

Tip Sheet #33



Keeping My Own Social Life Going

Having a life helps you keep your perspective. Your social life may change, but does not have to disappear. Consider what the stroke survivor is able to do. Make plans for each of you to have some fun with your friends. **Having a social life is necessary to prevent burnout.**

What about keeping my social life going?

- Do not feel guilty about wanting a social life. Being with people is important for your health.
- Think about whether the survivor can stay by him or her self. Does the survivor need someone to stay with him or her?
 - If necessary, ask family or friends to spend a few hours with the survivor while you are away. The survivor will have an opportunity to visit too.
 - Consider paid respite care if you want to go away for an occasional weekend. Or, another family member may be able to stay at your home.
 - Check out **Tip Sheet #26 Finding care for my stroke survivor while I am away.**
- Plan social activities for both you and the survivor.
 - If you need a break from each other, this tip sheet will give you some ideas about what you can do on your own.
 - If you want to plan social activities with the survivor that you can enjoy together, see the following tip sheets:
 - **Tip Sheet #16 Keeping the Stroke Survivor Socially Active**
 - **Tip Sheet #25 Going Places with the Stroke Survivor**



- If a spiritual life is part of your routine, let your congregation know how they can help. Maintain your spiritual life.
 - Plan with your family and friends how to get to church, temple or house of worship.
 - Call members of your congregation to come visit you and the survivor
 - Take the opportunity to nourish your spirit, focus beyond the immediate situation, and make contact with people outside of the house.
- A shopping trip with a friend can provide a change of pace.
- Try breakfast or coffee with friends.
- Some people enjoy going out for dinner, a movie, or to the theater, or a concert.
 - It may be possible to go with the survivor.
 - You may want a break from constantly being with each other.
- Clubs and social groups provide a place where you can talk about something else for a short time.
 - Check with the library or bookstores for book clubs.
 - Hobby clubs offer interaction with people with similar interests.



How can I learn about how to keep my social life going?

- Support groups can give you ideas about how to start getting out again. **A list of stroke support groups is provided at the end of Tip Sheet #8 Where to find resources.** These groups are for survivors and caregivers.
- Talking with friends or family may give you some ideas.
- Fill out the following worksheet to help you plan.

Possible list of activities: Put an X beside ideas that would work for you. Add more ideas.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Call to talk with a family member | ☐ Go to a support group |
| ☐ Call to talk with a friend | ☐ Go to a community program like senior citizens or YMCA class of some sort. |
| ☐ Invite a family member over | ☐ Try out an art class |
| ☐ Invite a friend over | ☐ Look for volunteer activities (Check with local hospitals for volunteer activities) |
| ☐ Visit a family member | ☐ Go to church |
| ☐ Visit a friend | ☐ Call a church for peer visits |
| ☐ Go to a movie | ☐ Get tickets to a sports game |
| ☐ Go shopping | ☐ Get tickets to a play or musical event |
| ☐ Go out to eat | ☐ Look for support groups on the internet |
| ☐ Go to a local festival | |
| ☐ Take a walk outside | |
| ☐ Talk with neighbors | |
| ☐ Arrange a game night | |
| ☐ Email friends or family | |
| ☐ Try instant messaging with kids or grandkids on the computer | |

Other ideas? Brainstorm. Anything that comes to mind. List them...

List activities you would like to try:

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

Pick 3 to try now. List them in the table on the next page and begin planning.

Top 3 Social Activities to try now:	Who to call and notes on how to plan (need tickets, transportation, someone to stay with survivor, etc.).	Date and time for activity.
1.	Name(s): Phone: Plans:	Date: Time:
2.	Name(s): Phone: Plans:	Date: Time:
3.	Name(s): Phone: Plans:	Date: Time:

When do I need to contact a professional about keeping my social life?

- If you are feeling so guilty that you do not go out, it is time to call a professional.
- If you and the survivor are having trouble talking about the need to be with people, a professional could help.

Where do I find more information about maintaining my social life?

Check out the following tip sheets:

- **Tip Sheet #26 Finding care for my stroke survivor while I am away.**
- **Tip Sheet #16 Keeping the Stroke Survivor Socially Active**
- **Tip Sheet #25 Going Places with the Stroke Survivor**
- **Tip Sheet #8 Resources** This tip sheet gives you information on several reading materials and organizations that can help. There is also a list of personal stories written by stroke survivors and caregivers that are interesting to read.
- **Skill-Building Tip Sheet #SB3. Maintaining realistic schedule and expectations** to see how to make extra time for activities.

For general help in locating resources and materials in the Indianapolis area, call the **Indianapolis Senior Citizens Center at (317) 263-6272**. They have many services and activities for older adults, such as a health educator, social worker, tours and vacation packages, and various social activities that are fun to join.

Join a support group either in person or online. **Also remember there is a list of stroke support groups at the end of Tip Sheet #8.**

- American Stroke Association's "Warmline" at 1-888-478-7653 or www.strokeassociation.org
- Center for Family Caregivers 1-847-823-0639 or online at www.familycaregivers.org
 - Non-profit organization includes online support groups