

# Taking care of yourself as a parent



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We all have a hard time being the parent we want to be when we're stressed out. The positive parent focuses on what's right in the parent-and-child relationship, finds joy in the simple things, and takes the general attitude that while there are lots of things they can't directly control, they can control what they choose to focus on.

But what if you find yourself frequently stressed out, exhausted, and thinking negative thoughts about your child? What can you do to de-stress? The positive parent prioritizes self-care.

They make sure personal needs for intimacy, companionship, recreation, and time alone are being met. Being a good parent does not mean that your child should dominate your life.

Unfortunately, when you're stressed out, exhausted, and running on empty, you can't be there constructively for your child. Prioritizing if your own needs are being met makes it much easier to be patient, consistent, and available to your child.



## Physical

- Hiking in nature
- Bicycling (outdoors/ stationary)
- Dancing
- Running or jogging
- Skating
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Walking briskly
- Weight lifting
- Yoga
- Basketball
- Aerobic exercise
- Stretching and toning exercises
- Muscle-strengthening
- Zumba
- Taking the stairs
- Boxing
- Tai Chi
- Jump rope



## Spiritual

- Pray
- Read a sacred text
- Meditate/ sit in silence
- Center Yourself
- Body scan
- Gratitude journal
- Mindfulness
- Present-moment awareness
- Visualization
- Affirmations
- Join a place of worship
- Join a choral group
- Chanting
- Play worship music
- Set an intention or mantra for the day
- Aroma therapy
- Give away a part of your income to the less fortunate on a regular basis
- Be mentored by a spiritual teacher



## Emotional

- Take a little time to relax, breathe, and unwind.
- get involved in a hobby or interest that helps you enjoy yourself.
- Use diaphragmatic breathing to release tension and relax
- Gratitude for your child
- Put on music you like to lift your mood
- Nap or go to bed when the children do.
- Take a hot bubble bath or shower in the dark
- Draw or doodle
- Listen to an audio book
- Ground yourself
- Progressive muscle relaxation
- Garden
- Plan some “Me time”
- Take a sabbath
- Get out in nature
- Journal/ brain dump



## Social

- Seek out friends for conversation and support
- Write a friend a nice card. Why? It can help you focus on someone positive and remind you that you’re not alone
- Call or text a friend
- Hug someone you love for at least 10 seconds
- Go to therapy or support group
- Connect with the community
- Ask for help
- Invite a coworker out for lunch.
- Meet a friend for coffee.
- Join a group focused on a favorite hobby, such as, reading or painting.
- Host a dinner party.
- Take a cooking or art class and learning something new
- Volunteer at a school, library, or hospital.

# Self-Care Shield

What can you do to strengthen your shield? This shield protects you from anything negative, stressful or toxic. Within the protection of this shield, you will feel centered, happy, and energized.

The image shows a large shield shape with a thick magenta border. The shield is divided into four equal quadrants by a vertical and a horizontal magenta line. Each quadrant is labeled with a blue, bold, sans-serif font. The top-left quadrant is labeled 'Physical', the top-right 'Spiritual', the bottom-left 'Emotional', and the bottom-right 'Social'. In each quadrant, there are five horizontal black lines of varying lengths, intended for writing notes or actions related to that specific area of self-care.

Physical	Spiritual
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

  

Emotional	Social
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____