

Self-Care for Parents

Whether you work or stay at home, raising children is a challenging 24/7 job.

If you are already stretched for time, the idea of practicing self-care may seem selfish.

But consider this: *when you nurture yourself and care for your needs, you have more love to give. If you are a dad, you can benefit from self-directed mothering, too! Here's how.*



Self-care tips when caring for an infant:

- ❖ **Ink in baby-free time** every now and then. And don't feel guilty. Ask someone you trust to babysit so you can change your routine and recharge.
- ❖ **Eat regular healthy meals** and snacks to keep your energy up. Drink plenty of water, especially if you are breastfeeding. Keep a water bottle handy.
- ❖ **Forgive yourself** if your house is not spotless. Caring for a baby can zap your energy. Ask loved ones to help out if you feel overwhelmed by household chores.
- ❖ **Remember time flies** and one day your baby will be driving. Such thoughts can encourage you to savor your baby's dependence.
- ❖ **Exercise to relieve stress.**



Self-care tips for raising young children:

- ❖ **Befriend parents with children** the same age as your own for a circle of support.
- ❖ **Stay organized for less stress.** Create a master calendar that has all family activities and appointments.
- ❖ **Make time** to pursue hobbies or interests you enjoy. Practice self-care daily, if for only 15 minutes at a time.
- ❖ **Laugh.** Call a friend, attend a sporting event, watch a silly movie or video. Humor helps.
- ❖ **Be realistic.** Perfection is an idea. Do the best you can.
- ❖ **Enjoy your child's youth.**
- ❖ **Ask for help if you need it.**
- ❖ **Exercise to relieve stress.**



Self-care tips for raising teens:

- ❖ **Walk away when tempers flare.** Your teen may challenge your authority while testing the boundaries of a growing independence. Take time to cool down.
- ❖ **Stop yelling** when your child ignores you or gives you the silent treatment. Enlist the help of another adult who connects with your child.
- ❖ **Strive for balance** between enforcing limits and flexibility. Compromise when appropriate.
- ❖ Do something nice **for yourself** daily.
- ❖ **Be self-aware.** Are you trying to live out your dreams through your teen?
- ❖ **Exercise to relieve stress.**

As a parent it's important to *be kind to yourself.*
It's a wonderful lesson to teach your child.