

Self-Care Strategies for Single Mothers

At the end of a long day, what do you do for yourself to feel better? For many single mothers, the answer is nothing. Often, single moms are so busy cleaning up toys, working, doing dishes, and trying to keep their children entertained that they find there's little to no time left for themselves. Even if there is a spare minute or two to do something for yourself, you may feel guilty for focusing on anyone else but your children. While these feelings are natural and understandable, you may be relieved to know that taking time for yourself can actually have a positive impact on your children.

Engaging in regular self-care can help you tend to your own needs, enabling you to care for your kids in a more consistent, patient, and effective manner. In this article, we'll explore the importance of self-care and provide you with an array of strategies that may work well with your schedule, lifestyle, and unique needs.

Top Self-Care Strategies for Single Mothers

Self-care doesn't have to be complicated, costly, or take up lots of your time. It can be anything that helps you relax, de-stress, and improve your physical or mental well-being. Whether you are seeking to incorporate self-care into your life for the first time or need new strategies to freshen up your daily routine, the following methods may be useful:

- **Exercise:** While you may not be able to leave your child alone to go to the gym, there are plenty of ways you can get exercise at home or by bringing your child along. You may take a walk around the neighborhood while pushing your child in their stroller, do a home workout in your living room, or set up a small gym in a spare room. You could also take a trip to the local park or recreation center, where both you and your child can enjoy time outside being active.
- **Find a hobby:** The beauty of self-care is that it can look different for everyone. No matter what your interests are, engaging in a hobby that you enjoy can provide both comfort and relief. You might take up knitting, cooking, or scrapbooking at home or try hiking, fishing, or a sport outdoors. Many hobbies can be altered to fit your situation, whether you need to bring your child along or they're old enough to stay at home alone.
- **Take a night off:** Although being a mom is a full-time job, it may be helpful to take some time off occasionally. Consider hiring a babysitter or asking a friend or family member to watch your child for an afternoon or evening. Then, use that time to do something you enjoy, like getting your nails done, seeing a movie in the theater, or catching up with a friend.
- **Cook a nutritious meal:** Nourishing your body is one of the most effective ways to cultivate positive mental health. It can be crucial to eat hearty meals rich in [whole](#)

[grains, fruits, and vegetables](#). You don't have to cut entire food items from your diet as long as you're practicing moderation and eating healthily the majority of the time.

- **Journal:** [Research](#) has found that journaling can promote mental wellness and alleviate symptoms of mental illness. Journaling isn't about how well you write or how your handwriting looks; rather, it's a chance to put your thoughts and feelings onto paper instead of ruminating over them in your mind. Expressing yourself in this way can help you recognize areas of struggle and growth while also allowing you to cope with feelings like anxiety or depression. Even five minutes of journaling at the end of the day can make a big difference.
- **Spend time with loved ones:** Social connection can be key to fostering mental well-being. Think about the people you enjoy spending time with—whether family or friends—and practice being intentional about seeing them. If your loved ones live nearby, you might set up monthly dinner plans or meet them at the local park once a week. These outings might be even more relaxing if they also have kids, as your children can play together while you take some time to catch up. If your loved ones live far away, consider FaceTime dates, emails, or phone calls to stay connected.

Establishing a self-care routine might take some time as well as trial and error. Along the way, don't be afraid to take a chance and try something new; you may end up finding a new favorite pastime. Some weeks you may have more time for yourself than others, making it difficult to be consistent. However, what matters is that you keep finding ways to look after yourself, ensuring that you're taken care of even when your circumstances and needs change. Far from being selfish, self-care can help you maintain your well-being so that you can show up as your healthiest self for your family.