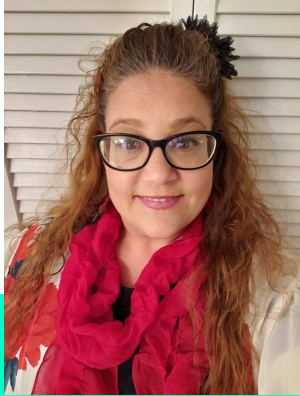


*YOU CAN'T DRINK FROM AN EMPTY CUP:
SUPPORTING YOUR OWN SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING
HELPING PARENTS SURVIVE THE ROLLER-COASTER OF PARENTING A SPECIAL NEEDS CHILD
THROUGH ONLINE EDUCATION DURING COVID*



Stacy Hurley, LCSW-C, Howard County Autism Society, Family Navigator
Brad Bernstein, LCPC, Crossroads Psychological Associates



Please note: participants can access closed
captioning

LET'S MEDITATE FOR A MOMENT



ORDER OF TOPICS

- Introduction
- Identifying stressful triggers
- Surveying your satisfaction
- Self-care considerations
- Let's play a game - **Self-Care Bingo**
- Takeaways
- Questions & Feedback
- Check out the Resources!





WHAT ARE YOUR STRESSORS?

IDENTIFYING STRESSFUL TRIGGERS

Work	Childcare	Legal matters
Finances	Relationships	Mental health
Physical health	Schedule	Amount of free time
Trauma	Food Security	Spiritual/Religious issues
Helping with child's schooling	Attitudes/thoughts	Career decisions
Health of family	Housing	Life changes

WHAT ELSE?!

SURVEYING YOUR SATISFACTION

How satisfied are you feeling?



How do you measure that?

PROFESSIONAL QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE (PROQOL)

COMPASSION SATISFACTION AND COMPASSION FATIGUE

(PROQOL) VERSION 5 (2009)

When you *[help]* people you have direct contact with their lives. As you may have found, your compassion for those you *[help]* can affect you in positive and negative ways. Below are some questions about your experiences, both positive and negative, as a *[helper]*. Consider each of the following questions about you and your current work situation. Select the number that honestly reflects how frequently you experienced these things in the *last 30 days*.

1=Never

2=Rarely

3=Sometimes

4=Often

5=Very Often

- _____ 1. I am happy.
- _____ 2. I am preoccupied with more than one person I *[help]*.
- _____ 3. I get satisfaction from being able to *[help]* people.
- _____ 4. I feel connected to others.
- _____ 5. I jump or am startled by unexpected sounds.
- _____ 6. I feel invigorated after working with those I *[help]*.
- _____ 7. I find it difficult to separate my personal life from my life as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 8. I am not as productive at work because I am losing sleep over traumatic experiences of a person I *[help]*.
- _____ 9. I think that I might have been affected by the traumatic stress of those I *[help]*.
- _____ 10. I feel trapped by my job as a *[helper]*.
- _____ 11. Because of my *[helping]*, I have felt "on edge" about various things.
- _____ 12. I like my work as a *[helper]*.

What does self-care mean to you?



YOU WOULDN'T LET THIS
HAPPEN TO YOUR PHONE.
DON'T LET IT HAPPEN TO
YOU EITHER.

SELF CARE IS A PRIORITY,
NOT A LUXURY.

How do you go about doing it?

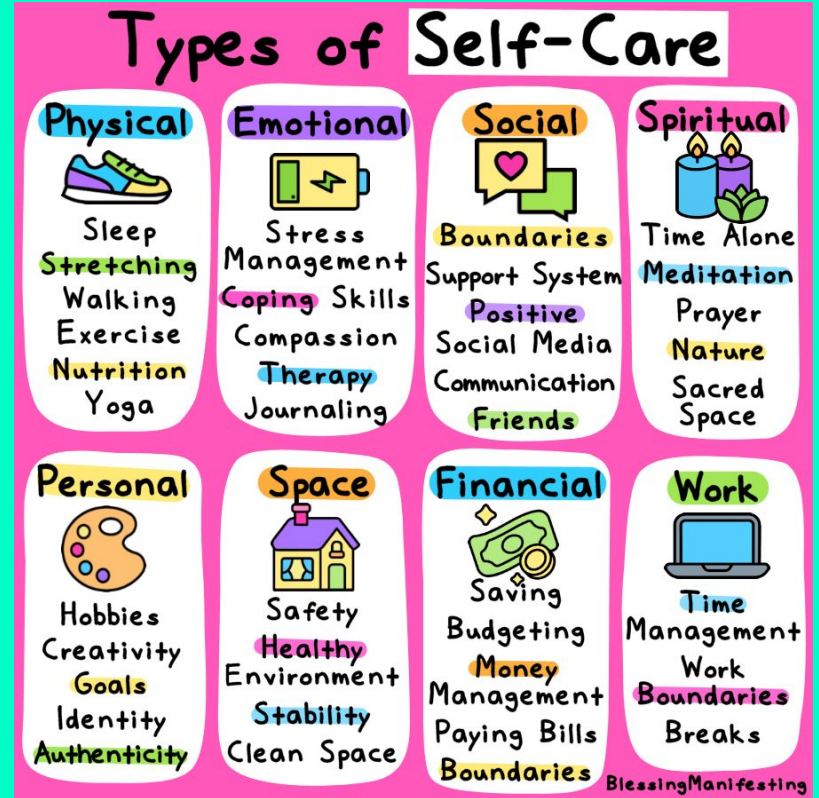
SO WHAT IS SELF-CARE?

Self-care is important to maintaining a healthy relationship with yourself. It means doing things to take care of our minds, bodies, and souls by engaging in activities that promote well-being and reduce stress. Doing so enhances our ability to live fully, vibrantly, and effectively. The practice of self-care also reminds both you and others that your needs are valid and a priority.



SO HOW DO I PRACTICE SELF-CARE?

- Focus on the positive.
- Acknowledge what you have accomplished.
- Continue family rituals.
- Give yourself time to adjust.
- Make time for your friends.
- Explore creative interests outside of autism.
- Get involved with the autism community!
- Respite Care



EXAMPLES OF SELF-CARE

- Clean
- Cook or bake
- Cross something off your to-do list
- Exercise
- Get a massage
- Go for a walk
- Listen to music or a podcast
- Make art



- Meditation
- Mindfulness exercises
- Play a game
- Practice deep breathing
- Read
- Take a bath
- Take a (timed) nap
- Watch TV or a movie
- Yoga

DISTRACTION AS A STRATEGY

WHY SHOULD I DISTRACT MYSELF?

Activities are a great way for us to distract ourselves from our current emotions until we are better able to cope. When our level of distress is too high, we may not be able to effectively handle a situation and need ways to bring our emotional state down.

Some suggestions may seem similar to self-care, but distraction activities serve a different purpose. One person's self-care activity is another's distraction technique.



DISTRACTION

EXAMPLES OF DISTRACTION ACTIVITIES

- Call a friend (and don't talk about what's causing you distress)
- Create something
- Describe your surroundings using your five senses
- Do a puzzle
- Do something kind for someone else
- Focus on a single task
- Go out to eat
- Go to an event
- Hold ice
- Listen to music or a podcast
- Make a list of things (cars, dog breeds, music artists, etc.)
- Take a hot or cold shower
- Try something new
- Volunteer
- Watch something funny
- Watch TV or a movie

Tips for Self-Care During COVID-19

During times of change and uncertainty it is ever more important to incorporate self-care and structure into your schedule. And while your typical self-care routine may no longer be available, there are ways to stay healthy and remain connected. Every day take a moment (or more) to take care of yourself.

Exercising increases energy levels, improves happiness and doesn't have to take place in a gym. Take a virtual workout class at home or spend some time outdoors walking or biking.



Exercise

The foods we choose to nourish our bodies and the way we enjoy them can have a tremendous impact on our mental and physical health. Be purposeful when restocking on groceries and pick up foods that boost your mood such as oatmeal, nuts, and even dark chocolate.

Eat Healthy



Sleep plays a major role in our overall health, improving emotional regulation and management of anxiety. It's important to get 7 to 9 hours of sleep, especially during times of stress. Try to limit your exposure to the news and social media a couple of hours before bed.



Sleep

Research shows people engaged in learning feel more confidence, hope and purpose. Keep your mind active by taking virtual tours of museums, reading, trying new recipes, or solving puzzles.

Learn and Explore



Having regular times for eating, going to bed and rising in the morning, exercising, and working or studying can help maintain a sense of normalcy.



Structure and Routines

Take breaks throughout the day, first thing in the morning or before bed to slow down and be present. The practice of pausing, breathing, and just "being" is essential to our well-being and mental health because it helps us reduce stress, worry less and it enhances feelings of resiliency.

Practice Mindfulness



Our connections with others help us cope with the ups and downs in life. Keep in contact with friends, family and co-workers through phone and video calls.



Talk with a Friend

For mental health resources visit [EachMindMatters.org](https://www.EachMindMatters.org)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.8255

The Peer-Run Warm Line: 1.855.845.7415
for peer-run non-emergency emotional support.



self-care recommendations

FROM CALIFORNIA'S EACH MIND MATTERS

- Exercise
- Eat Healthy
- Sleep
- Learn and Explore
- Structure and Routines
- Practice Mindfulness
- Talk with a Friend

DO YOU HAVE A SELF CARE PLAN?

Do you follow it?

**NEW SELF-CARE:
TALK TO MYSELF
THE WAY I TALK
TO DOGS**

**“HI, SWEET GIRL.”
“YOU’RE SO CHUBBY
AND CUTE.”
“WANT A TREAT?”
“NEED A NAP?”**

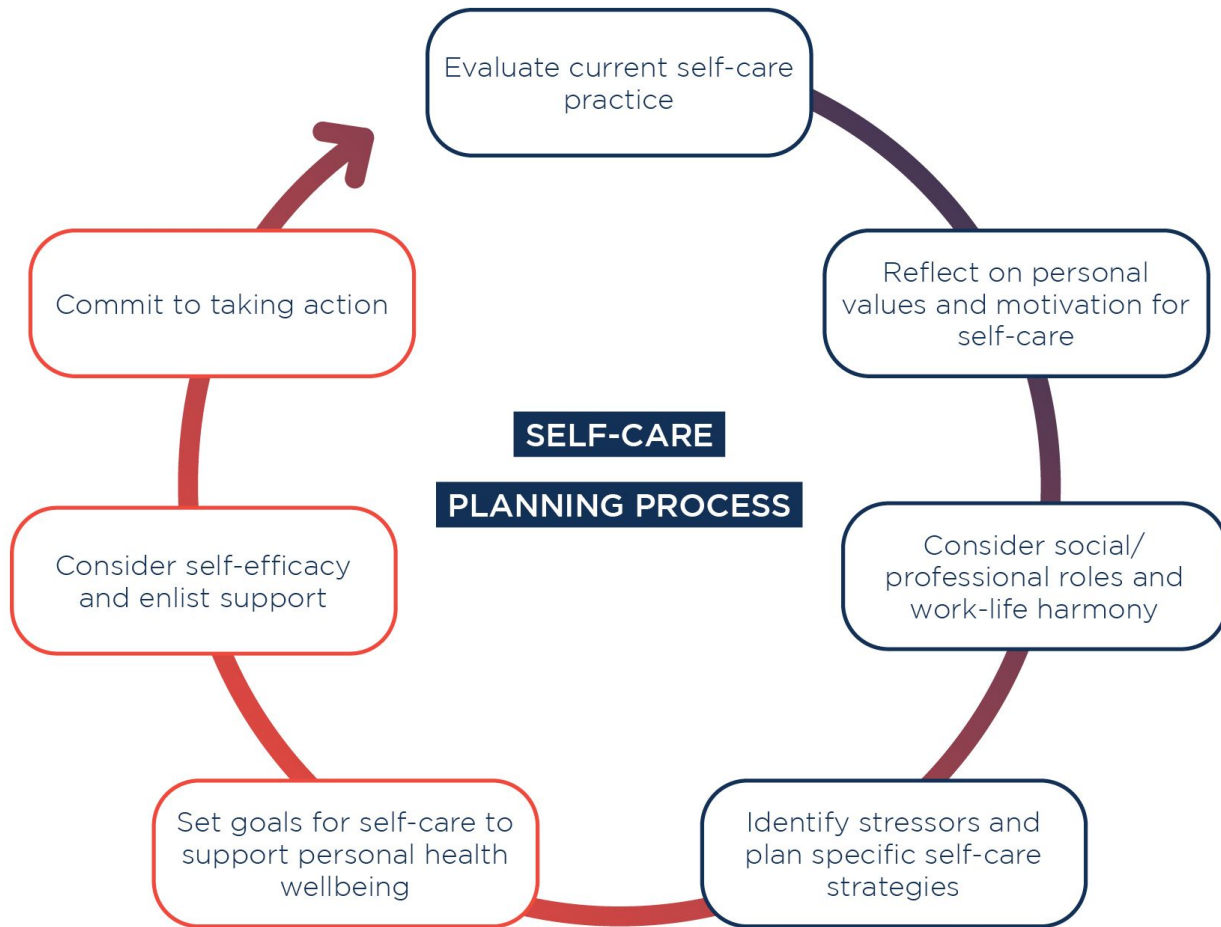


DEVELOP YOUR SELF-CARE PLAN

For each category in your self care plan, select at least one strategy or activity that you can undertake. You might notice areas of overlap between these categories. It is important to develop a self-care plan that is holistic and individual to you.

- Use a self-care plan template or create your own.
- **Fill your self-care plan with activities that you enjoy** and that support your wellbeing.
- **Keep this in a place where you can see it every day.** Keeping it visible will help you to think about and commit to the strategies in your plan. You can also share it with your friends and family so they can support you in your actions.
- **Stick to your plan and practice the activities regularly.** Just like an athlete doesn't become fit by merely 'thinking' about fitness, as a parent/caregiver you can't expect to perform effectively without putting into practice a holistic plan for your wellbeing.
- **Re-assess how you are going at the end of one month** and then three months. Plans can take over a month to become habits, so check-in and be realistic about your own self-care plan. After a while, come back and complete the self-care assessment again to find out how you are going with your new habits.

[Developing a self-care plan | Teacher wellbeing](#)



LET'S PLAY A GAME!

AT HOME SELF CARE

TOOK A SHOWER	COMPLETED A VIRTUAL WORKOUT	DANCED LIKE THERE WAS NO ONE LOOKING	STRETCHED	PRACTICED AND HOUR OF SILENCE
WROTE YOURSELF A LOVE NOTE	MEDITATED	TURNED OFF THE NEWS	WATCHED AN UPLIFTING VIDEO	TOOK A REFRESHING NAP
FACETIMED A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER	TOOK AN HOUR SOCIAL MEDIA BREAK	STAYED HOME	TRIED A NEW RECIPE	TOOK A DEEP BREATH AND ENJOYED THE MOMENT
LET GO OF A TOXIC THOUGHT	SENT A NOTE TO A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER	MADE SOMEONE SMILE	HAD A COUPLE OF GLASSES OF WATER	WROTE IN A JOURNAL
PLAYED YOUR FAVORITE SONG	READ A BOOK OR MOTIVATING QUOTE	HAD A CUP OF TEA OR COFFE AND SAVORED THE TASTE	MEAL PREP	STOOD OUTSIDE TO GET FRESH AIR

SELF-CARE BINGO

TOOK A SHOWER	GOT DRESSED TODAY	talked TO A friend	SAT WITH MY FEELINGS	gave myself a compliment
MOVED MY BODY JOYFULLY	ate food	LISTENED TO MY BODY	CHALLENGED NEGATIVE THOUGHTS	HAD FUN
WENT OUTSIDE	TRIED SOMETHING NEW	STAYED ALIVE	practiced being mindful	DID A HOBBY
used a coping skill	LET MYSELF CRY	took a break	ASKED FOR HELP	GOT SHIT DONE
BRUSHED MY TEETH	practiced self compassion	DRANK WATER	TREATED MYSELF	got 7-9 hours of sleep

@ALYSERURIANIDESIGN

TAKE AWAYS

- ✓ IDENTIFYING STRESSORS
- ✓ LIFE SATISFACTION
- ✓ SELF-CARE STRATEGIES
- ✓ SELF-CARE BINGO



QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK



CITATIONS & RESOURCES

- [How to Support Children's Emotional, Educational Needs while Remote Learning | University of Michigan](#)
- [Webinar: Autism, Parenting, and Self-Care](#), Kristin Pleines, LCSW, DSW
- [Oath to Self-Care and Well-Being – MUKTA PANDA, MD](#)
- [Self-Care](#)
- [COVID-19](#) - The Self-Care Institute
- [Self Care for Parents | Coronavirus Resources for Families](#)
- [Self-Care Matters - Palliative Care](#)
- [Autism Society: Home](#)
- [Developing a self-care plan | Teacher wellbeing](#) Lisa Damour, PhD
- [Self-Care Exercises and Activities](#)
- [Our Mindful Life: Home](#)

HCAS RESOURCES

Howard County Autism Society – Providing Support. Promoting Awareness. Advocating for Change.

Support Groups (Currently all Virtual)

- **Asperger's Family Support Group**– Designed for family members. Meets the second Thursday of each month at HCAS from 7:30-9:00pm. For information, call 410-290-3466.
- **Latino Parent Support Group** – Conducted in Spanish/English, this family support group meets most months at HCAS. Child care provided. Consult the calendar for upcoming dates or call Marianela Estrada at 973-223-1024. Para más información y para inscribirse, contacte a: Marianela Estrada emailnella22@gmail.com; 973-223-1024.
- **General Support Group** – Designed for family members with children of any age with ASD. Led by HCAS' Family Navigator, Stacy Hurley, these gatherings will have a different focus each month. For more information, check the calendar at howard-autism.org or call 410-290-3466.

VIDEO RESOURCES

Breathing Exercise:

[Diaphragmatic Breathing Technique](#) (laying down)

[Yoga Three Part Breath](#) (sitting/ standing)

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nZEdqcGVzo> (6 minute guided relaxation)

[Body Scan Meditation](#) (10 minute guided relaxation)

Ted Talk on Yoga:

[Krishna Sudhir: What yoga does to your body and brain](#)

Ted Talk on Drawing:

[Shantell Martin: How drawing can set you free | TED Talk](#)

VIDEO RESOURCES (CONT'D)

Ted Talk on Perfection:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/thomas curran our dangerous obsession with perfectionism is getting worse](https://www.ted.com/talks/thomas_curran_our_dangerous_obsession_with_perfectionism_is_getting_worse)

Ted Talk on Connections During Quarantine:

[Priya Parker: How to create meaningful connections while apart](#)

OTHER RESOURCES

Books:

Nataly Kogan, *Happier Now*

Rick Hanson, *Hardwiring Happiness: The New Brain Science of Contentment, Calm, and Confidence*

Lori Gottlieb, *Maybe You Should Talk to Someone: A Therapist, HER Therapist, and Our Lives Revealed*

Jen Sincero, *You Are a Badass: How to Stop Doubting Your Greatness and Start Living an Awesome Life*

LINK TO PRINTABLE RESOURCES

[Self Care Printable Resources](#)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Stacy Hurley, LCSW-C -- Howard County Autism Society

stacy.hurley@howard-autism.org

Brad Bernstein, LCPC -- Crossroads Psychological Associates

brad.bernstein@crossroadspych.net