

WELLNESS KEY 1 TOOLS

My Support Circle Worksheet

Building a circle of support can help you and your loved one with Parkinson's meet important needs and feel more connected. This circle might include a combination of people you know (family members, close friends, neighbors), and organizations or professionals you trust.

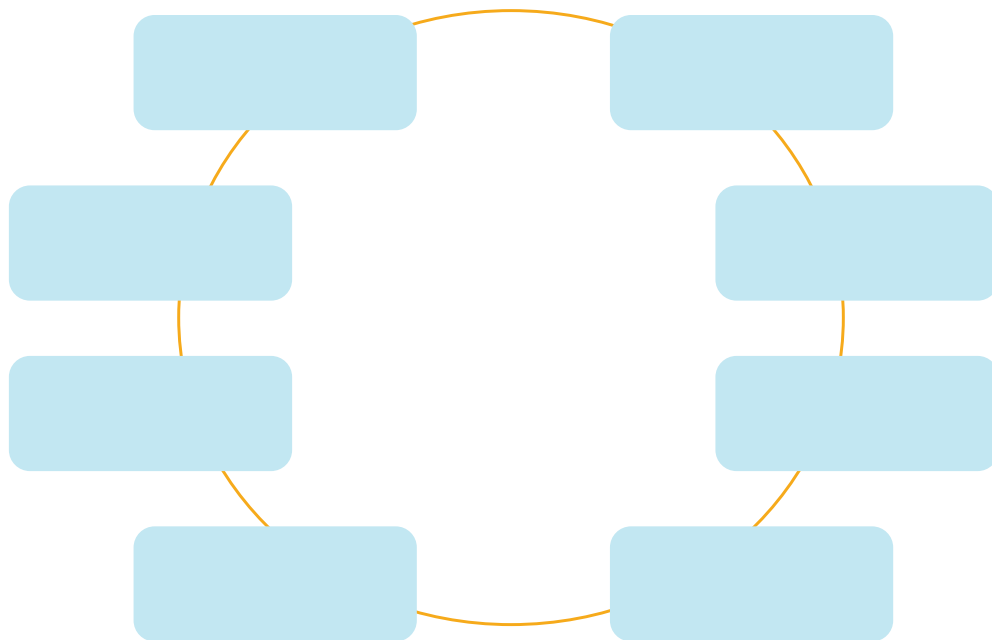
To identify who is in your circle, answer the following questions:

1. What do I need to do by myself? What tasks could someone else help with?

2. Is there a specific day of the week or time of day when I need more help?

3. Who can help with daily tasks? Use the spaces in the circle to write their names.

Add additional names outside of the circle if you need more room.



 To print additional copies, visit [Parkinson.org/Worksheets](https://www.parkinson.org/Worksheets).



WELLNESS KEY 1 TOOLS

Schedule Support Worksheet

Use the worksheet below to organize support.

Task or Activity	Person to Ask	Contact Information	Time Commitment	Items Needed
Take mom to lunch	Alex (friend)	alex@email.com	Noon-2 p.m., Fridays	Medication
Grocery shop	Son	256-456-7890	Every two weeks	Grocery list

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WELLNESS KEY 2 TOOLS

Care Partner Burnout Reflection

Check in with yourself regularly; ongoing feelings of stress and strain may signal a need for more self-care or support.

"I'm exhausted and stressed out all the time."

If this sounds familiar, you may be experiencing **care partner burnout** — a common issue involving deep physical, mental or emotional exhaustion that can result from the ongoing demands of care-giving. Burnout can build up slowly or hit you unexpectedly.



How are you doing?

Choose a quiet, distraction-free space. Read each statement and check those that are true for you.

- I often feel emotionally or physically exhausted.
- I am not getting enough sleep due to anxiety, stress or my loved one's PD symptoms.
- I have a short fuse or break down easily.
- I'm not interested in getting together with friends or family.
- I feel alone and isolated.

What You Can Do

If any of the above statements reflect your current situation, it could be a sign of care partner burnout. Even if you feel capable of managing on your own, taking proactive steps is important for your well-being and the well-being of the person with Parkinson's. Here are several suggestions:

Prioritize self-care. Use the **Self Check-In: Your Well-Being Matters** tool to find activities that will nourish you and help build your resilience.

Explore new coping skills. If you are feeling overwhelmed, try setting small, manageable goals. Techniques such as mindfulness and deep breathing can also help.

Talk to someone. Reach out to friends, family or your support group. Consider chatting with a therapist, counselor or spiritual advisor for coping and stress-management techniques. For tips on finding a counselor or a therapist, visit [Parkinson.org/finding-counselors](https://www.parkinson.org/finding-counselors).

Ask for help. Identify tasks that others could assist with. Use the tools on pages 14-15 to help you choose who to ask for support.

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WELLNESS KEY 2 TOOLS

Self Check-In: Your Well-Being Matters

Remember the last time you took a deep breath? **Let's take one now. Inhale deeply, hold for a moment and slowly exhale...**

1. Understand stress.

Stress is a natural response to uncertainty, conflict, health concerns or other challenging situations. Long-term stress can lead to anxiety and depression, disturb memory and sleep and impact the cardiovascular and immune systems. Care partners are vulnerable to chronic stress and burnout.

2. Take time for yourself.

Focusing on your needs and doing activities that promote health, relaxation and personal growth can help reduce stress and prevent care partner burnout. Self-care isn't just about managing stress; it's about honoring your worth and increasing your ability to support others.

3. Start the day with a reflection.

Each morning, ask yourself: **"What will strengthen, calm and inspire me?"** Make a list of activities that nourish you and help build your resilience. Below are some examples:



4. Explore mindful breathing.

Spend at least five minutes every day focusing on your breath. Notice the rise and fall of your chest as you breathe in and out. Discover more mindfulness techniques at [Parkinson.org/MindfulnessMondays](https://www.parkinson.org/MindfulnessMondays).

5. Practice gratitude.

Each day, take a moment to think or journal about a few things you're thankful for. This simple habit can help lift your mood and reduce stress, making it easier to cope with challenges.

 To print additional copies, visit [Parkinson.org/Worksheets](https://www.parkinson.org/Worksheets).

WELLNESS KEY 3 TOOLS

Parkinson's Pre-Appointment Worksheet

For people with Parkinson's disease (PD), appointments with the healthcare team are valuable opportunities to discuss symptoms, concerns and goals. Preparation is key to making the most of these visits. Planning ahead with a care partner can help prioritize questions and concerns and set clear health goals for the appointment. Whenever possible, inviting a care partner, trusted friend or family member to join the visit for support and note-taking can help ensure important topics are covered and understood.

Use this checklist to help get ready for an appointment:

Review relevant Parkinson's information.

Get familiar with the basics of PD symptoms and treatments. This can free up time for more individualized discussions during the appointment.

Fill out the Medications Form.

Visit [Parkinson.org/Worksheets](https://www.parkinson.org/Worksheets) to print and complete this form. Pay attention to any new side effects and list them in the notes section.

Monitor symptoms.

A week before the appointment, note any symptom affecting daily activities. Consider when the symptom occurs, along with factors that improve or worsen it, such as stress, medication, meal timing or sleep. This information can help identify patterns to discuss with the healthcare team.

Reflect on what matters most.

Consider important goals, such as enjoying a hobby, participating in an upcoming family event or managing work and home responsibilities, along with symptoms that might impact these goals.

Choose three main questions or concerns.

Sharing these at the beginning of an appointment can help keep the discussion focused.

The Parkinson's Foundation Helpline specialists are available to answer your PD questions, discuss any concerns and connect you with health professionals, local support and resources. Call at **1-800-4PD-INFO (1-800-473-4636)** or email Helpline@Parkinson.org.



To print additional copies, visit [Parkinson.org/Worksheets](https://www.parkinson.org/Worksheets).



WELLNESS KEY 3 TOOLS

Parkinson's Pre-Appointment Worksheet Continued

Complete this section before each PD appointment to prioritize questions and concerns.

Examples:

1. I want to help out with my grandkids after school, but lately I've been too tired to keep up. Is this due to PD, a side effect of my medication or something else? – Person with PD
2. My spouse doesn't feel motivated to exercise, but we know it's really important. Is there anything we can do? – Care partner
3. I get so stiff in the morning that it's hard to get out of bed. Should we be looking into medication changes or is there something else that would help? – Person with PD

1.

2.

3.

During the Appointment

Share questions and concerns openly. Though talking about sensitive issues can be difficult, your input guides treatment. The aim of the healthcare team, who has likely heard it all, is to improve quality of life.

Take notes to remember important details later. Use one notebook for Parkinson's appointments so you can track trends and follow up with the healthcare team.

Ask for clarification if anything is unclear. If starting new medications, ask about possible side effects.

Request referrals to specialists, like physical therapists, mental health professionals and local support services. Care partners can also inquire about resources for their own needs.

Confirm instructions and next steps before leaving to understand the follow-up plans and stay focused on goals. Ask the healthcare team how to reach them if you have more questions later.

Note for Care Partners:

Encourage the healthcare team to communicate directly with the person with Parkinson's rather than through you.



To print additional copies, visit [Parkinson.org/Worksheets](https://www.parkinson.org/Worksheets).



WELLNESS KEY 4 TOOLS

How to Build Better Communication

Open and honest dialogue with those in your life can help you address needs, solve problems, feel supported and maintain healthy relationships throughout the ups and downs of Parkinson's disease (PD). Below are tips for improving communication skills and getting your message across.

Be mindful of PD communication challenges. Parkinson's can impact communication. People may take longer to share thoughts, and speech may be softer or less clear. Be patient and allow extra time for responses. Facial expressions may not always match spoken words. During "off" periods, communication can be more difficult, so it helps to talk when medications are working well. To learn more, visit [Parkinson.org/Speech](https://www.parkinson.org/Speech).

Consider prior relationship dynamics. Past resentments or fears can impact healthy communication. Understanding these triggers can help address issues.

Build communication skills. Using "I feel ..." statements and active listening can help encourage empathy and understanding.

Practice regularly. Building new communication habits takes effort.

Get support. Adjusting long-standing communication patterns can be difficult. Counseling or therapy can offer valuable guidance, and support groups can connect you with others facing similar challenges.

Communication Strategies

Explore these effective communication strategies to improve your interactions:

"I feel ..." Statements

Starting difficult conversations with "I feel ..." allows you to express your feelings and needs without placing blame. For example, instead of saying "You don't listen or care about my feelings," try this:

Instructions:	Examples:
Use "I feel ..." statements.	I feel hurt ...
Describe the situation.	... when you don't respond to my questions.
Explain the impact.	I'm starting to feel disconnected.
State your need or request.	I would like you to acknowledge when I say something to you, even with a small nod.
Offer a solution or compromise.	I will try to be more patient if you can do your best to let me know you have heard me.



To print additional copies, visit [Parkinson.org/Worksheets](https://www.parkinson.org/Worksheets).



WELLNESS KEY 4 TOOLS

How to Build Better Communication Continued

Active Listening

Active listening is a communication technique that helps build trust, improve understanding and strengthen relationships by making sure the speaker feels heard and appreciated.

Follow these steps:

5 Steps for Active Listening

1. Give your full attention

- Put away distractions (like phones or computers) and make eye contact.

2. Show you are listening

- Nod, use facial expressions or say short affirmations like: "I see" or "I understand."
- Avoid interrupting; let the person finish speaking.

3. Reflect back

- Answer based on what was shared.
- Ask clarifying questions if something is not clear.

4. Respond thoughtfully

- Rephrase to ensure you understand. For example, say, "So, what you're saying is ..."
- Confirm you have understood correctly by summarizing key points.

5. Show empathy

- Acknowledge the speaker's feelings.
- Use compassionate language: "That sounds really challenging" or "I get why you feel that way."

Putting it into Practice

Try using these new communication tools to help navigate challenging conversations.

Afterwards, reflect:

What communication strategies did I use? How did they work?

What did I learn from this experience that I can apply to future conversations?

Do I need support or guidance to improve my communication skills or navigate relationship dynamics?



To print additional copies, visit [Parkinson.org/Worksheets](https://www.parkinson.org/Worksheets).



WELLNESS KEY 5 TOOLS

Estate and Advance Care Planning 101

What is estate and advance care planning?

The process of preparing legal documents that outline how you want your finances, belongings and medical care to be handled if you become unable to make decisions.

Who should do estate and advance care planning?

Every adult regardless of age or health who wants their personal wishes to be known and followed should have a plan.

What role do care partners play in estate and advance care planning?

Care partners have their own estate and advance care planning needs and can support a loved one by assisting with discussions, meetings with attorneys and communicating wishes if needed.

Why do people often put off estate and advance care planning?

Many feel overwhelmed, uncomfortable or afraid thinking about future needs, which can make it hard to start planning. You don't need to make all the decisions at once – take one step at a time.

How do I get started?

Learn what each document does. Start early and involve those who will help carry out the plans. Consult an elder law or estate planning attorney for legal guidance. For referrals, contact:

- The National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys at 1-703-942-5711 or Naela.org
- Your local Area Agency on Aging at 1-800-677-1116 or Eldercare.acl.gov

Documents	What It Does	Who to Pick
Power of Attorney for Healthcare	Enables someone to make medical decisions for you if you can't	A trusted person who knows your health wishes (agent)
Power of Attorney for Property	Permits someone to handle your finances and property if you are unable	A responsible, budget-conscious person to manage finances and belongings (agent)
Will	Explains how you want belongings divided after you pass away	An organized person who can smoothly carry out your wishes (executor)
Trust	Manages your assets during your life and after; helps simplify legal matters	A reliable person who will carefully follow your instructions (trustee)

Future Care Preferences

Advance planning in healthcare means making choices about your medical care in advance. This includes documents like the Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) form, which outlines wishes for end-of-life care.

Learn more about estate and advance care planning at Parkinson.org/Financial.



To print additional copies, visit Parkinson.org/Worksheets.



WELLNESS KEY 5 TOOLS

Planning for Hospital Safety

People with Parkinson's disease (PD) are at a higher risk of hospitalization and face many challenges while in the hospital, including not getting their medications on time or limited opportunities for movement. This year alone, one in every six people with PD will experience avoidable complications in the hospital. Symptoms, such as confusion or thinking changes, can develop due to stress, infection, fatigue, sleep issues, surgery or new medications.

Preparation and clear communication can help minimize complications and recovery time.

1. Order or download the free Hospital Safety Guide at [Parkinson.org/HospitalSafety](https://www.parkinson.org/HospitalSafety).
2. Carry Parkinson's identification in case of an emergency.
3. Prepare a hospital "go bag" using the Hospital Safety Guide. Keep it by the door.
4. Be ready to accompany your loved one to the hospital. Prepare a secondary care partner in case you are not able to be there the entire time.
5. Plan to communicate the urgency of PD needs, including medications on time, every time.

Use the Five Parkinson's Care Needs to help communicate your loved one's PD needs during a hospital visit.

Need 1	Need 2	Need 3	Need 4	Need 5
				
Follow At-home Medication Plan	Medications On Time	Avoid Harmful Medications	Prioritize Regular Movement	Screening for Safe Swallowing

How to Communicate with 911

When calling for emergency help for someone with Parkinson's, follow these tips to get the right assistance quickly:

- Stay calm and focus on the main reason for calling — too many details can delay help.
- Mention the person has PD. Save detailed medical history for the emergency crew.
- Answer questions clearly and honestly.
- Stay on the line until help arrives and update the dispatcher if anything changes.

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