

## BITE-SIZE SELF CARE IDEAS

As a parent, opportunities for self care often come in bite-sized moments. Make the most of those unexpected minutes of downtime by taking that time to nurture yourself. Self care doesn't mean selfish – it can, in fact, enhance your parenting by giving you more patience, clarity, and energy. You set a good example for life long health when the kids see you take care of yourself.

Here are some ideas that are easy to begin, and fairly easy to interrupt. Kids can be nearby or join you even. Take a look, then make your own list of 5-10 bite-size self care ideas.

### **Bite Size Self Care Ideas**

- Drawing or Coloring (with or without your kids)
- Reading a novel
- Journaling
- Eating a meal outside
- Going on a walk or run – with older kids this is a way to increase fitness and get a chance for talking together.
- Badminton, tennis or racquetball with your kids
- Knitting, Crochet, or other handwork
- Watching a show with the whole family
- Doing Legos with your child (or sorting pieces for them – allowing your mind go blank for a bit...it's like Lego meditation.)
- Choosing your favorite: Sitting in your favorite chair, using your favorite mug, plate or bowl, choosing your favorite ice cream – allowing yourself to have a preference in a time when usually you've been catering to everyone else.
- Noticing and enjoying silence when it happens
- Yoga
- Meditation
- Sitting down with a cup of coffee and just drinking – enjoying without being 'productive'
- Watching birds
- Vacuuming, folding laundry or some other house-care that you actually enjoy doing
- Taking pictures
- Making daisy chains while at the playground

The primary way to make self care happen is to simply to change your mindset; realizing that choosing an activity that nurtures you is an option when you have a moment of peace. You may also find it helpful to create a basket full of things you love to do and have it at the ready.

Self care may look different now than it did when you had no children. Especially when kids are young, their needs dictate a level of selflessness that we may never have experienced before. One of your jobs though, is to continue to have a *self* to give from. Your ideas, your care and your love MATTER to your family. Safeguard yourself by looking for bite-sized moments to nurture who you are, so that you can continue giving the love and care that allows your family to thrive.

