

## CAREGIVER BILL OF RIGHTS

As a caregiver for a terminally ill loved one, I have the right to:

- Take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the capability of taking better care of my loved one.
- Seek help from others, even though my loved one may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.
- 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 that I reasonably can for my loved one; I have the right to do some things just for me without feeling guilty.
- Get angry, be depressed or happy, experience frustration, laugh and cry and express the normal range of human emotions.
- Reject any conscious or unconscious attempts by my loved one to manipulate me through guilt, anger or depression.
- Receive consideration, affection, forgiveness and acceptance from my loved one for what I do for them on a daily basis.
- Take pride in what I am accomplishing and to applaud my own courage in taking on the responsibility for caring for my loved one.
- Protect my individuality and maintain a life for myself that will sustain me once my loved one has passed on.
- Expect and demand that, as government makes strides in finding resources to support afflicted persons, similar strides are made toward aiding and supporting caregivers.

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