



Coping Effectively with Emotional Distress when Parenting a Child with Diverse Needs

Presenters:

Dr. Lucia Melano, PsyD.

Karla Perez-Pussman, Ph.D

Somang Kim, PsyD.



Intentions

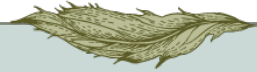
Learn about the different parts of an emotion in order to stay calm and model for your child emotional regulation.

View yourself separate from your emotions.

Explore your values and better align your decisions to them.

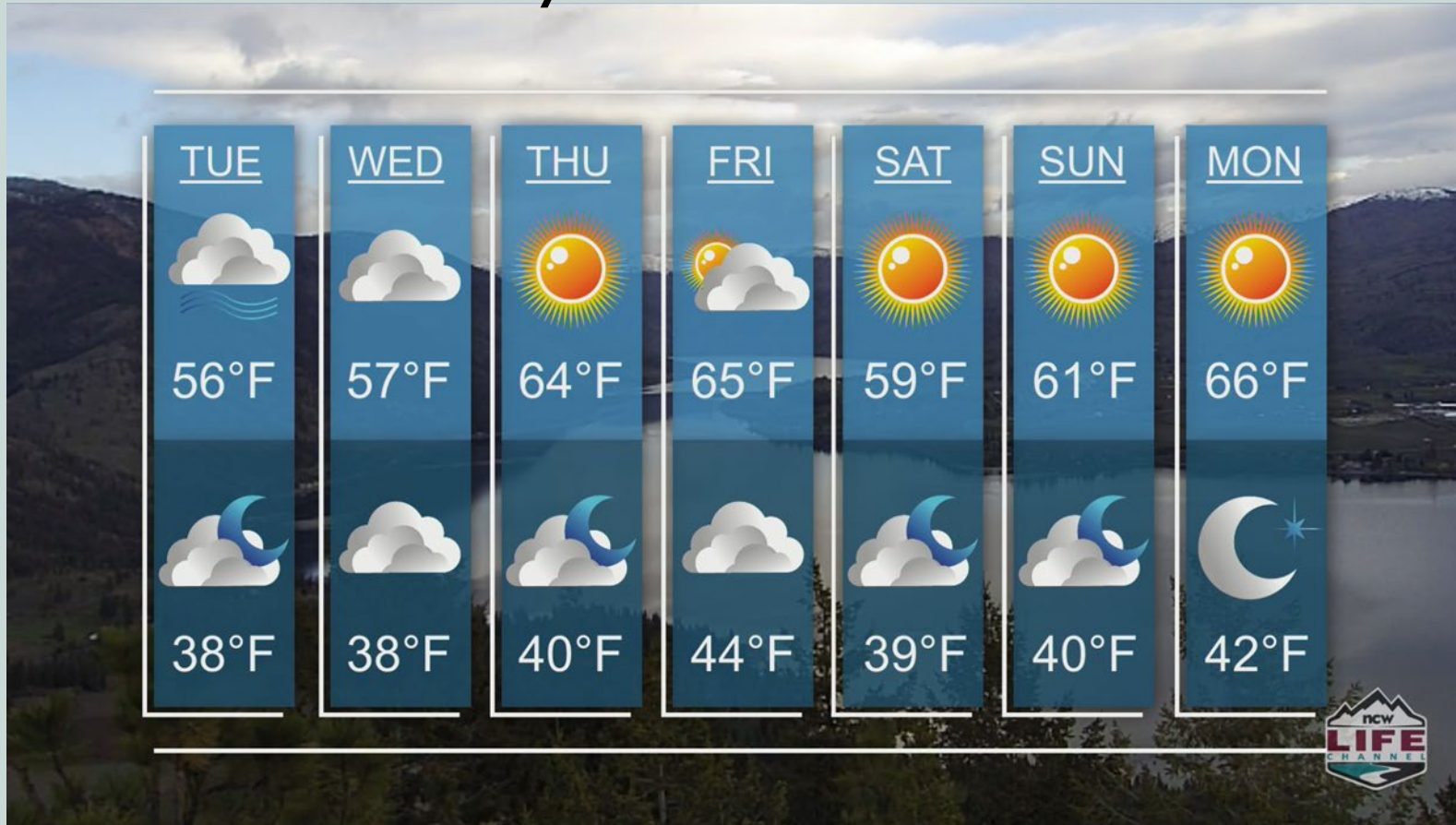
Relationship build with your emotions with non-judgment.

What are emotions?

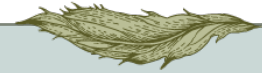


- Emotions are important. Emotions are beautiful.
- They keep us alive and safe.
- They give us data. Emotions can be painful.
- Depending on your life experience and vulnerabilities, your ability to tolerate intense emotions is unique.
- Depending on your culture and upbringing, emotions are diverse in intensity and what is seen as the norm.

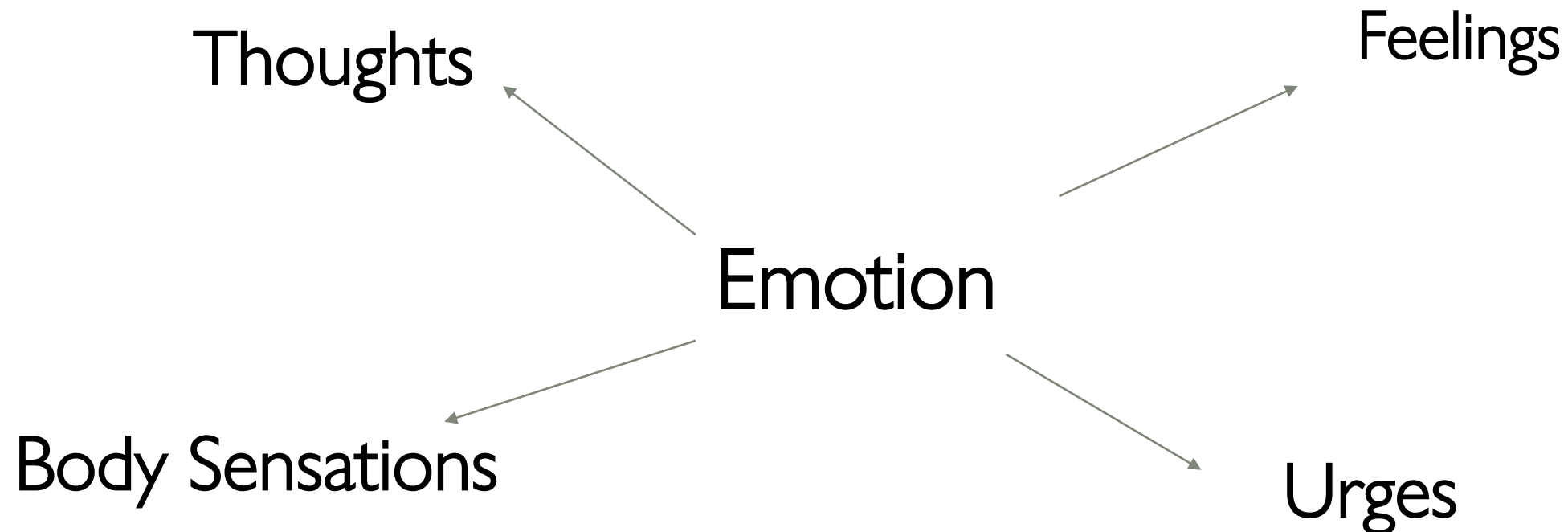
You are not your emotions.



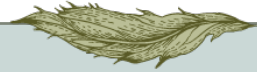
Anatomy of an Emotion



- There are four components that make up your experience of an emotion:



Anatomy of an Emotion



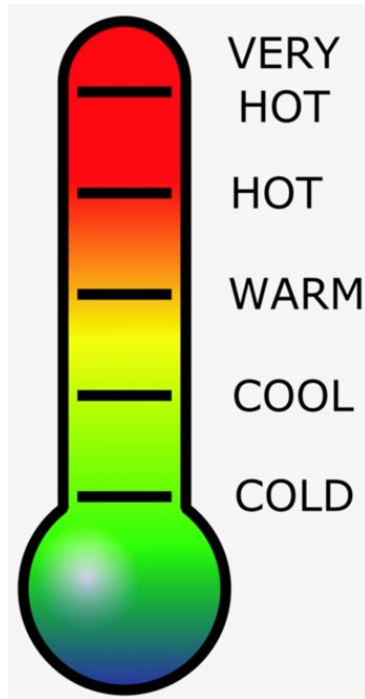
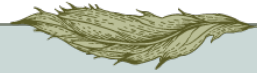
- Thoughts: The content of what you're thinking.
- "I am not doing a good job." "I am a bad parent." "Things will never get better."

- Feelings: The interpretation or label we give the emotion.
- Sad, angry, disappointed, afraid

- Sensation: Anything you feel in your body.
- Pain, heat, tension, looseness, stomach pain

- Urge: Impulses to do something-or not to do something.
- Yell, throw things, isolate, hit, not get out of bed, cry

Emotions can peak... and that's ok.



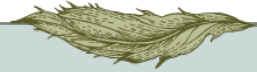
10- Being to most distressed



1- Being the least distressed

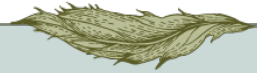
Think of a time you were distressed.
Nothing over a 5.

Make a list of your top 5 values.



- Accountability. Ambition. Assertiveness. Authenticity. Balance. Boldness. Calmness. Cheerfulness. Compassion. Communication. Consistency. Contribution. Creativity. Dependability. Diversity. Empathy. Enjoyment. Equality. Fairness. Faith. Focus. Freedom. Generosity. Growth. Happiness. Honesty. Humility. Independence. Intelligence. Joy. Justice. Leadership. LOVE. Loyalty. Mastery. Obedience. Originality. Peace. Positivity. Professionalism. Reliability. Rigor. Security. Self-control. Selflessness. Sensitivity. Simplicity. Spontaneity. Stability. Strength. Success. Teamwork. Thankfulness. Tolerance. Tradition. Trustworthiness. Understanding. Uniqueness. Unity. Usefulness. Vision. Vitality.

Let's put it all together...



Trigger: Think of something that has recently occurred.

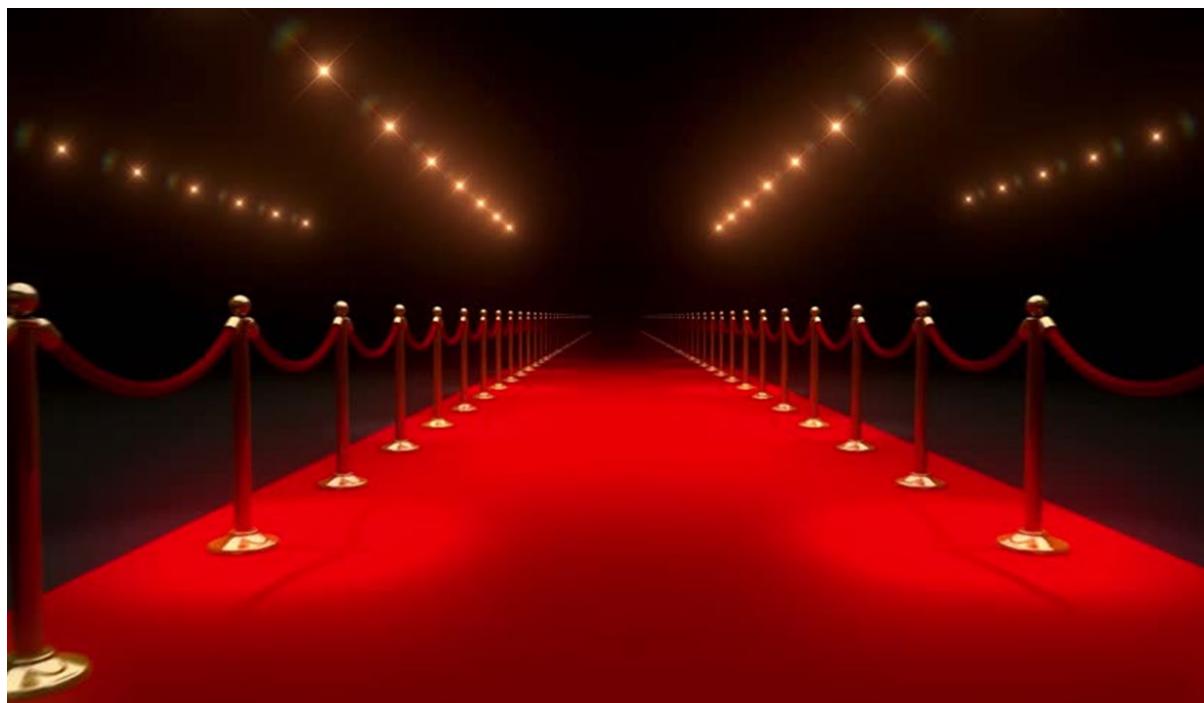
- Thoughts: What were your thoughts?
- Feelings: What label can we assign to this situation?
- Urges: What did it make you want to do OR avoid?
- Sensations: Where in your body did you feel it?
- 1-10

Time to Distract Before you Act...

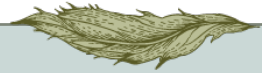


- Mindful breathing. Ask for help. Exercise. Take a break. Eat a healthy meal. Mindful eating. Mantra. Change environment. Dance. Cry it out in the other room. Water your plants. Prayer. Listen to your favorite song. Create an altar. Talk to a safe person. Journal. Drink a glass of water. Tea. Art. Read a book. Listen to a podcast. Hug someone. Get a massage. Stretch your body. Yoga. Rearrange furniture. Hot shower. Hike. Jog. Invite compassion into the room. Random act of kindness. Take a nap. Facetime your favorite person. Sit in silence. Lean into ancestral wisdom.

Moment of choice.



The Sacred pause.



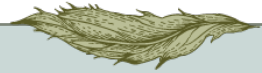
- Values based actions can be more satisfying
- You model to your child emotional regulation
- You regulate and respond more calmly when your child is emotionally dysregulated.
- Will help calm your child if they see you calm.
- Values based actions are not easy, but more satisfying in the long run.
- You choose to make decisions based on what matters to you and not on your current emotional state.
- Emotional efficacy is not about getting it right all the time!
- Meant to help you and your child understand and relationship build with your emotions.



Community is important.

- We are not meant to be in isolation.
- Reach out and ask for help!
- P&I Call Center: 714-567-5192 OR check out OC NAVIGATOR ocnavigator.org for more information!
- Community Counseling & Supportive Services (CCSC)
- Orange County Parent Wellness Program (OCPWP)
- Orange County Center for Resiliency, Education, and Wellness (OCCREW)

References



Adaptations made to:

- McKay, M., & West, A. (2016). Emotion efficacy therapy; A brief, exposure-based treatment for emotion regulation integrating ACT and DBT. Context Press/New Harbinger Publication.

Self-Care for Parents





Agenda

Introduction

Primary goals

Self-Care Ideas

Summary

Questions and Answers



Introduction

Parenting a child with a special need, whether a physical disability, a learning delay, an emotional challenge, or a developmental disorder, may require the acquisition of specific skills, such as caregiving or advocacy, and demand a commitment of time and energy that can jeopardize careers, marriages, and connections with other children. While every child's particular need may be different, the experts' advice for parents is the same: Do not let your own physical and mental well-being decline.





How can parents maintain self-care while caring for a special-needs child?

- For anyone whose life revolves around caregiving, including the parents of special-needs children, there are inherent risks that can jeopardize both their own well-being and that of the people they care for.
- Insufficient management of one's own stress as one cares for others can lead to emotional burnout and feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and paralysis.
- Experts advise parents to find a practice that works for them, whether therapy, exercise, mindfulness, or another approach.
- It may bring on feelings of guilt, but caregiving parents need to redirect some of their energy to self-care and remind themselves that these efforts will directly benefit their child.





“When parenting a child with special needs the need for self care is event greater and is twice as challenging as for other parents to get



Effects on Parents



- Caring for a child with a disability brings multiple challenges to parents, such as additional financial burdens for treating their child's condition, dealing with the child's problematic behavior, and social stigma associated with disabilities (Baker & Heller, 1996; Lecavalier, Leone, & Wiltz, 2006).
- Consequently, parents of children with a disability often experience more physical health symptoms, negative affect, and poorer psychological well-being than parents without a child with disabilities (Ha, Hong, Seltzer, & Greenberg, 2008; Seltzer, Greenberg, Floyd, & Hong, 2004; Singer, 2006).

Research Studies found....



- In the context of raising a child with a disability, a few studies found that parents with greater social support show more positive parenting behaviors (Ceballo & McLoyd, 2002) and lower levels of parenting stress (Smith, Oliver, & Innocenti, 2001).
- A study identified strategies, including seeking guidance and help from others, sharing with friends, dependence on positive sources found in families, thinking about one day at a time, trying to learn the vocabulary about the child's disability, learning to handle natural feeling of rage, frustration and bitterness, keeping their outlook positive, finding the related and helpful management problems, accepting the situation and feeling responsibility for their child and identifying the fact that they are not alone in this endeavour.



- Religious coping such as praying, seeing faith or spirituality as the source of comfort, peace, hope, and the belief that God is in control of their life, is another strategy used by parents and caregivers while social supports from healthcare professionals and other parents in similar situations, and support from close family members, such as spouses and grandparents, have also been reported as effective strategies used by parents to cope with difficult situations in caring for children with a disability
- Problem-focused coping where parents put effort into finding appropriate solutions to the challenges associated with their child's disability is another strategy used.



Primary goal

Increase Self-Care in your life





Self-Care

Self Care Definition

- Involves activities, tasks, and practices that help you think and feel your best



Types of Self Care

- Emotional Self care- Positive feelings
- Mental Self care-Mentally Stimulating
- Physical Self care-Body
- Practical Self Care-Cleaning Home
- Social Self Care-Spending time with friends of family
- Spiritual Self Care-Practicing attending church or prayer



How we get there



Time

- You only need 5 minutes
- Making Time
- No Cost
- Rethink your time



Motivation

- Being Intentional
- Setting a Goal
- Being Honest



Action

- Practice
- Don't forget
- No excuses
- Prioritize
- Spontaneous
- Include your kids
- Multitask
- To Do: make a list, Planning, Scheduling, allowing others to help

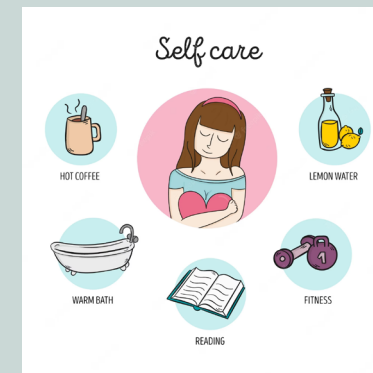
Everyday Self-Care



- Call a Friend
- Choose a Theme Song-RESPECT
- Practice Mindfulness-OAK app
- Apply Lotions
- Diffuser essential oils
- Delete Emails
- Create a 5-minute makeup Routine
- Savor a Piece of Fruit
- Create and Repeat Affirmations-I remain calm under stress I am strong
- Cuddle with your kids



- Make your Bed
- 5-minute Yoga
- Add flowers to your home
- Drink Water
- Light a Candle and Breathe
- Do A Power Pose
- Practice Gratitude
- Eat a piece of chocolate or your fav candy
- Take off nail polish



- Sit outside
- Wash your face
- Try Freewriting
- Pray
- Experience Self Massage
- Make a pitcher of fruit water
- Complete a leg or Ab Circuit
- Do nothing
- Open your windows
- Spend 5 minutes cleaning



15-minute Activities

- Paint your nails
- Read Chapter in a book
- Make a healthy smoothie
- Use Social Media Purposefully-positive quotes or funny videos
- Soak your feet
- Journal
- Enjoy your coffee or tea
- Send a card
- Take an intentional Shower or Bath



15-minute Activities

- Do core work
- Get dressed in an outfit you love
- Listen to music in your car
- Figure out your triggers and how to cope
- Get up 15 min early
- Do a face or hair mask
- Check something off your to do list
- Make a list of friends to stay in touch with
- Color
- Have Dance party



15-minute Activities

- Create a Bedtime routine
- Do your full makeup
- Meditate
- Get Clear on your boundaries
- Read a Spiritual Book
- Create a plan for your laundry
- Play a brain game on your phone
- Start a group text and plan a night out
- Eat something
- Cultivate positive thinking

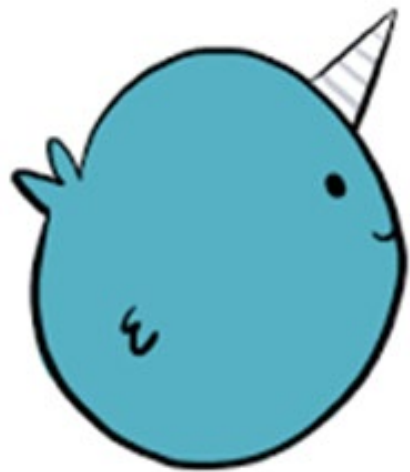


30 Minute Activities



- De-Clutter
- Go outside for a walk
- Watch a Sitcom or reality TV
- Plan for a Vacation
- Meal Plan for the week
- Get a library card
- Work on a puzzle
- Give yourself a facial
- Get lost in a book





YOU DESERVE TO
BE AS NICE TO
YOURSELF AS YOU
ARE TO OTHER
PEOPLE.

LOVE
ROY

- Clean for 30 minutes
- Work out
- Engage in Spiritual Practice
- Work on a Creative Project
- Get your eyebrows done
- Work on a budget
- Meet up for coffee or tea
- Have some cozy time
- Plan a date night

- Add self care to a chore-TV while you fold laundry
- Prepare healthy snacks
- Pick a goal and plan how you will get there
- Get out of the house
- Connect with your partner-fun topics
- Organize clothes for the week
- Take a Bath
- Research Life Hacks



1-hour Activities

- Have a Self-Care Family Meeting
- Take an Exercise Class-Zumba
- Meet a friend for lunch
- Delegate to your children or partner
- Get your nails done
- Sleep In
- Go to a doc appointment
- Go to church or a place of worship
- Unplug



- Get a massage
- Evaluate how work fits into your life
- Catch up on your fav show
- Plan for the week
- Volunteer
- Go to Nursery or Park
- Attend therapy or support group
- Have a beauty hour
- Do a walk and talk



- Do a self-care grab back
- Visit an animal shelter
- Take a Nap
- Go on a mini date
- Schedule your appointments
- Join a start a book club
- Do that thing you keep meaning to do
- Go shopping alone
- Go on a bike ride





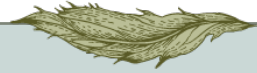
Extended Self-Care Activities 2-4 hour

- Go to movie or Netflix
- Take a painting class
- Get your hair done and maybe go out after
- Take a Hike
- Have a Laundry Bonanza
- Have a guys or ladies' night out
- Create a at home spa session
- Head to local coffee shop
- Drive and explore
- Listen to Live music
- Head to the spa

- Organize your closet
- Do something cultural-Placito Olvera
- Go Dancing
- Catch up on work
- Design and create a space that's yours
- Do a mani-pedi lunch with friends
- Have an at home date
- Have a no plan afternoon
- Work out with a friends and more
- Clean a room
- Have a group dinner
- Participate in a sport



Self-Care a Day or more



- Go to a museum
- Go to zoo
- Spend the night at a local hotel
- Get your shopping done
- Go to all day spa
- Attend a Conference
- Spend a weekend away
- Spend a day with friends
- Create a DIY project and finish it
- Spend a day being active in nature



- Visit a friend that lives far away
- Take a trip
- Do a pool day
- Go to beach
- Have a personal retreat
- Learn something new (Language, recipe)



Mindfulness Breathing



- Let's do a Mindfulness Breathing exercise!
- If you feel more comfortable with your camera off, please go ahead and do so at this time



References



- Robinson S. (2019). *Self-care for moms : 150 real ways to care for yourself while caring for everyone else*. Adams Media.
- Pennington, D. (2022). *Self-Care Workbook for Special Needs Parents*.

A vertical branch of pink cherry blossoms with green leaves, positioned at the top left of the slide.A vertical branch of white lily flowers with green ferns and leaves, positioned on the right side of the slide.A vertical branch of green leafy plants, positioned at the bottom left of the slide.

Thank you

Remember to practice
self care, model
emotional regulation
and to breathe.