

Self-Help Strategies in a Challenging World



Submissions from Boston Children's Faculty and Staff

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Self-Help Strategies in a Challenging World Workshop: Self-help strategies emphasizing practical ways to get the most daily self-care despite a busy or stressful schedule in an environment that prizes perfectionism. Inspiration for this workshop derived from reading a summary of Leanne Brown's recent cookbook, *Good Enough* – see : <https://cnn.it/3PYOnXx> - also <https://www.publishersweekly.com/9781523509676>

Dear Friends,

At Boston Children's Hospital, our days are full with meaningful work; your role, as a faculty member, researcher, fellow, trainee, or staff member, is vital to the well-being of children. In doing our work, we need to remember that our own health and well-being is important to Boston Children's on-going excellence. We have prepared this resources guide to support you on your busiest days when you need to take a few breaths to restore your energy and sense of calm.



A few starter tips:

- Try to be intentional about your schedule; a planner is essential for review of your calendar – monthly, weekly, and daily. This way, you can take steps to organize your time when life becomes hectic (and possibly chaotic).
- Select a planner, either online or hardcopy, that you enjoy taking out and using – it needn't be a traditional academic planner. You can purchase or download planners that emphasize fitness/wellness activities that provide spaces for noting your workout or health routines. Many people like to track these activities; however, if this does not appeal to you, look for planners that intersect with your favorite activities in some way.
- As you review your daily schedule each week, build in the activities that you find restorative and pleasurable – even if the time is abbreviated.
- You can use your planner for shopping lists, cooking tips, and reminders.

Take Daily Happiness Boosters

Most parents are familiar with the practice of including encouraging notes in a child's backpack to boost well-being and happiness. Now is the time to start boosting your own happiness as you move through your day! Here are some ways to promote these moments:

In your tote:

- Keep a favorite book at hand and read a few paragraphs that are especially important to you; the book could be fiction, poetry, or non-fiction prose; it doesn't matter as long as the work releases a positive emotional response

- Postcard images of artwork or saved photos on your phone from museum collections or exhibits
- Cherished vintage recipe card from a family member or friend that conveys good memories
- Notes from colleagues, patients, or family members that remind you how awesome you are

If you have a spare hour in the day:

- Savor a few minutes to appreciate natural beauty. If you are in the LMA, the Gardner Museum Courtyard can be inspirational
- Connect with a friend – or make plans for a meet-up
- Do your favorite workout routine - your most enjoyable routine that results in either relaxation or increased energy (or both!)

If you need an end-of-workday activity challenge:

- If your home is located in metro-Boston (all Boston neighborhoods, Allston, Cambridge, Somerville), you can probably map out a walking route and enjoy some stress relief and outdoor air on the way. If winter darkness is deterring your journey, look for colleagues/friends who might be interested in this endeavor. You can even post a “Walk Home with Me” sign-up sheet in your program office or online homepage.

Self-Care Tips:

Overview on self-care in our perfectionist culture: Lauren Mednick, PhD, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Surgery:

Perfection often gets in the way of progress and can lead to anxiety and depressed mood. Adopting a “good enough” way of living can free individuals from the all-or-nothing thinking that is inherent in perfectionism (“I must do it perfectly or I won’t do it at all.”). Importantly, the definition of “good enough” will be different for every scenario based on the significance of the task and your particular values.

<https://effectiviology.com/good-enough-is-good-enough-letting-go-of-perfectionism-to-get-things-done/>

Meal Planning: Christine Sinclair, MA, MS, RD, LDN, Registered Dietitian, Stop & Shop:

Meal Planning with Stop & Shop

- Savory Recipe Database: [Stopandshop.com/recipes](http://stopandshop.com/recipes)
 - Savory Recipe Collections
 - [Take 5 Recipe Collection](#): 1-2-3-4-5! Five ingredients is all it takes to pull together these yummy dishes. Mealtime has never been so easy.
 - [Dinner on a Dime Recipes](#): Enjoy these budget-friendly meal inspirations.
 - [362 Sheet Pan Recipes Inspiration](#)
 - [Quick & Easy Sheet Pan Recipes](#)
 - [Pasta Dishes](#)
 - [Guiding Stars Recipes](#): Guiding Stars is a nutrition navigation system created to help you quickly identify more nutritious recipes. One Guiding Star indicates good nutritional value, Two Guiding Stars are better and Three Guiding Stars is the best nutritional value. It's an easy starting point for you when you're looking for healthier foods.
- Quick Meal Solution Resources:

- Quick meals:
https://i5.peapod.com/c/pdfs/SS_Nutrition_Partners_QUICK_MEAL_21.pdf
- Weekly Meal Plan handout:
https://i5.peapod.com/c/pdfs/SS_Nutrition_Partners_MEAL_PLAN_21.pdf
- Shopping List:
https://i5.peapod.com/c/pdfs/SS_Nutrition_Partners_GROCERY_LIST_21.pdf
- Healthy Eating Shoppable Pages: <https://stopandshop.com/pages/dietitian-shoppable-pages>
- Free [Stop & Shop Nutrition Partners](#) Classes:
 - Virtual <https://stopandshop.com/pages/health-and-wellness-events>
 - In-person and virtual - <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/stop-shop-grove-hall-nutrition-classes-1043859>

Fitness Routines: Shawn Cameron, MS, LAT, ATC, PES, Micheli Center Injury Prevention Specialist:

Regular exercise is one of the best things you can do for your health. This link is a one-stop shop for all things physical activity: <https://medlineplus.gov/exerciseandphysicalfitness.html>

Meditation – Emily Jean Davidson, MD, MPH RYT, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, General Pediatrics

Practicing meditation has been shown to have many benefits from reducing stress and anxiety, to increasing attention, decreasing blood pressure, improving sleep, and feeling more focused on the present. There are many great ways to start or support a meditation practice. Using an App like Insight Timer (<https://insighttimer.com/>) for guided meditations can be very helpful. If even 5 minutes feels like it is too much, try the One Moment Meditation app (<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/one-moment-meditation/id873255555>).

Resources for learning to meditate:

- www.mindful.org/how-to-meditate/
- [Beditation \(short background, 10-minute guided meditation\):](#)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5ut2NYdAEQ>
- <http://www.relaxationresponse.org/>
- <https://www.gaiam.com/blogs/discover/meditation-101-techniques-benefits-and-a-beginner-s-how-to>
- <https://www.nytimes.com/guides/well/how-to-meditate>
- www.Mindfulhub.com



[Insight Timer - #1 Free Meditation App for Sleep, Relax & More](#)

The best meditation app with the world's largest FREE library of more than 130k guided meditations, 14k teachers & the world's most loved meditation Timer.
insighttimer.com



[One-Moment Meditation on the App Store](#)

No time? No problem. At the heart of the One-Moment Meditation® App is one simple exercise that really takes just one minute to be amazingly effective. Based on the best-selling book and viral video by Martin Boroson, the One-Moment Meditation app makes it easy for you to tap into an experience o...
apps.apple.com

Other Resources:

- **The Spicebox Kitchen, by Linda Shiue, MD, and Chef:** nutritious recipes that span the globe; the book focuses on eclectic, vegetable-forward cuisines from California, the Mediterranean, Asia, and Trinidad. A copy is available in the BCH Medical Library
- **The Resources Booklet from the 2021 Office of Faculty Development and Office of Fellowship Training workshop “How to be an Active Family”** is available as a PDF on the OFD website: https://www.childrenshospital.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/how-to-be-an-active-family_resources.pdf

