Maintaining Personal Well-Being for Adults Diagnosed With Special Needs

The diagnosis of an illness or disorder can be life changing. Feelings of denial, fear, anger, guilt, anxiety, confusion and grief are all normal reactions to a new diagnosis. It is important to:

- Seek a second expert opinion if there are doubts regarding the diagnosis
- Listen carefully, take notes and ask questions
- Learn about tests, treatments, medications and potential side effects
- Bring a family member or friend to appointments and consultations to provide support
- Talk to employers if time off from work is needed
- Consider counseling or support programs to learn ways to cope with the physical and emotional challenges
- Get adequate sleep, nutrition and relaxation

Personal well-being

Everyone faces continued responsibilities and demands in their everyday life. An illness or a disability can make these situations more physically and emotionally challenging. Issues may seem small or insignificant when viewed individually, but can accumulate, leaving a person exhausted, sad or overwhelmed. People are more likely to feel successful and resilient if they make time for their own emotional and physical well-being.

Healthy relationships

Individuals respond differently to managing an illness or disability, and relationships can become more complicated. Healthy relationships support personal well-being. Be aware of and accept boundaries and limitations when seeking support and assistance from family and friends. Open communication between spouses, siblings and children provide opportunities to understand varying viewpoints and needs.

While family members often provide most of the emotional and physical support, it is important to develop friendships and engage in activities outside of the family. Military life may pose challenges to developing and maintaining relationships. A wide network of friends can provide support when service members are geographically separated from their families. Friendships may change when families relocate, but support can be maintained through phone calls, emails and other forms of electronic communication such as Skype, Facebook, Twitter or blogs.

http://www.militaryonesource.mil/family-and-relationships/special-needs

Exceptional Family Member Program support is available for military families with special needs. For more information, please contact your installation EFMP office or visit http://www.militaryonesource.mil/family-and-relationships/special-needs, an official Department of Defense website.