

## 5 Top Tips for Self-Care

In challenging times, it can be easy to forget to look after yourself, especially when you have a child with additional needs. However, caring for yourself is one of the most important things you can do for you and your child. Here are 5 tips on how to look after yourself.

### 1. Take some you-time

Everybody needs some time to themselves. Make sure you get some time to check-in with yourself every day. It doesn't have to be for long.

If you don't have much time you might like to try:

- Closing your eyes by a window. Let the sun shine on your face for 30 seconds
- Taking some extra time in the shower, enjoy the water running over your body
- Drawing a flower, write down 1 positive thing about yourself in each petal

Or if you have a little longer you might like to try:

- Reading a poem or book
- Doing some Yoga or Mindfulness – try downloading an app or looking for some exercises online

### 2. Understand your needs

Don't forget you have needs too and those needs are important. Try to be very clear with yourself about what you are feeling and why. Remember the trigger to your feeling may be something that happened a day, week or even month ago. Take some time to understand what your feelings need so you are able to manage them. Meeting your needs will make you feel more calmer and more rooted.

### 3. Plan ahead

Having structures and plans in place will help you to feel more prepared for what is coming next. Structures and routines support you (and your child) in having a sense of where you are in your day. Knowing what has been done and what needs to be done can be really helpful for making sure needs are met. Checking in with your needs throughout the day is a really important way to manage those needs, so try to include some time for you in your daily structure.

### 4. Adjust your expectations

Wanting to live up to expectations is normal but remember to adjust your expectations so that they have a helpful, positive impact. Setting attainable, day to day goals may be helpful. Setting ambitious, difficult to reach targets is NOT helpful. Do **NOT** expect too much from yourself or your child.

### 5. Connect and Reach Out

Staying connected with family and loved ones is a really important part of self-care. Try to maintain regular contact with those closest to you. You might like to try booking in a regular phone call with the same friend every week for example. If you feel you need support reach out to friends, family or the academy. We are here to help too. If you feel you could benefit from some emotional support email: [Eugenie.aitchison@theedenacademy.co.uk](mailto:Eugenie.aitchison@theedenacademy.co.uk) and one of the creative arts therapists will call you back.