Practicing Self-Care

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A Look at the Numbers

• Mothers who attend to the needs of children with socially disruptive conduct spend 3.6 more waking hours per day caring for their child (Whitney & Smith, 2015).

• Mothers raising children with disabilities reported the following UNMET needs (Bromley et al., 2004):

  91% Doing things I enjoy
  85% Having someone to talk to
  69% Meeting other parents in socially satisfying situations
2/3 of parents of children with Developmental Disabilities have significantly elevated stress levels (Baker-Ericzen et al., 2005).
Stress negatively impacts our:

1. **Physical** health
2. **Mental** health
3. **Children’s outcomes**

Self Care is NOT Selfish

Being a **ROLE MODEL**
What is Self Care?

Decisions and actions we take to enhance all aspects of our health and wellbeing.
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

- **Physiological needs**: air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing, reproduction
- **Safety needs**: personal security, employment, resources, health, property
- **Love and belonging**: friendship, intimacy, family, sense of connection
- **Esteem**: respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom
- **Self-actualization**: desire to become the most that one can be
"How can I do self care?"

SELF CARE PYRAMID

- Eat. Sleep. Move.
- Health
- Support
  - Family
  - Partner
  - Other parents
  - Teachers/therapists
  - Groups
  - Respite
- Just for you
TIPS

1. **Schedule** self care/ respite, then schedule another
2. **Guilt -Free**
3. Ask for and **accept help**
4. Take regular **breaks**
5. Find your **tribe**
6. Prioritize **your time**
7. **OK to say NO** to extra responsibilities
8. **OK to cancel plans** or appointments
9. Small things add up- it’s a **process**
Activity

Do you Remember What **YOU** Like to Do?
Activity

What does Self Care Look Like For YOU?

1. ______________________
2. ______________________
3. ______________________
4. ______________________
5. ______________________
Mind and Body

**Body:**
- Friends
- Respite
- Breaks
- Exercise
- Creativity
- Nature

**Mind:**
- Journal
- Meditation
- Mindfulness
- Gratitude
# Self Care Menu

## Seconds
- Take a break while walking around the car after putting the kids in their car seats
- Turn your phone off
- Moment of silence
- Congratulate yourself on doing something small
- Savor the moment when something good happens
- Wear your favorite perfume

## Minutes
- Burn a candle
- Have a cup of tea or coffee
- Take 10 deep breaths
- Quick meditation or prayer
- Put music on (and dance?)
- Stretch
- Call someone you love
- Conversation with a friend
- Give a compliment
- Write a thank you note
- Buy some flowers
- Go outside!
- Create relaxing morning routine
- Do something creative
- Go for a walk
- Mini pamper session (sheet masks)
- Bubble bath/hot shower
- Unplug from technology for an hour
- Social media break
- Make your favorite meal
- Order out dinner
- Try a new, healthy recipe
- Write down 5 things you are thankful for
- Heat up buckwheat neck pillow in microwave

## Hours
- Declutter a space/clean
- Watch your favorite movie again
- Read a good book
- Take a nap
- Get a massage
- Yoga
- Date night (in or out) with partner or friends
- Have an intense workout session

## Longer
- Try a new hobby or restart an old one
- Try something new!
- Therapy
- Mindfulness, meditation
Brainstorm self care for you

1. ______________________
2. ______________________
3. ______________________
4. ______________________
5. ______________________
Resources

• AutismUp
• Levine Autism Center (formerly Kirch)
• Family Navigators- Levine, Jewish Family Navigator
• Parent to Parent of NYS
• Family Autism Center/ Camp Puzzle Peace/ Managing Autism Together Today
• Starbridge
• Future Cares
• Upstate special needs support group
• In the Driver’s Seat
• OPWDD (Office for People With Developmental Disabilities)
App recommendations

• Calm
• Stop, breathe, think
• Smiling Mind
• Pacifica
• Happify
• Gratitudes


Gallagher & Whitely, 2013; Lovell, Moss, & Wetherell, 2012; Resch, Benz & Elliott, 2012 For more complete citation, see references from Article #9 of lit search “Social support and mastery influence the association between stress and poor physical health in parents caring for children with developmental disabilities.”


Mugno, Ruta, D’Arrigo, & Mazzone, 2007; Weiss, 2002. For more complete citation, see references from Article #12 of lit search “Interventions that target improvements in mental health for parents of children with autism spectrum disorders: A narrative review.”

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Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics

Please Join Us for the

Skirboll Family Autism Conference

Strong Museum of Play
Saturday, June 9, 2018
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

- Information sessions with national experts
- Parent panels, workshops, and more!
- Free admission
- Spanish and ASL interpretation requested

Visit https://is.gd/skirboll18 to register today!

Questions?
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