

## *Self – Care List*

*for the exhausted, frazzled, frustrated parents without a minute or ounce of energy to spare.*

**Buy little indulgences that help calm you.** Nestle scented candles strategically throughout your home to provide scents for instant relaxation and calm. Pamper yourself with essential oils to make the most of your shower (perhaps one of the few moments of privacy you get).

**Use simple tricks to feel better physically.** Splurge on a really great refillable water bottle and stay hydrated to improve your overall energy and health. Stock up on grab-and-go healthy snacks (but don't beat yourself up when you grab for a high-carb, high-satisfaction treat during a rough patch).

**Find creative ways to make up for enjoyable activities you don't have time for anymore.** Don't miss your favorite shows. Consider DVR to enjoy them when you can sneak a few moments to yourself.

**Seek the small feel-good moments in life.** Open your curtains and let natural light nurture your mood and improve your concentration. Get your endorphins pumping by walking laps while your child is occupied in baseball, soccer, or football practice.

**Don't sacrifice your daily coffee even on the most chaotic of mornings.** Use the app for your local coffee shop to order ahead and skip the line. (I use both Dunkin Donuts' and Starbucks' online apps to order ahead and earn rewards.)

**Make those few hours of sleep you get as rejuvenating as possible.** Purchase a pillow that provides good support. Check out a Weighted Stress Blanket (I sleep so much better with mine).

**Pamper yourself.** Get a pedicure or manicure. Just a glimpse of my strawberry pink nails helps me feel good about myself even as I clutch the steering wheel, flip through paperwork, and wipe up messes. Drop in for a 15-minute walk-in chair massage at your local shopping mall for instant relief from tension headaches and tight muscles.

**Look for support in the nooks and crannies of life (that can be so difficult to find from friends and family).** Fill up your social media feeds with encouragement at your

fingertips by following pages, people, and accounts that post motivational quotes and memes. Check out:

**[@CuteEmergency](#), [@Inspire Us](#), [@FamousWomen](#), [@HLMeadows](#)**

**Escape into that guilty pleasure read with an audiobook.** I've always got at least one audiobook downloaded onto my phone for those endless hours of chauffeuring kids, sitting in waiting rooms, and idling in carpool.

**Hire some help for everyday tasks.** Look for a maid service to clean your bathrooms and kitchen every other week. This is a big bang for your buck in terms of getting a little relief. Don't let lawn work be a time suck when there's probably an eager teenager in your neighborhood looking for pocket cash.

**Just say 'no' to extra activities and volunteer work you're signing up for only out of a sense of obligation.** It's okay to prioritize yourself right now.

**Ask for help that's actually helpful when friends and family offer.** Suggestions include, "Would you bring by a meal on Tuesday? Could you drop my daughter off at piano lessons this afternoon? When you swing by would you bring a gallon of milk?"

**Surround yourself with people who support the incredibly challenging work you're doing and limit time with naysayers.** Don't seek advice or support from people, even family members, who don't 'get' the very real challenges you're facing.

**Join a support group.** Online support groups can be a great way to feel less alone and get practical suggestions for busy parents. My favorite private Facebook groups are [The Underground World of RAD](#) and [Attach Families Support Group](#).

**Be your own greatest fan.** Be kind to yourself. Forgive yourself. Remind yourself of all the things you do well. Give yourself a generous 'A' for effort for those things you don't do so well.