

Coping After a Stroke

For stroke survivors and family members

Coping after having a stroke can be difficult. It is normal to go through changes in emotions. This handout gives you ideas on how to manage.

Stroke survivors may feel:

- Sad
- Angry or frustrated
- Worried
- Bored
- Embarrassed
- “Why me?”

...and more

Caregivers may feel:

- Worried about what’s next
- Sad
- Frustrated
- Overwhelmed

....and more



How will I manage?

Patience helps

Remember that recovery from stroke is a gradual process that happens in small stages. It helps if you:

- Try to set goals you can reach
- Break bigger goals into smaller ones

Talk to others

If you are feeling sad, worried, angry or any other emotions that are troubling you, don't be afraid to talk about it. You are not alone.

- You can join a peer support or caregiver support group.
- You can speak to your therapists, doctors, a social worker, or other counselling professionals.

Who can I call?

1. For support from other stroke survivors and caregivers, you can call:

- After Stroke Canada
- Phone: 1 888 540 6666 | Website: www.afterstroke.ca

2. For individual, couple or family counseling, you can call:

- Family Service Toronto | Website: familyservicetoronto.org
 - Phone: 416 595 9230
- Catholic Family Services
 - Central office, phone: 416 921 1163
 - North Toronto office, phone: 416 222 0048
 - Website: www.cfstoronto.com
- Jewish Family and Child Services
 - Intake office, phone: 416 638 7800 | Website: www.jfandcs.com

3. For caregiver support, you can call:

- Ontario Caregiver Organization
 - Phone: 1 888 877 1626 | Website: <https://ontariocaregiver.ca>

Live outside of Toronto? Talk to a social worker to help you find services near you.

What helps?

Take care of yourself

- Relax with deep breathing, rest, or music.
- Join activities in the community, such as day programs, and social events.
- Exercise. Stay active without getting too tired — pace yourself.
- Find new interests and continue old ones, in any way you can.

Get help from others

- Ask friends or family to help, or look for respite care (community services that give caregivers a break).
- Join a support group for other stroke survivors and caregivers.
- Consider speaking to social workers or other professionals for counseling.
- Ask your doctor if medication might be helpful in managing your emotions.

Take it one day at a time

- Keep a schedule and write things down.
- Say “no” if you are doing too much. Say “yes” to help.
- Don’t try to be perfect. Do what you can.
- You can still enjoy life after stroke. A positive attitude can help!

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