

# LOVING OURSELVES ALONG THE WAY

## The Importance of Self-Care

We have all heard this in trainings, many have read about it, yet most of us do not do it well. Why?

We came today to learn how to care for our children better. But I would challenge us to take a moment, take the information we have heard here and apply it to ourselves. Many of us have had our brains, our hearts, our souls suffer damage as a child yet never addressed it. We heard how that damage can transfer to our bodies which they then carry around as an unnoticed baggage of hidden pain and stress.

Do we help our bodies, our minds and our souls. Do we give them rest, structure, exercise, fun and nutritional supplements?

Are we kind to ourselves? Do we feel self-regulated? Do we feel attached?

Take a minute right now to write down something you heard today, that explanation or story that caused your heart to skip a beat or caught your breath with an 'aha' moment. \_\_\_\_\_

Pause and think... can you apply this knowledge to yourself as well as your child?

Write down something you have been avoiding about yourself that you know you need to address. \_\_\_\_\_

A wise therapist once counseled me with these words that completely changed my commitment to Self Care.

*"You will never bring your child any farther along the path to healing than you have gone yourself"*

This is why Self Care is so important.

Becoming a MINDFUL & THERAPEUTIC Parent starts with our SELF CARE!!

**BE MINDFUL!** Notice what is happening in your body right now – tightness in your chest your shoulders, heaviness in your legs. Just like our children are hardwired to be on alert ALWAYS– We too, as parents are physiologically wired, our body carries our heavy thoughts. The worry about the next meltdown, the anxiety of figuring out how to repair our broken babies, the badgering thoughts of "what was I thinking – I can't do this – it is never going to get better."

We all need to stop and just **'Be in the Moment'** take a breath and BE ~ not DO ~ just BE and notice what is happening in our body.

*Mindfulness: observing Self with Curiosity, Kindness, & Acceptance Without Judgement*

**BE THERAPEUTIC!** The definition of therapeutic is that which is healing, curative, reparative, restorative, health giving, beneficial, and good. This is what we want to be for our children to provide to our children This also is the definition of Self Care.

We all need some healing, some repairing & restoring. I challenge you to **take one thing** from the back side of this hand out and commit to it.

*Therapeutic: that which is Healing, Reparative, Restorative, Health giving, Beneficial & Good.*

**Our children desperately need us to be resilient and strong; mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually.**

**We must take care of ourselves in order to take care of them, they deserve our best.**

**Our best starts with Ourselves ~ Self Care ~ it is not a choice but a necessity.**

*Self Care ~ Water for your weary soul ~ Fuel for your vitality, your passion & your commitment to this calling*

## SELF CARE ~ It's IMPORTANT

### START SMALL—START SOMEWHERE – JUST START

*Each moment is all we need, not more.*

*Mother Teresa*

10 minutes a day or every other day — 1 hour one or two days a week – Just Start

#### CARE FOR YOUR MIND

**Mindfulness-** We need to 'take our thoughts captive and fill our mind with whatever is good, whatever is right, whatever is honorable and lovely the things that are excellent ~ thinking on these things will bring the peace of God.

Google is your friend here: TaraBrach.com has talks on mindfulness. Google Christian Meditations (*yes Christians meditate!*)

If you must multitask then listen while you clean the kitchen or in your car driving or waiting to pick up kids.

**Read-** turn off the TV, computer, your cell phone and read something for 20 minutes, a devotion, a book that brings hope to your journey. A great book is *The Connected Child* by Karyn Purvis or go to the DTCA website and click Resources

#### CARE FOR YOUR BODY

**Exercise** – Walk with a friend for 20 minutes before picking up your kids. Share stories with each other, laugh & cry together OR listen to a podcast on Mindfulness while you walk.

**REST**—10 minutes before you get the kids—instead of squeezing in one more errand ~ Stop close your eyes and just Be.

**Water**—Just as we need to be sure our kiddo's are hydrated our bodies need it to. Start you day with one glass.

**Give Up One Thing** you know is not good for you – that 1 donut or 2<sup>nd</sup> glass of wine or 3<sup>rd</sup> cup of coffee. We all have one thing we could give up or change that would be SELF CARING.

#### CARE FOR YOUR HEART & SOUL

**Be in Community** - We need others to walk this path we have chosen. Our children's trauma becomes our trauma – we need others to help carry the burden, to speak hope and truth into our moments of despair.

**Belong** to a support group, a church. If you already belong – reach out, join a bible study or small group (most have child care). Take a walk with a friend, meet for coffee or pedicure – get filled up so you can pour back out.

**Get Healing** – As noted before just as our children struggle with baggage and invisible wounds from their past, so can we. A great place to start is chapter 12 Healing Yourself to Heal your Child in *The Connected Child*.

**Being our Best for our children starts with Ourselves ~**

**Self Care ~ it is not a choice but a necessity.**

*Self Care ~ Water for your weary soul ~ Fuel for your vitality, your passion & your commitment to this calling*