

Self-Care



Challenges to Self Care

Why are you not taking care of yourself?

- “Not enough time in the day.”
- Feeling selfish for taking time for yourself
- Work responsibilities
- Not having someone to watch your children
- Errands that need to be finished
- Children’s school work and activities



Self-Care is important!

- Although it can be hard to find time for self-care, routinely doing things for yourself will provide you with more energy.
- Try to schedule time each day for yourself.
- Even if it is only ten minutes, getting to focus on you can make all the difference.

Introduction

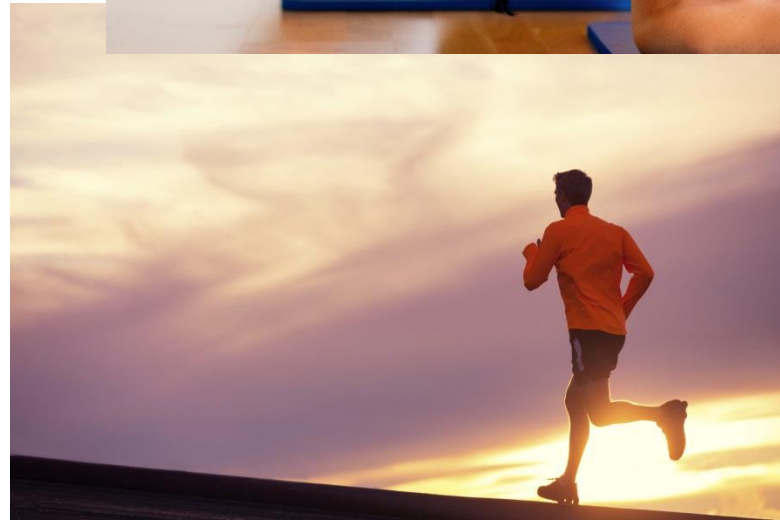
- **Self-care** is a term widely used to refer to activities and practices that you engage in on a regular basis to maintain and enhance your short-term and long-term health and well-being.
- If you neglect your own needs and forget to nurture yourself, you are in danger of deeper levels of unhappiness, low self-esteem, and feelings of resentment.
- Also, if you spend your time only taking care of others, you can be at risk of becoming burned out.

Take Care of Yourself

- Taking care of yourself and reducing stress is important for your physical and mental health, which directly affects your children's well-being.
- Recognizing the signs of stress is important so you know how to lessen it.
- Signs of stress include:
 - feeling tired,
 - snapping at family and friends,
 - being indecisive,
 - changes in sleep,
 - changes in appetite,
 - headaches and stomachaches,
 - and not being able to concentrate on tasks.
- The next several slides are ideas on how to take care of yourself and lessen your stress.

Regular Exercise

- The benefits of regular exercise are:
 - Relieves stress
 - Lowers the risk of depression and anxiety
 - Boosts your immune system
 - Increases energy
 - Promotes better sleep
 - Manages weight
 - Sets a good example for your children



Eating Healthy



- The benefits of eating healthy are:
 - Improves mood
 - Controls weight
 - Combats diseases (heart disease, high blood pressure, etc.)
 - Boosts energy

Plenty of Sleep

- Benefits of good sleep are:
 - Improves memory and attention
 - Improves concentration and reaction time
 - Extends length of life
 - Benefits your health (lower risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, etc.)
 - Improves mood



Good Hygiene



- The benefits of good hygiene are:
 - Stops the spread of illness and bacteria
 - Provides increased confidence at work and in social interactions
 - Improves mood

Avoid Unhealthy Habits



- Avoiding unhealthy habits will keep you healthier and safer.
- Unhealthy habits to avoid are:
 - Excessive drinking
 - Smoking
 - Recreational drug use
 - Risky behaviors

Make Time for Yourself



- Ideas for spending time for yourself:
 - Reading a book
 - Taking a bath or long shower
 - Meditating
 - Watching your favorite television program
- By making time each day for yourself, you are:
 - Taking a mental and emotional vacation
 - Recharging your energy level
 - Triggering the relaxation response

Begin a New Hobby

- Beginning a new hobby provides you with an outlet to express yourself, meet others, and enjoy something just for yourself.
- Hobbies can include:
 - Joining a book club
 - Taking a class
 - Arts and crafts
 - Outdoor sports
 - Hiking
 - Playing an instrument



Determine Social Support



- Having a positive and helpful support system is crucial to a healthy lifestyle. People who genuinely care about you are invaluable during good times and bad. Your social support can come from a number of different sources such as:
 - Family
 - Friends
 - Support Groups

Social Support Benefits

- Research has shown that people with strong support systems have better health, live longer, and report higher well-being.
- In addition, your support system will listen to your fears, hopes, and help you feel understood.
- They can also provide alternatives to solve problems and help distract you from worries.



Seek Help and Support if Feeling Overwhelmed



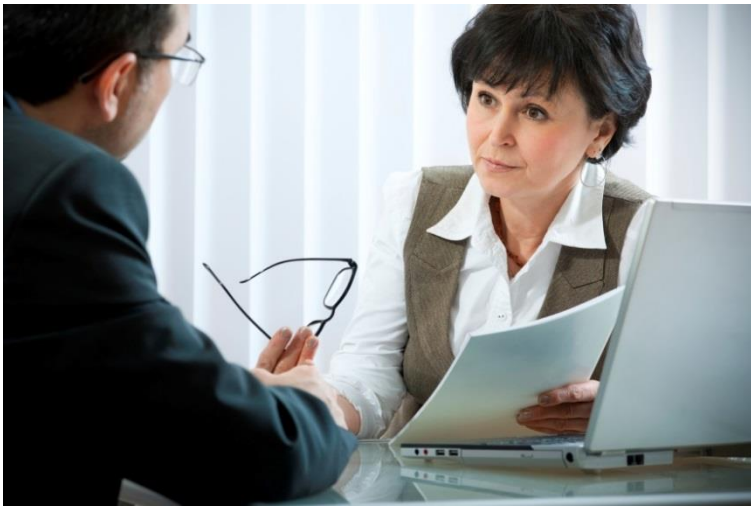
- You may still feel overwhelmed or stressed regardless if you take care of yourself or have a strong support system.
- When you feel overwhelmed, it is good to seek help from professionals.
- The next few slides will provide information on who to ask for additional support.

Professional Support: Physicians

- If you are feeling sick, achy, or depressed frequently, you may want to see your physician.
- A physician can examine you to see if there is something physically wrong with you and give you recommendations to feel better.



Professional Support: Counselors



- A counselor can be a good option if you feel like you need to talk to someone with an unbiased view.
- They can be a sounding board and also provide therapeutic interventions such as mindfulness, cognitive behavioral therapy, thought restructuring, and meditation.
- Counselors can also provide community resources that can be beneficial to you.

Professional Support: Religious or Spiritual Advisors

- If you are religious or spiritual, a religious leader may be a good option to reach out to.
- They can provide you support and guidance connected to your religious or spiritual affiliation.



Conclusion

- Self-care is crucial to keep yourself healthy and to be an active parent in your child's life.
- It can be difficult to find time, but there are ways to focus on yourself and there are resources available to help you along the way.
- Remember, self-care involves activities and practices that you engage in on a regular basis to maintain and enhance your short-term and long-term health and well-being.
- When you are healthy and free of stress, you will be a more attentive parent and good role model to your children.