caregiver is a noble and often challenging role. Whether you're caring for an aging parent, a disabled family member, or someone with a chronic illness, your responsibility can be overwhelming at times. With the right strategies and support systems in place, however, caregiving can also be deeply rewarding.

At Frank & Kraft, we've met many of these hardworking people over the years, and the families we help often touch on topics impacting caregivers, like estate planning specialized for families living with Alzheimer's or hospice care. Their work is inspiring and selfless, but to care for others, you must also take care of yourself.

Whether you are a caregiver yourself or have someone in your life who performs this vital role, we wanted to share some essential tips for caregivers to get the support and self-care they need while they provide this life-changing service for others.



Prioritize Self-Care

As a caregiver, it is easy to neglect your own needs while focusing on the well-being of your loved one. Self-care is essential for maintaining your physical, emotional, and mental health. Make time for activities that rejuvenate you, whether it's reading a book, walking, or practicing meditation.

Seek Support

You do not have to navigate the caregiving journey alone. Contact family members, friends, or support groups for emotional support and practical assistance. Sharing your experiences with others who understand can provide comfort and validation. Additionally, consider enlisting the help of professional caregivers or respite care services to give yourself a much-needed break when necessary.

Establish a Routine

Consistency and predictability can provide stability for both you and your loved one. Establishing a daily routine can streamline caregiving tasks and reduce stress. Create a schedule for meals, medication administration, appointments, and leisure activities. A structured routine can promote a sense of normalcy and minimize disruptions to your loved one's daily life.

Communicate Effectively

Open and honest communication is essential for building trust and maintaining solid relationships

with your loved one. Keep the lines of communication open and encourage them to express their thoughts, feelings, and preferences. Listen actively, validate their emotions, and involve them in decision-making whenever possible. Effective communication fosters a sense of mutual respect and promotes a collaborative approach to caregiving.

Set Boundaries

While caregiving is a labor of love, setting boundaries to prevent burnout and maintain your well-being is essential. Establish clear boundaries around your time, energy, and personal space. Learn to say no to additional responsibilities or requests that exceed your capacity.

Stay Organized

Caregiving often involves juggling multiple tasks, appointments, and responsibilities. Staying organized can help you manage your time more effectively and keep you from feeling overwhelmed. Use calendars, to-do lists, or caregiving apps to keep track of appointments, medications, and important documents. Designate specific storage areas for medical supplies, paperwork, and other caregiving essentials to streamline your daily routine.

Celebrate Small Victories

Amid the challenges and uncertainties of caregiving, don't forget to celebrate the small victories along

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NEW YEAR, NEW EXEMPTION

Why 2024 Is the Year to Update Your Estate Plan



While keeping up to date with your estate planning should always be a priority, 2024 is the ideal year to review and make changes to your estate plan. This is because the federal estate, gift, and generation-skipping transfer, or GST, tax exemptions have seen a marked increase this year. In 2023, the GST was \$12.92 million per individual, but it has increased by \$690,000 to \$13.61 million per individual in 2024. This means you can transfer property with a value up to the exemption amount, either at death or throughout your lifetime, without paying a transfer tax. If you are in a position to do so, consider taking full advantage of this estate planning environment.

Estate, Gift, and GST Taxes

Every year, the IRS allows individuals to gift up to \$18,000 to individuals without incurring federal gift or estate taxes. If you are married, your spouse may also gift up to the same amount, effectively increasing the amount to \$36,000 per year, tax-free. Some gifts do not count toward the exemption — meaning these are not taxed — such as payments made directly to medical providers or between spouses. According to the American Bar Association, the GST tax is imposed on transfers to “remote descendants,” including grandchildren, known as “skip” persons, that exceed the exemption limits. The GST tax

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is applied to direct transfers to any skip person, either during someone’s lifetime or at the time of death. However, transfers made to trusts can use the GST exemption — making the trust partially or wholly exempt from the tax. As of 2024, the federal gift, estate, and GST tax rate is a flat 40% — representing a significant expense. That is why the gift, estate, and GST tax exemptions are so important; they allow you to circumvent this tax rate in your estate plan.

The GST Tax Exemption

While the federal estate, gift, and GST tax exemptions were just \$5 million in 2011, they have increased by over 170%. Before 2012, inflation was not considered when determining the exemption. This increase should not come as a surprise to anyone. After all, inflation has significantly strained the economy in recent years.

If you wish to take advantage of the GST tax exemption through the use of a trust, you need to consider a few factors. Any non-exempt trust will still be taxed at a 40% rate. For a trust to be GST tax-exempt, it must either be a Gallo trust, meaning it is for the benefit of a single grandchild or skip person, be a grandfathered trust, or qualify for the GST tax annual exclusion. Otherwise, if you want to cement your legacy and do what is best for your family at the time of death, you need to act quickly while this exemption still applies. You need to create your estate plan *this year*; the current federal estate, gift, and GST tax exemption rate is temporary and set to decrease soon.



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the way. Whether it's a milestone reached, a moment of connection with your loved one, or a personal achievement, take the time to acknowledge and celebrate these moments of joy and progress.

Being a family caregiver requires immense dedication, but remember, even superheroes need their moments of respite. By embracing these self-care and support strategies, you can provide the best care for your loved ones and ensure you're well-equipped to thrive in your own journey.

If you are a caregiver, we can help you navigate the estate planning process and tailor a plan to best protect the loved one you care for. Call us at 317-684-1100 to get started.

-Paul Kraft

TASTY TURKEY MEATLOAF

This turkey meatloaf is packed with flavor and protein, perfect for a family dinner or meal prep!

Ingredients

- 1 lb ground turkey
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsp ketchup
- 2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 eggs
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375 F and line a baking dish with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, combine turkey, onion, garlic, bread crumbs, Parmesan cheese, ketchup, Worcestershire sauce, eggs, parsley, salt, and pepper.
3. Form the mixture into a loaf shape and place it in the baking dish.
4. Bake for 45 minutes or until the internal temperature reaches 165 F.
5. Let the meatloaf rest for 10 minutes before slicing.

Nature's Playground Awaits!

These National Parks Are Accessible to All

For decades, the 400-plus national parks encompassing over 84 million acres were unreachable for millions of Americans with mobility issues. Thankfully, recent advances at many national parks have made nature available for everyone. Let's look at five accessible options for your next adventure.

Great Sand Dunes

Great Sand Dunes National Park has 5 billion cubic meters of sand and stretches 30 miles. The winds blow these sands into massive dunes with peaks reaching 13,000 feet in elevation. Now, with sand-friendly wheelchairs available for rent, utilizing inflatable wheels for accessibility, everyone can explore these natural wonders.

Grand Canyon

A scenic drive accessibility permit allows visitors to access roads that are closed to regular traffic, providing incredible views of the Grand Canyon without needing to get out of the car. However, for a closer peek, you can find wheelchair-friendly overlook platforms and a free shuttle to transport visitors around the park.

Carlsbad Caverns

Think again if you thought cave exploration was off the table for folks with trouble getting around. Carlsbad Caverns features an elevator that takes visitors 750 feet underground into a giant cave chamber, home to over a mile of paved trails through beautiful rock formations that took millions of years to form.

Grand Teton

Feel like going for a swim? Grand Teton National Park wanted everyone to feel welcome to cool off in the 1,200-acre Jenny Lake, so they built a path that allows wheelchair users to roll into the water. Nearby, Teton Adaptive Sports hosts climbing trips, so nobody has to abandon their dreams of conquering the cliffs.



Yellowstone

This national park is one of the country's best, with over 90% of visitors reporting never needing to leave their car. For adventurers with injuries, age-related mobility issues, or other disabilities who want a closer look, most of the thermal features Yellowstone is famous for are easily accessible due to its excellent boardwalk system.

The accessibility changes made by these parks are a significant step toward ensuring our national treasures are inclusive for all who wish to experience nature's wonders. Through innovative solutions like sand-friendly wheelchairs, cave elevators, and special driving permits, these parks give outdoor access to even more people.

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Slim Shady's Mom Sued Him for Millions

Eminem has famously feuded with Machine Gun Kelly, Mariah Carey, and many other musicians and celebrities. In many cases, his rivals become the subject of his rap lyrics.



He has even written entire songs as parts of long-standing rap battles and disputes, some of which become massive hits.

In 2018, Eminem released a music video for his single, "Killshot," a song targeting rapper Machine Gun Kelly. Despite the video being nothing but a still image — a drawing of Machine Gun Kelly seen through a gun's scope and crosshairs — it has amassed nearly *half a billion* views on YouTube. But one of his earliest, and perhaps most hurtful battles, hit close to home. Eminem, whose real name is Marshall Mathers, was sued for defamation by his mother, Debbie Mathers-Briggs, in 1999. She sought \$10 million in damages, claiming that the then-26-year-old rapper had slandered her in songs and interviews.

Background of the Beef

Eminem first mentioned Mathers-Briggs in his 1999 single, "My Name Is." The song

won the artist a Grammy for Best Rap Solo Performance in 2000. The lyrics include explicit references to his mother in the lines, "I just found out my mom does more dope than I do," and "I told her I'd grow up to be a famous rapper. Make a record about doin' drugs and name it after her." Mathers-Briggs claimed that she did not use illegal drugs and that the rapper's lyrics were untrue and amounted to slander. Eminem's attorney refuted this claim, arguing that everything the rapper sung about her was verifiably true.

Rapper's Result

The court awarded Mathers-Briggs a settlement in this case, but it was *far* from the \$10 million she originally sought. She initially won around \$25,000, which was reduced to just \$1,600 by a Macomb County judge, who awarded the majority of the settlement, some \$23,354, to her attorney to cover legal fees.