Caregiver Assertive Rights*

I have the right...

...to take care of myself. This is not an act of selfishness. It will give me the capacity to take better care of my relative.
...to seek help from others even though my relative may object. I recognize the limits of my own endurance and strength.
...to maintain parts of my own life that do not include the person I care for, just as I would if he or she were healthy.
...to refuse a request from my family member without feeling guilty.
...to be treated as a competent adult by health care professionals, other family members, and peers.
...to make mistakes.
...to have different values and beliefs than others.
...to make choices about my commitments (for example, to which activities I want to commit myself)
...to accept or reject an offer for help without feeling obligated.
...to take pride in what I am accomplishing and to applaud the courage it has taken to meet the needs of my relative.
...to get angry, be depressed, and express other difficult feelings occasionally.
...to protect my individuality and my right to make a life for myself that will sustain me in the time when my relative no longer needs my full-time help.
...to expect and demand that as new strides are made in finding resources to aid physically and cognitively impaired older persons in our country, similar strides will be made toward aiding and supporting caregivers.
...to_________________________________ (fill in others)

*Adapted from Gallagher-Thompson, Ossinalde, and Thompson (1996), and Glueckauf & Quittner (1992)