OAK RIDGES HOSPICE
OF DURHAM LTD.

Caregiver Bill of Rights

1. **Take Care of Myself:** This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the capability to take better care of my loved one.
2. **Ask for and Accept Help:** Seek help from others, even though my loved one may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.
3. **Maintain My Own Life and Identity:** Maintain facets of my own life that do not include the person I care for, just as if he or she were healthy. I know that I do everything I reasonably can for my loved one; I have the right to do some things just for me without feeling guilty.
4. **Express My Emotions:** Get angry, be depressed or happy, experience frustration, laugh and cry, and express the normal range of human emotions.
5. **Establish Emotional Boundaries:** Reject any conscious or unconscious attempt by my loved one to manipulate me through guilt, anger, or depression.
6. **Receive Love and Appreciation:** Receive consideration, affection, forgiveness, and acceptance from my loved one for what I do for them on a daily basis.
7. **Recognize My Own Accomplishments:** Take pride in what I am accomplishing and applaud my own courage in taking on the responsibility of caring for my loved one.
8. **Protect My Future Well-Being:** Protect my individuality and maintain a life for myself that will sustain me once my loved one has died.
9. **Advocate for Caregiver Support:** Expect and demand that, as government makes strides in finding resources to support ill persons, similar strides are made toward aiding and supporting caregivers.

Adapted from Caregiving: Helping an Aging Loved One (AARP Books, 1985) by Jo Horne