



Take Time to Renew

When a child is identified with a hearing loss there is a lot to learn, and new demands on your time, such as appointments with the audiologist and therapists.

And learning how to take care of your child's hearing technology can be demanding with the daily tasks of making sure the technology is working and that your child is wearing the technology. You may also be teaching others about your child's hearing loss and how to take care of their hearing technology.

You are faced with many new demands on your time, attention, and energy. And still, you must take care of all the things in your life, such as your family, work, and friends.

Sometimes, we forget to take care of ourselves. You may find yourself putting your own needs aside as you work to make sure your child learns to use his or her technology and learns to listen and talk. You may feel stress and pressure to put your child's need before your own. And while you are very important to your child's success, you cannot help him or her unless you are healthy in both mind and body.

There are many negative effects of stress, whether it appears suddenly or builds up over time. Stress can cause problems with both physical and mental health. Stress has been associated with chronic headaches, heart attacks, poorer recovery from sickness, and increased cardiovascular risk.

Furthermore, the ways that we attempt to cope with stress, such as overeating and smoking, can themselves lead to other health problems. In other words, stress increases the likelihood of poor health outcomes and ineffective life management in general. For these reasons, it is important to find constructive ways to cope with the stress in our lives. One way to do so is through self-care or acts of self-compassion.

There are many ways to handle stress and take care of yourself that can promote good health. For example, being physically active, using stress management techniques, and working toward spiritual growth, can counteract the effects of stress on your well-being. In other words, self-care does not necessarily remove stress from our lives, but it allows us to handle stress more effectively, in ways that serve our well-being.

A closely related concept to self-care is self-compassion. There are three parts to practicing self-compassion. The first one is being kind and understanding to yourself during difficult times. The second one is viewing your pain and suffering as just part of the human experience, and the



third one is observing your thoughts and feelings mindfully and non-judgmentally. Self-compassion is an attitude that we choose to take toward ourselves. The attitude of self-compassion can then show up in the self-care behaviors or actions we do in our daily lives.

Research studies have found that self-compassion can help protect against anxiety, and increasing self-compassion is related to better psychological well-being. For example, in a study with parents of children with autism, researchers found that higher levels of self-compassion were related to greater parental well-being. The growing body of research on self-compassion suggests that self-compassion may be an important quality that contributes to healthier living, even in the midst of stressful events.

To manage your stress, you must first identify the sources of stress in your life. Then you can problem solve and establish positive social support that you can rely on in times of need. It is also important to get enough rest, and if needed, seek out professional help.

There are also small things you can do for yourself on a daily or weekly basis. For example, you can soak in the tub, eat your favorite food, watch a movie, talk to a friend, ask for help, pray, meditate, take a walk, or write in a journal.

It might seem challenging to fit these self-care activities into an already busy schedule, but keep in mind that as you take care of yourself, you can improve your wellbeing and avoid burnout. When you take time out for yourself, even if only for a few minutes, you will be able to more effectively respond to the pressure and stress that has built up inside you—pressure and stress you may not even realize was there. And, you will be able to once again give your attention to helping your child learn to listen and talk!