



## **RAISING WITH CARE: A PARENT'S GUIDE TO CONNECTION, PATIENCE, AND SELF-CARE**

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Parenting is both rewarding and demanding—and it doesn't come with a manual. This guide brings together practical tools and encouraging insights to help parents nurture themselves and their children. From practicing self-care and building patience, to setting loving boundaries, listening with empathy, and celebrating differences, each section offers simple, real-world strategies to strengthen family bonds. Whether you're seeking calmer moments at home, healthier communication, or ways to model compassion, this guide empowers you to raise with both confidence and care.

# SELF-CARE: WHY TAKING CARE OF YOU HELPS YOUR CHILD



As parents, it's easy to put yourself last. Between school drop-offs, work, meals, and bedtime routines, the idea of self-care can feel like a luxury. But here's the truth: when you care for yourself, you're not being selfish—you're building the foundation to show up as the parent your child needs.

## Why Self-Care Matters for Parents

- **Kids learn by example:** When you show that rest, balance, and well-being matter, children learn to value those things for themselves.
- **Patience grows with rest:** A well-rested, cared-for parent has more patience and energy to manage challenges calmly.
- **Prevents burnout:** Consistent self-care protects against stress overload and resentment.
- **Strengthens connection:** When you're less depleted, you have more attention and warmth to give.

# SELF-CARE: WHY TAKING CARE OF YOU HELPS YOUR CHILD

## Simple Ways to Practice Self-Care

- **Carve Out Small Moments**
  - Even 5–10 minutes of deep breathing, stretching, or reading can reset your mood.
- **Stay Connected**
  - Make time for friendships or support groups. Sharing experiences helps lighten the load.
- **Prioritize Rest**
  - Sleep is not a luxury—it's a necessity. Aim for a bedtime routine that supports your own rest as much as your child's.
- **Move Your Body**
  - Walks, dancing with your kids, or short workouts boost energy and lower stress.
- **Nourish Yourself**
  - Choose foods and hydration that help you feel steady and energized.
- **Ask for Help**
  - Accepting support—from a partner, friend, or family member—is part of self-care. You don't have to do it all alone.

## How Self-Care Benefits Your Child

- **Better emotional regulation:** Kids see how you handle stress and copy your strategies.
- **Improved parent-child bond:** A calmer parent is more able to connect meaningfully.
- **Healthier role models:** Children learn that caring for themselves is important, too.

## Final Thought

Self-care is not about perfection or long spa days—it's about consistent, small choices that keep you grounded. By taking care of yourself, you're teaching your child one of the most powerful lessons: love and care begin at home, with you.

# PARENT SELF-CARE PLAN WORKSHEET

Taking care of yourself helps you show up as the calm, patient, and connected parent your child needs. Use this worksheet to create a simple self-care plan that fits your life.

## Step 1: Quick Check-In

Circle how you're feeling today:

- Calm
- Tired
- Stressed
- Overwhelmed
- Energized

## Step 2: Daily Self-Care Commitments

<b>For my body</b> (movement, rest, food, water)	
<b>For my mind</b> (quiet, reading, reflection)	
<b>For my joy</b> (connection, hobbies, play)	

## Step 3: Weekly Recharge

One activity I will make time for each week:	
One boundary I'll set to protect my energy:	

# PARENT SELF-CARE PLAN WORKSHEET



## Step 4: My Support System

One person I can reach out to when I need help:	
One way I'll ask for support this week:	

## Step 5: Gentle Reminders

- I can't pour from an empty cup.
- Self-care is not selfish—it's part of good parenting.
- Small steps matter more than perfection.
- Keep this worksheet somewhere visible (like the fridge or inside your journal) and revisit it often.

Update your plan as your needs change.

# POSITIVE DISCIPLINE: SETTING BOUNDARIES WITH LOVE



Children need guidance just as much as they need love. Boundaries provide structure, safety, and consistency—but how you set them makes all the difference. Positive discipline is about teaching and guiding, not punishing. It helps kids understand expectations while strengthening your relationship with them.

## What Is Positive Discipline?

Positive discipline means using respect, empathy, and consistency to teach children how to make good choices. Instead of focusing on control or punishment, it emphasizes learning, problem-solving, and cooperation.

## Why Boundaries Matter

- **Provide safety:** Boundaries protect children from harm.
- **Teach responsibility:** Kids learn that actions have consequences.
- **Build trust:** Consistent rules make children feel secure.
- **Support self-control:** Clear limits help children manage impulses.

# POSITIVE DISCIPLINE: SETTING BOUNDARIES WITH LOVE

## How to Set Boundaries with Love

- **Be Clear and Consistent**
  - State rules in simple, age-appropriate language. Stick with them—consistency builds trust.
- **Connect Before You Correct**
  - Show empathy first: “I see you’re having fun running inside.” Then redirect: “Let’s take that energy outdoors.”
- **Use Natural and Logical Consequences**
  - If a toy is thrown, it’s put away for a while. Consequences should be directly related to the behavior, not random punishments.
- **Offer Choices Within Limits**
  - Kids thrive when they have some control. Try: “You can do homework before dinner or right after dinner—your choice.”
- **Model Respect**
  - Speak the way you want your child to speak. Respectful tone and words show them how to treat others.
- **Acknowledge Effort and Progress**
  - Reinforce positive behavior: “I noticed you shared your toys today—that was kind.” Encouragement builds self-esteem.

## Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- Empty threats you can’t follow through on.
- Overreacting with harsh punishments.
- Setting too many rules at once—keep it simple and realistic.

## Quick Reminders for Parents

- Boundaries + warmth = trust and cooperation.
- Discipline is teaching, not punishing.
- Consistency matters more than perfection.

## Final Thought

When children know that boundaries come from a place of love, they learn that rules aren’t meant to control them but to keep them safe and help them grow. Positive discipline balances structure with compassion—so your child learns responsibility and feels deeply cared for.

# PARENTING WITH PATIENCE: STAYING CALM AND CONNECTED



Parenting is one of the most rewarding jobs—but also one of the most challenging. Kids test boundaries, emotions run high, and daily stress can make it hard to stay calm. Practicing patience doesn't mean never losing your cool; it means learning how to pause, reset, and respond with care instead of reacting in frustration.

## Why Patience Matters

- **Models self-control:** Children learn how to manage their own emotions by watching you.
- **Keeps communication open:** Calm responses make kids more willing to listen.
- **Strengthens connection:** Patience helps build trust and reduces power struggles.

# PARENTING WITH PATIENCE: STAYING CALM AND CONNECTED

## Practical Tips for Parenting with Patience

- **Pause Before Responding**
  - Take a breath before reacting. Even a 5-second pause gives you space to choose your words more carefully.
- **Name Your Feelings**
  - Saying “I’m feeling frustrated right now” models emotional awareness for your child and helps you defuse tension
- **Lower Your Voice**
  - When you feel like yelling, try speaking more softly instead. A calm tone can reset the energy of the interaction.
- **Set Realistic Expectations**
  - Remember that kids are still learning. Spills, tantrums, and mistakes are part of the process—not personal attacks.
- **Use Breaks Wisely**
  - If emotions are high, it’s okay to take a “parent timeout.” Step away, breathe, and return when you’re calmer.
- **Practice Self-Care**
  - Rest, nutrition, and downtime matter. A well-cared-for parent has more patience to give.
- **Focus on Connection First**
  - Respond with empathy before correction:
    - I know you’re upset that playtime ended.”
    - Then move to guidance: “Now it’s time to get ready for bed.”

## Quick Calming Strategies in the Moment

- Take three deep breaths.
- Count backward from 10.
- Imagine pressing a “pause button.”
- Step into another room briefly if it’s safe to do so.

## Remember

Patience is a skill, not a trait. The more you practice, the easier it becomes. Each time you respond calmly, you’re not only helping the situation—you’re teaching your child one of the most valuable life skills: how to handle big feelings with grace.

# LISTENING THAT BUILDS TRUST: COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILD



Good communication isn't just about what you say to your child—it's also about how you listen. When children feel truly heard, they're more likely to share openly, trust your guidance, and build strong emotional connections with you.

## Why Listening Matters

- **Builds trust:** When kids know you're paying attention, they feel safe bringing their worries and ideas to you.
- **Strengthens self-esteem:** Being listened to shows them their thoughts and feelings are important.
- **Improves cooperation:** Children who feel understood are more willing to cooperate and problem-solve.

# LISTENING THAT BUILDS TRUST: COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR CHILD

## Keys to Effective Listening

- **Give Your Full Attention**
  - Put down your phone, turn off the TV, and make eye contact. Even a short conversation deserves your presence.
- **Listen Without Interrupting**
  - Let them finish before you respond. This teaches patience and shows respect.
- **Reflect Back What You Hear**
  - Try phrases like:
    - "It sounds like you felt left out at recess."
    - "You're frustrated because the project is harder than you expected."
  - Reflecting helps your child feel understood and clarifies what they mean.
- **Validate Their Feelings**
  - Even if you don't agree, acknowledge their emotions:
    - "I can see why that would upset you."
  - Validation doesn't mean approval—it means empathy.
- **Ask Open-Ended Questions**
  - Encourage more than yes/no answers. For example:
    - "What was the best part of your day?"
    - "How did you feel when that happened?"

## Common Pitfalls to Avoid

- **Jumping in with solutions too quickly:** Sometimes your child just wants to be heard, not "fixed."
- **Minimizing feelings:** Avoid phrases like "It's not a big deal."
- **Multitasking while listening:** Kids can tell when you're only half paying attention.

## Putting It Into Practice

Try making a daily "listening moment." This could be five minutes before bedtime, during the ride home from school, or while sharing a snack. Consistency helps children feel they always have a safe space to talk.

## Remember

Listening is more than hearing words—it's showing your child that what matters to them matters to you. When you listen with empathy, patience, and presence, you lay the foundation for trust that lasts a lifetime.

# CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES: BUILDING EMPATHY AT HOME



Children grow up in a world full of diversity—different cultures, abilities, perspectives, and experiences. When kids learn to celebrate these differences, they not only grow into more compassionate people but also create stronger, more inclusive communities. Empathy starts at home, with the lessons they see and hear every day.

## Why Empathy Matters

- **Encourages kindness:** Kids who understand others' feelings are more likely to show care and compassion.
- **Builds respect:** Learning to value differences helps children appreciate what makes each person unique.
- **Reduces bullying:** Empathy teaches kids to stand up for others and treat people fairly.

# CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES: BUILDING EMPATHY AT HOME

## Ways to Nurture Empathy at Home

- **Model Respect and Curiosity**
  - Children learn from watching you. Speak respectfully about others and show curiosity rather than judgment when someone does things differently.
- **Talk About Feelings**
  - Help kids name and recognize emotions—their own and others’.
  - For example: “Your friend looked sad when the game ended. How do you think we could cheer them up?”
- **Expose Kids to Diversity**
  - Read books, watch movies, and explore music and foods from different cultures. These small steps broaden their worldview
- **Celebrate Uniqueness in Your Family**
  - Point out and value what makes each family member special—whether it’s a talent, tradition, or personality trait.
- **Encourage Perspective-Taking**
  - Ask questions like: “How would you feel if that happened to you?” This builds the skill of imagining life from another person’s point of view.
- **Create Opportunities for Inclusion**
  - Invite kids to include others at school, in play, or in sports. Reinforce that everyone deserves a chance to belong.

## Common Everyday Practices

- Share stories about acts of kindness you noticed during the day.
- Celebrate cultural or community holidays together.
- Volunteer as a family to support people in need.

## Final Thought

Empathy is not just taught—it’s lived. By celebrating differences and showing compassion at home, you equip your child with one of the most powerful tools for navigating the world: the ability to see others with kindness, respect, and understanding.



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