



Self-Care Tips for Parents

Airline flight attendants always say that in the event of an emergency landing, adults must put on their oxygen mask first in order to help their children and others.

That example is a good one to help you understand the importance of self-care, especially when you feel stressed by the demands of life.

Practicing self-care restores your physical, mental and emotional energy. When you feel stronger you are better able to meet your own needs as well as those of your son or daughter and other loved ones.

Raising children is challenging. It's even more difficult if you work or go to school. Taking personal time is not a luxury, it's a necessity. You already know exercise helps. Are you ready for some more ideas?

Being kind to yourself provides health benefits, and teaches your child the value of self-care. That's a wonderful lesson to learn and one children can pass on.

Restore your energy with these self-care tips when caring for an INFANT:

- * Ask a trusted person to babysit so you can change your routine and recharge.
- * Keep your energy up with healthy meals, snacks and lots of water, especially if breastfeeding.
- * Ask loved ones to pitch in if you feel overwhelmed by household chores.
- * Schedule a "pamper-yourself" activity or a reading a day. Whatever relaxes you, do it as often as you can.

Self-care tips for raising YOUNG CHILDREN:

- * Form a circle of support with parents whose children are the same age as your own.
- * Create a master calendar that has all family activities and appointments.
- * Find a hobby and work on it, if for only 30 minutes at a time.
- * Call a friend; host a dinner or game night. Choose to have fun.

Self-care tips for raising TEENAGERS:

- * Avoid yelling when your child ignores you or gives you the silent treatment. Enlist the help of another adult who connects with your child.
- * Compromise when appropriate. Your child is hardwired to test his or her budding independence.
- * Declare a monthly technology-free weekend. Use the time to talk or do family activities.
- * Be honest. Are you projecting your dreams on your teen? If so, apologize and back off.