

Self-care for Child Care Providers

With “Back to School” officially in full swing and September being Self Care Awareness month; I thought that “self-care for child care providers” would be a good topic for Coach’s Corner. Self-care can be defined as any activity that helps to promote and maintain wellbeing. Also, it should be something that you enjoy.



It is so easy to put our needs aside when caring for young children. Typically, caregiving professionals tend to be people that focus on everyone around them and at the end of the day have little energy left for themselves. This leads to burnout. As the saying goes, you cannot pour from an empty cup.

Taking care of yourself does not have to be time consuming or expensive. There are many different things you can do.

Not sure what to do or how to start? No worries! I’ve put together a short list of some easy ways to carve out time for yourself.

- **Meditation-** This may sound intimidating to beginners but fortunately there are many options for those who are new to the practice of meditation. Headspace is a great App/website to get started. There are short, guided practices with varying themes. It’s important to remember that meditation is about “practice”. The more you work at it, the easier and more beneficial it becomes.
- **Bullet Journaling-** Bullet journaling is different from keeping a traditional journal. It is keeping short, anecdotal notes each day. It is a great way to practice reflection without feeling like you need to make each entry a novel. Bullet journaling is all about what YOU want to reflect on and write about. There are many websites and Pinterest boards devoted to this practice. You can track various habits such as health and fitness, keep to do lists, track your moods, or keep a list of books you would like to read. In my personal bullet journal, I enjoy devoting a page each month to things that made me smile. Here are a few links to get you started!

“...always remember, the most important things that you can provide to these children are love and kindness.”



- **Use Vacation Time!** Everyone needs and deserves a break from work. Time off is the best way to avoid burn out. Be sure to research your company's vacation/sick policies. For family child care providers, be sure to build vacation time into your schedule. Include this time in your parent handbook or contract. If you plan your vacation time in advance you are more likely to use it.
- **Create an Accomplished List-** Our society is obsessed with to-do lists. We are constantly making mental or physical notes of things that need to be done. What if we practiced the opposite? At the end of each day, make an "accomplished list" of all of the things that you have done throughout the day. It is a great way to reflect and feel good about yourself at the end of each day.

These are just a few simple ways to take time for yourself. A Google or Pinterest search will provide you with endless ideas. I would encourage all child care providers to find a way to fit self-care into their schedules. I would love to hear your ideas and thoughts on self care in the child care profession!

SOURCES

Meditation Website and App

Headspace: www.headspace.com

Bullet Journaling Ideas and tips

www.bulletjournal.com

<https://www.medium.com/@melodywilding/bullet-journaling-for-beginners-and-impatient-unartistic-people-like-me-6efd7ee97f0e>

*** Search "Bullet Journal" on Pinterest. You will get lots of results providing tips and ideas.**