

Autism Education Series: Parent and Caregiver Selfcare

What is self care?

- Taking an active role in protecting one's own wellbeing and happiness, in particular, during periods of stress.
- Think of putting on your oxygen mask or recharging your batteries.

Why is self care important?

- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Improves health and energy levels
- Increases happiness
- Improves feelings of well-being.

What 'fills your cup'?

- When others remind us of what a good job we're doing.
- Receiving a hug from our child.
- When our child learns a new skill.
- Coffee with a friend or going for a walk.

Self care activities

- Getting enough sleep
- Staying hydrated
- Getting regular exercise
- Making healthy eating choices
- Spending time away from children, respite



How can I make time for me?

- **Plan:** Think about the things you do in a day and how much time it takes to do each one.
- **Prioritize:** Have to do, want to do, should do.
- **Schedule:** Map it out! Putting it on paper can help keep you on track
- **Organize:** use lists, post-it notes, phone reminders/timers, calendars
- **Delegate:** Ask for help with tasks that don't have to be done by you.

Remember: reach out for help when you feel overwhelmed!

For adult mental health services, visit: mhs.nshealth.ca