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*Counseling services are available for children and families.
Please contact me for zoom, in person, and phone sessions.*

SELF-CARE: IT'S AN ESSENTIAL

Oxford dictionary defines self-care as, “the practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, in particular during periods of stress.” Making time for ourselves is harder these days. As parents, we have to be more intentional about carving out time for our own needs. It's a challenge but the way to help your child be at their best is to make sure we are at our best. Keeping ourselves supported and nurtured is exactly what we need to ensure our families stay strong.

TIPS ON HOW TO ENCOURAGE SELF-CARE:

Schedule it into your day. If you co-parent, communicate how you can share caregiving responsibilities to allow for each of you some alone time. Use the time after your child goes to bed or before they wake up in the morning. Or include the kids! Think about ways to share your self-care activities with your child - modeling self-care is the best way to teach it.

Don't think of self-care as selfish or indulgent. Self-care has little to do with self-absorption and everything to do with health and wellness. Self-care is how we keep ourselves well to ensure that we are physically and mentally capable to be the best version of ourselves. It keeps us healthy and has a sustaining, positive impact on everyone.

Try to do one thing every day to improve your mental or physical health. Think about what activities make you happy, reduce stress, bring peace, leave you feeling rejuvenated. Simple and realistic activities like taking a walk, deep breathing, or calling a loved one may seem insignificant but can make a big impact. Try different things and find what works for YOU.

WHEN THINGS GET TOUGH.....JUST BREATHE

Try Belly breathing to promote relaxation:

- 1.) **Place one hand on your belly.**
- 2.) **Take a deep breath through your nose and into your belly. Feel your hand rise on your belly.**
- 3.) **Exhale slowly and gently through your lips like you are blowing on hot soup.**
- 4.) **Repeat three to ten times. Take your time with each breath and notice how you feel.**