



PLAN:

Developing positive self-care strategies

Taking care of yourself is one of the most important things you can do as a parent. You really need to know yourself to take care of yourself—to establish a routine, to know when you might be stressed, and to develop effective self-care strategies to build into your daily life. Parents often have to work hard to find the time and energy to do something for themselves, which may not be their priority on any given, busy day. You may feel guilty or even neglectful of your children in the process of taking time for yourself—many parents do. Identify what works best for you—something that doesn't conflict with your children's needs or their safety—and that helps you feel and stay well.

A self-care strategy helps you feel better. What works for one person does not necessarily work for another. At the same time, not all strategies for helping us feel better are healthy or safe. While everyone has bad habits, your goal may be to shift from negative strategies to more positive strategies over time.

Positive strategies add to your health and well-being, not jeopardize it. Some examples of everyday activities that may help you feel better are reading for pleasure, exercising, listening to music, dancing, playing with a pet, trying a new recipe or participating in a faith community. Building positive strategies into your daily routine shows your children you are taking care of yourself. You can help your children discover healthy ways to take care of themselves, too. Take a minute to think about what positive self-care strategies help you feel better and exactly how they make you feel.

POSITIVE SELF CARE STRATEGY	THIS MAKES ME FEEL

Keep this list where it's easy to find. Look at it every day to remind yourself to take a moment for yourself. Remind yourself of what helps when you are feeling anxious or stressed. Share it with family and friends, so they can help you remember to take good care of yourself. If your children are old enough, sit with them to help them make a self care list of their own.