Understanding and Surviving Life in a Blender

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My Life
Parenting a child with physical, emotional and/or behavioral needs, is not what we expected parenting to be.
Instead....
Caring for a Child with Special Needs

Takes you down roads and through experiences you never dreamed you would take.

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Caring for a Child with Special Needs

Can...

- Shatter dreams
- Test limits
- Challenge beliefs
- Strain relationships
Overwhelming Feelings

Feelings...

- Are with you all day, every day – morning noon and NIGHT
- Don’t just visit your home and family; they move right in with you
- May vary in intensity depending upon the speed of the blender that day
- What are these feelings??
Uncertainty

About ...

- What will the next minute bring - crisis or calm?
- Having many questions... but no answers
- What the future holds for your child
- How other members of the family are doing
- If your marriage will survive under the stress
Grief

Because...

- Your dreams for your child are slipping through your hands
- Your child experiences frustrations, failures and fears
- Hopes for other parts of your life are fading – friends, family, marriage, job, financial security
Isolation

When...

- Listening to other parents whose children are successful
- Family members do not understand
- Professionals leave you questioning your own competence
- Your child is excluded from activities and friends
Helplessness

Never ending wish to...

Make it better for your child, but no matter how hard you try, it sometimes only gets worse with reports from school, suspensions, arrests, victimization or suicide attempts.
Loss of You

Nothing left...
- No time or energy left for friends, hobbies, reading, fun
- Forgotten what it is like not to worry
- Sleep deprived
- More vulnerable to depression and other feelings
Anger

So much anger at...
- The world
- Yourself
- Your child
- Your spouse for not seeing your child as you do
- Family & friends for not helping
Helping Others Deal with Their *Life in a Blender*

“Always put yourself in another’s shoes. If you feel that it hurts you, it probably does hurt that person, too.

Anonymous
Surviving My Life in the Blender

- Wellness is an active, lifelong process of becoming aware of choices and making decisions toward a more balanced and fulfilling life.

- Wellness is the ability to live life to the fullest and to maximize your personal potential in a variety of ways.
Wellness places responsibility on the individual; it becomes a matter of self-evaluation and self-assessment.

Wellness involves continually learning and making changes to enhance your state of wellness.

Wellness combines seven dimensions of well-being into a quality way of living.
Areas of Self-Care
Rejuvenate and Re-balance your Life

Physical

Emotional

Mental

Spiritual
Physical Care

Ways to take care of your body:

• Learn to appreciate your body and your appearance

• Eat Healthy and energizing foods

• Get enough sleep and drink plenty of water.

• Exercise to replenish your energy and manage stress
Emotional Care

Ways to develop your emotional stability:

- Seek out support from a therapist, coach, social worker or counselor
- Have a heart to heart with a close friend or mentor
- Have kind, loving thoughts about yourself (Try going a week without self-criticism).
- Write in a journal
- Go out by yourself, with your partner or with friends.
Mental Care

Ways to develop your mind:

• Read a good book or see an intellectually stimulating movie

• Learn a new hobby or skill.

• Sign up for a class, group or workshop on a topic that interests you.

• Challenge yourself to learn something new at work
Spiritual

Ways to develop your spirituality:
• Take time to be by yourself to think or write
• Take a walk in a park or out in nature
• Challenge yourself to be a better person and think about what that means for you.
• Meditate, pray or just reflect on what you’re grateful for. Start a “Blessings Book”
• Volunteer for a cause you’re passionate about
Remember

Even with all of this stress, we don’t give up.

It takes courage and strength to go on everyday, and Somehow we find that strength!
On particularly rough days when I’m sure I can’t possibly endure, I like to remind myself that my track record for getting through bad days so far, is 100% and that’s pretty good.

-Unknown
“I Survived. I Am Surviving. I AM A WARRIOR MOM."

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Life in a Blender
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