




# HOW SMOOTH IS YOUR RIDE?

The Importance of Self-Care

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**Self-love** is so important. Because when you find yourself crying on the bathroom floor whether it's 3 am or 5 in the afternoon, who is going to be there for you? **You.** You have to pick yourself up and find the strength to move on. **At the end of the day, you're all you've got.**

# What is self-care?

Taking time to connect and care for myself  
Taking time away from my regular life duties  
in order to renew and refill my cup

*“Self-care can mean doing little things here  
and there, wherever you can, to make sure  
you are looking after your own well-being”  
(from CP NOW)*

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our children's health and development, but what about our own health?



# Why is self care important?

- enables you to be more resilient during challenging times
- provides an opportunity for self-reflection and contemplation
- Without taking time for yourself, the risk of compromising your physical and mental health is greatly increased



# Myth Buster: Self-care is selfish

“Self-care is not about self-indulgence, it’s about self-preservation” ~ Audre Lorde

A diagram illustrating factors that lead to suicidal thoughts. On the left, a vertical column of six light blue arrow-shaped boxes points to the right. These boxes contain the text: 'CHRONIC STRESS', 'FREQUENT DIFFICULT DECISIONS', 'REPETITIVE TRAUMAS (PSDS)', 'ISOLATION', 'WORRY', and 'LACK OF SLEEP'. At the bottom, a wide light blue rectangular box contains the text 'LACK OF SELF-CARE'. An upward-pointing light blue arrow connects this bottom box to the 'SUICIDAL THOUGHTS' box. On the right, a vertical column of five light blue rounded rectangular boxes contains the text: 'DEPRESSION', 'ANXIETY', 'OVERWHELM', 'CHRONIC HEALTH PROBLEMS', and 'SUICIDAL THOUGHTS'. A solid blue rectangular box is positioned at the top center of the diagram.

CHRONIC STRESS

FREQUENT DIFFICULT  
DECISIONS

REPETITIVE TRAUMAS  
(PSDS)

ISOLATION

WORRY

LACK OF SLEEP

LACK OF SELF-CARE

DEPRESSION

ANXIETY

OVERWHELM

CHRONIC HEALTH  
PROBLEMS

SUICIDAL  
THOUGHTS

# Stress (Sympathetic Response)


- Chronic stress - large muscles stay tense, breathing shallow, pupils dilate, blood flows to limbs, digestion is disrupted
- The body is designed to deal with stress in 60 - 90 second bursts
- Over time the body must draw on its own reserves



# Exhaustion is a daily part of life

- Cognitive Exhaustion
- Emotional Exhaustion
- Physical Exhaustion
- Conflict Exhaustion (a.k.a. battle fatigue)





Myth Buster: Self-care is expensive and I must have everything lined up (i.e. childcare) in order to practice it



# 5 Free and Easy Ways to practice self-care

- Doing nothing
- Gratitude rituals
- Grounding/Earthing
- Contemplation
- Finding a tiny piece of joy in your daily routine

**Walking My Dog**

*Giving Myself A Foot Massage*

Netflix And A Glass Of Wine

Dancing In The Kitchen

*Waking Up Before Everyone Else To Meditate*

Calling A

Listening To Music Loudly

Friend

Listening To An Inspiring Podcast

Rather Than The News

Taking 5 Minutes

*Reading A Not  
Kid Related Book*

Taking A Bubble Bath

**Hiking Alone**

Once upon a time, I was  
“Jodi Stock”



then I got married...  
and became “Mrs. Jodi  
Anderson”




when our boys were born, I  
became “Liam and  
Graham’s mom”





all day, every day.  
That's who I am.





With the sheer amount of  
care involved in being  
Liam and Graham's mom,  
I can often forget that I'm  
anything else or that I  
ever was anyone else.


Taking the time to remind ourselves that we matter, too, is an important part of this journey.





It's important for parents to  
periodically take a  
self-assessment

- what they need
- what aren't they getting
- what are they currently appreciative of
- who they need to talk to in order to get more answers

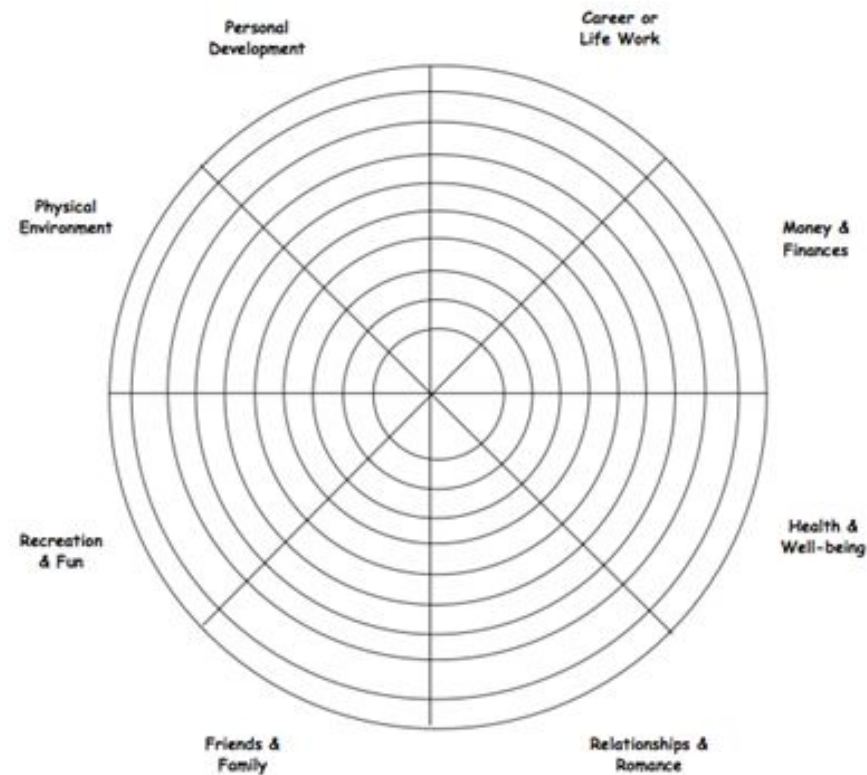


This exercise works under the belief that if there is some balance across the many aspects of our lives that draw our attention and energy, our lives we will be happier, healthier and have more energy

If there is balance, our wheels  
will turn easier



# WHEEL OF LIFE QUESTIONS



# Section 1: Personal Development

- 1. I often put myself first. Without extreme self-care I cannot "be there" for others.
- 2. I try to do something every day that gives me joy.
- 3. I am the person I always wanted to be.
- 4. I know what I have a real passion for.
- 5. I am thoughtful and positive when time I speak, yet I still say what I need to say.



# Personal Development (cont'd)

- 6. I have learned to say no and understand that "NO." is a complete sentence which needs no further explanation.
- 7. I have fully forgiven those people who have hurt/damaged me, deliberate or not.
- 8. I am a person of his/her word; people can count on me.
- 9. I make decisions based on my integrity first, needs second, and wants third.
- 10. I have set boundaries for myself that I don't allow others to cross.

# True:\_\_\_\_\_

## Section 2: Career or Life Work

- 1. I enjoy my job and going to work each day.
- 2. I am on a career or life work track which is or will soon be financially and personally rewarding.
- 3. My work environment is productive and inspiring. (cooperative, supportive, enough resources; no undue pressure)
- 4. I have few confrontations or conflicts at work.
- 5. I know how much I am worth.

## Career or Life Work (cont'd)

- 6. I am computer literate.
- 7. I have learned to respond rather than react.
- 8. I always do at least 100% so that things don't come back to "bite me."
- 9. I know how to delegate.
- 10. I am up to date with all of my mail and e-mail.

# True:\_\_\_\_\_



## Section 3: Money & Finances

- 1. My taxes are organized and up-to-date.
- 2. I pay my bills on time.
- 3. I live within my means.
- 4. I have a financial plan for the next year.
- 5. My credit rating is excellent.

# Money & Finances (cont'd)

- 6. I have a regular savings plan.
- 7. I have adequate insurance coverage.
- 8. I have a plan for long-term savings and retirement.
- 9. I budget my money so I know just how much I should spend.
- 10. My will is up to date and accurate.

# True:\_\_\_\_\_



## Section 4: Health & Well-Being

- 1. I eat well balanced, healthy meals.
- 2. I limit the amount of sweets I eat. (Less than 3 times per week.)
- 3. I participate in physical activity/exercise at least 3 times per week (walking, running, swimming, gardening)
- 4. I eat at least four servings of fruits and/or vegetables every day.
- 5. My teeth and gums are healthy and I have seen a dentist in the last year.

# Health & Well-Being (cont'd)

- 6. I get the sleep I need to feel fully rested.
- 7. I am aware of any physical or emotional problems or conditions, and I am fully taking care of them.
- 8. My weight is within my ideal range.
- 9. I have get regular check-ups for my vision and hearing.
- 10. I have a spiritual or religious practice in my life.

# True:\_\_\_\_\_

## Section 5: Relationships & Romance

- 1. I have a romantic partner in my life.
- 2. There is nothing unresolved with past loves or spouses.
- 3. I know where to go in order to meet people of similar interests.
- 4. I am fully caught up with letters and calls.
- 5. I quickly clear miscommunications and misunderstandings when they do occur.



# Relationships & Romance

(cont'd)

- 6. I always tell the truth, no matter what.
- 7. I do not gossip or talk about others.
- 8. I receive enough love from people around me to feel good.
- 9. There is no one who I would dread or feel uncomfortable "running across." (In the street, at an airport or party)
- 10. I do not judge or criticize others.

# True:\_\_\_\_\_

## Section 6: Friends & Family

- 1. I have a best friend or soul-mate.
- 2. I feel my immediate family is supported by the rest of our family.
- 3. I get along well with my sibling(s).
- 4. I have no unresolved conflicts with a family member.
- 5. I have quality friendships in my life.

## Friends & Family (cont'd)

- 6. I am part of a loving and supportive community.
- 7. I put people first and results second
- 8. I have let go of the relationships which drag me down or damage me.
- 9. I spend time with people who don't try to change me.
- 10. I have communicated or attempted to communicate with everyone who I have damaged, injured or seriously upset, even if it wasn't fully my fault.

# True:\_\_\_\_\_

## Section 7: Recreation & Fun

- 1. I have a rewarding life beyond my work or profession.
- 2. I have personal interests that I pursue.
- 3. I find time to read (for enjoyment) daily.
- 4. I consistently take evenings, weekends and holidays off.
- 5. I have a hobby.

## Recreation & Fun (cont'd)

- 6. I do not speed or tailgate when I'm driving; I am not in a hurry.
- 7. I schedule time just for myself at least once a week.
- 8. I have at least one vacation scheduled this year and am looking forward to it.
- 9. I prioritize my daily activities so I have time for all of the ones I really care about.
- 10. I share fun times with those I enjoy being with.

# True:\_\_\_\_\_


## Section 8: Physical Environment

- 1. I live in the part of the country/state that I choose.
- 2. I live in a home/apartment that I like and enjoy.
- 3. I like my neighborhood.
- 4. My home appliances, machinery and equipment work well.
- 5. My car is in good, reliable condition.  
(Doesn't need repairs, cleaning or replacing).

# Physical Environment (cont'd)

- 6. My closets and/or basement are neat and uncluttered.
- 7. I surround myself with things that make my life more enjoyable.
- 8. My plants and animals are healthy. (Fed, watered, getting light and love).
- 9. My home environment(s) is not cluttered to the point that it causes me stress.
- 10. I have a place in my home that I can retreat to that is comfortable and quiet.

# True: \_\_\_\_\_



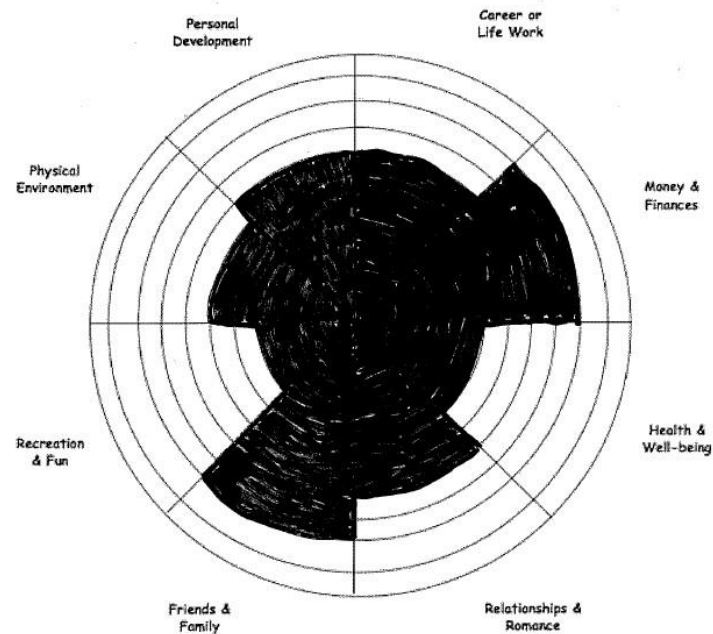
Transfer the number of "True" statements that you had in each section to the wheel. Each circle within a section represents one true answer.




# My Wheel:

## How Smooth is Your Ride?

Directions: The eight sections in the Wheel of Life represent Life Balance. What does the perimeter of your wheel look like? How smoothly do you roll along?





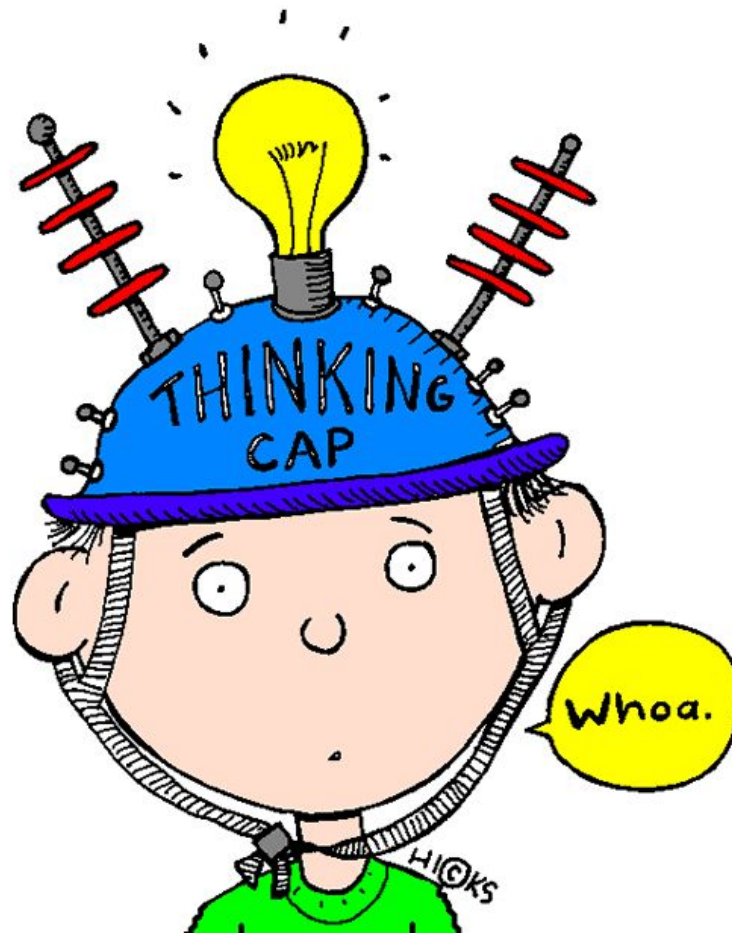
If you don't want to find  
yourself stranded and broken  
down at the side of the road  
on one of the most  
challenging journeys of your  
life, you'd better take good  
care of yourself



# What is self-care?

Self-care is any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health. Although it's a simple concept in theory, it's something we very often overlook.

# STRATEGIES





ASK THE QUESTION

What are you  
*grateful* for?

# GRATITUDE

- Guilt, worry and shame activate the brain's reward system
- Gratefulness activates the area of the brain that makes dopamine and serotonin
- Dopamine and serotonin helps improve your mood

# LABEL NEGATIVE FEELINGS

- Give your feelings a name
- Recognizing your emotions reduce their impact
- Suppressing them can make it worse

# MAKE THAT DECISION

- Make a decision, your brain feels more in control
- A feeling of control reduces stress
- Deciding boosts pleasure in the brain
- “Good Enough” versus perfection



# TOUCH PEOPLE

- Makes you more persuasive
- Increases team performance
- Improves flirting
- Boosts math skills
- Touching someone you love reduces pain
- Texting is the same as no support!



## DAILY 'ME' TIME: 15–30 MINUTES

- Read a magazine
- Cup of coffee/wine
- Talk on phone to a friend
- Bubble bath
- a detour through the park on your drive home



# EMBRACE MOVEMENT: EXERCISE WORKS

- good for your body
- improves your mood
- your cognitive efficiency increases
- your sense of well-being increases
- you feel more in charge of yourself



# FIND YOUR TRIBE

- you might no longer feel comfortable in social relationships you used to love
- find a meaningful group of friends that can support you where you are at now
- Develop or join a network of parents who have children with special needs.



# SLEEP

If you are getting less than five consecutive hours of sleep (approximately a full sleep cycle), your brain is being depleted in serotonin, the neurotransmitter that regulates mood.



# FIND THE POSITIVE IN THE STRUGGLE

- family members are more likely to be compassionate, tolerant, embracing of diversity, authentic, mature, empathic, and wise beyond their years in unquantifiable ways
- Focus on humor
- Focus on the magnitude of love in your family. It is profound.



# CRY

Stress hormones, found in tears, negatively affect every system and organ in the human body. Crying provides health by eliminating harmful stress hormones.


Haven't you found that you feel relief after a good cry?



# CUDDLE YOUR CHILD

- It rejuvenates you and relaxes your child.
- No matter what's happening, no matter how crazy the day, sitting together brings everything back into focus.
- It is a way to reconnect and say, "We can do this. Let's get going."






Sometimes it might feel like we only have time to be parents, but a little time to ourselves — to relax and remember who we all are — can go a long way.

# Inspirational Quotes

“There is a crack in everything, that’s how the light gets in” ~ Leonard Cohen

“Clouds come floating into my life, no longer to carry rain or usher storm, but to add color to my sunset day” ~ Rabindraneth Tagor

“Grief does not change you, it reveals you”  
~ John Green



“Happiness is letting go of what you think  
your life is supposed to look like and  
celebrating it for everything that it is” ~  
Mandy Kale

“Caminante, no hay camino, se hace  
camino al andar/ Traveler, there is no path,  
the path must be forged as you walk” ~  
Antonio Machado



# Wisconsin DeafBlind Technical Assistance Project



<http://www.wdbtap.wi.gov/>

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