

JOURNAL PROMPTS

This week, we'll create a self-care plan to keep your cup full, both because you deserve it, and so that you can be emotionally generous with your children. This includes physical, emotional and spiritual self-care. Put a date on your calendar one month from now, and then every month thereafter, to review your Self-Care plan, take stock of how you're doing, and update it. (Do this right now. I'll wait.)

What were your biggest take-aways from this audio on Self-Care?

1.

2.

What do you already do to take care of yourself that helps you maintain a high level of well-being? Give yourself a pat on the back for each one of these things!

What are the most important ways that you could take better care of yourself physically, to maintain a high level of well-being? What additional healthy habits would energize you? (Taking vitamins, keeping a journal, working out, etc.)

What are the most important ways that you could take better care of yourself emotionally, so you can give yourself more support to stay emotionally generous? For instance, what are some ways in which you could increase the amount of love and compassion you give yourself? How could you feel more nurtured?

What are the most important ways that you could take better care of yourself spiritually, to maintain a high level of well-being? For instance, how could you support yourself to feel more grateful, more joyful, more connected to your own inner wisdom, more trusting in the goodness of the universe?

What are the most important ways that you could support yourself to feel less stressed in your life?

PRACTICE

Print out and post on your refrigerator

This week, you have three exercises. In the next section, I'll ask you to reflect on what you experienced with each of these exercises.

Exercise 1. Set the alarm on your phone to go off every hour.

Each time your alarm sounds, ask yourself:

“What do I need right now to stay in balance?”

Then do it. You won't be able to do what you “need” every time – maybe you're rushing to pick up your child from school or in a meeting with your boss. But whenever possible, just do it. When it's not possible, promise yourself that you'll do it soon.

Exercise 2. Every time you're in the bathroom, look lovingly in the mirror. Say to yourself *“You are more than enough.”* Notice how you feel.

Exercise 3. In what small ways could you nurture yourself while you're with your child? Post this list and start doing these things as often as possible.

REFLECTION AFTER PRACTICE

Exercise 1

Your alarm probably sounded about 12-15 times yesterday. What were some of the things you found you needed?

How often were you able to give yourself what you needed?

What got in the way of you taking care of yourself?

How did it feel when you were able to take care of yourself?

Did you feel any different at the end of the day than before you began this practice?

Exercise 2

How did you feel when you spoke lovingly to yourself in the mirror?

Did your feelings change over the course of the day, or the week, as you continued to push through your discomfort and speak lovingly to yourself?

Exercise 3

It's a new – and essential – habit to nurture yourself as you nurture your family. Were you able to make and post a list of ways to nurture yourself? Did anything get in your way?

GOING DEEPER

Your Self-Care Plan

Notice your internal barometer. 1 is depleted, 10 is a full cup.

Circle the number that reflects how you're doing right now.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Now, rate how comfortable you feel, most of the time, with this statement:

“I am more than enough. I love myself just the way I am.”

1 means you don't feel comfortable with this statement; 10 means you feel very comfortable with it.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

List below the things you could do on a regular basis that would increase both of the numbers you've circled above, so that you feel more love and emotional generosity for yourself and can be more emotionally generous toward others. Include on this list the most important answers you've written throughout this homework about how you can nurture yourself, decrease your stress level, allow more joy, cultivate a more positive attitude, and take better care of yourself physically, emotionally and spiritually.

You can't do everything at once. But you CAN tackle one habit at a time; master that one habit over the next month or so, and then, tackle the next one. In a moment we'll choose the habit you want to start with. But for now, just make the list, in any order.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Now, which of these self-care strategies do you think would make the most difference in your life? Pick the change you'd like to begin with. Circle that one on the list above, and complete the information below to make your plan. Write in the present tense to describe your new habit.

Describe what it will look like once you begin to do this self-care habit. (For instance, *"I now listen to a guided meditation each day while the children nap."*)

Describe the effect you hope this self-care practice will have on you. (For instance, *"Now that I meditate every day, I find that I am calmer and more energetic."*)

List the necessary steps to create this habit. (For instance, *"Find and download a good guided meditation.....Find another time to return phone calls instead of once the children fall asleep....Come up with a plan for those days when one of the kids has a hard time going to sleep or falling asleep at naptime."*)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Describe what might get in the way of your making this a habit. (For instance: *“If I go to check my email or facebook, I might not start the meditation.”*)

Describe how you could support yourself to avoid that pitfall. (For instance, *“Once the children are asleep, I go right to my meditation spot. I do not look at my computer for any reason. I listen to the guided meditation on my phone, but I put the phone on airplane mode and turn off all other apps so I am not tempted.....I check it off every day on the calendar and give myself a star!”*)

Now, just start doing this one thing. Do it today or make a sacred promise to begin tomorrow. It takes about three months to develop a new habit, but every time you do it, it gets easier. And once it’s a habit, you won’t have to use self-discipline to do it because habits are more automatic.

You can do this. You deserve it. And your children will benefit.

Put on your calendar to come back to this page to evaluate how your new habit is going, every day for a month. (Yes, do that now.) Once you feel like you’ve made this a habit, start your next self-care strategy!