

Understanding and Surviving *Life in a Blender*

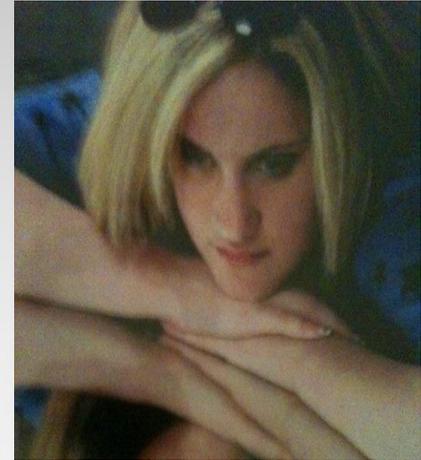
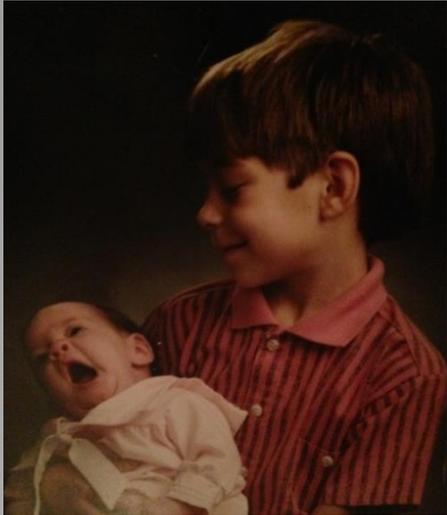
Presented by
Barbara Granger
Family Engagement Specialist
University of Texas
Institute for Excellence in Mental Health
Texas System of Care



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My Life



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Parenting a child with physical, emotional and/or behavioral needs, is not what we expected parenting to be.



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Instead....



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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



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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??



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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

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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

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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

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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.

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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

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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



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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



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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.



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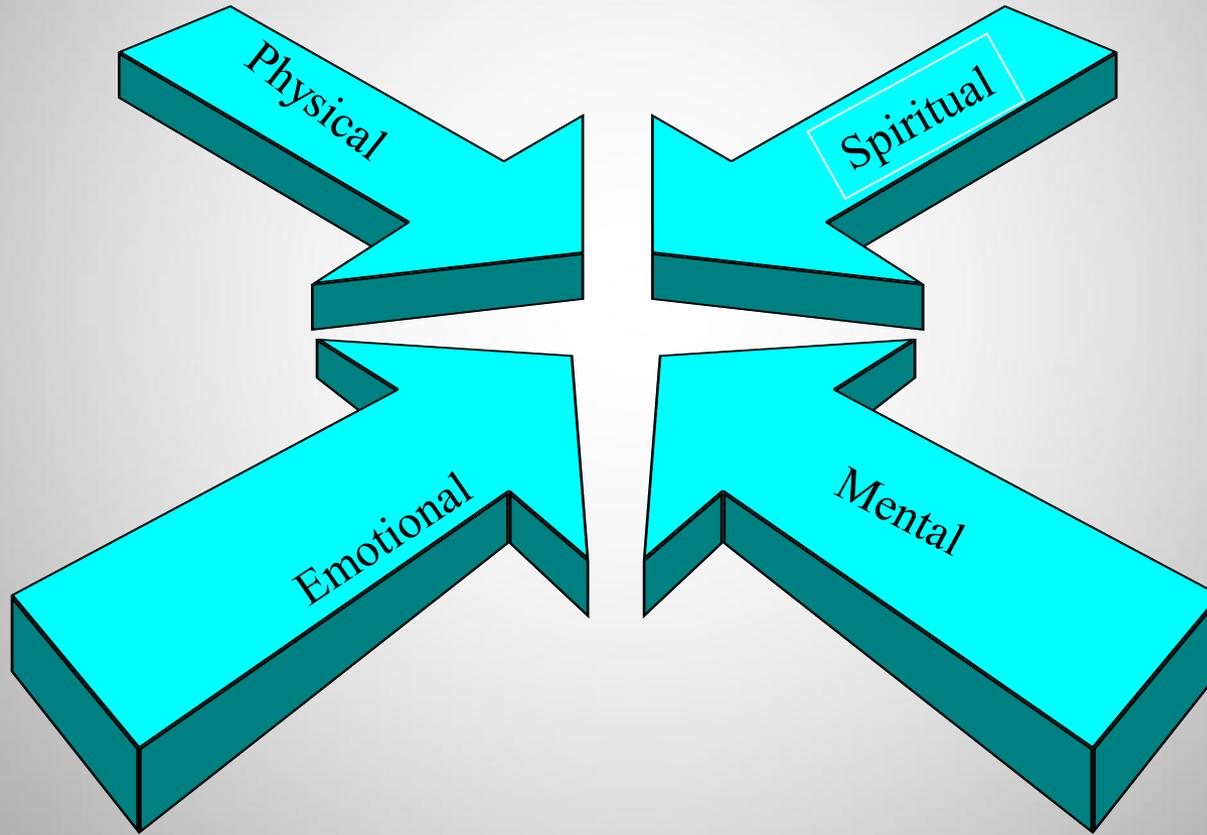
- Wellness places responsibility on the individual; it becomes a matter of self-evaluation and self-assessment.
- Wellness involves continually learning and making changes to enhance your state of wellness.
- Wellness combines seven dimensions of well-being into a quality way of living.

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Areas of Self-Care

Rejuvenate and Re-balance your Life



Physical Care

Ways to take care of your body:

- Learn to appreciate your body appearance



and your



Eat Healthy and energizing foods

- Get enough sleep and drink plenty of water.



- Exercise to replenish you energy manage stress



and

Emotional Care

Ways to develop your emotional stability:

- Seek out support from a therapist, coach, social worker or counselor

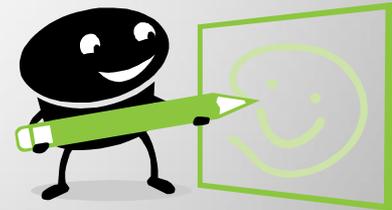


Have a heart to heart with a close friend or mentor

- Have kind, loving thoughts about yourself (Try going a week without self-criticism).



Write in a journal

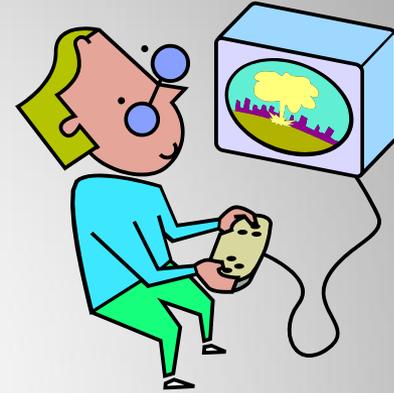


- Go out by yourself, with your partner or with friends.

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:

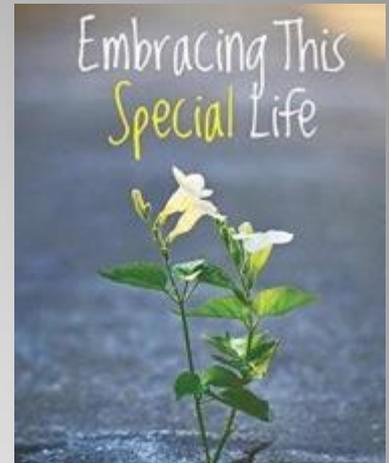
- Take time to be by yourself to think or write
- Take a walk in a park or out in nature
- Challenge yourself to be a better person and think about what that means for you.
- Meditate, pray or just reflect on what you're grateful for.
Start a "Blessings Book"
- Volunteer for a cause you're passionate 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!



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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

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YOU ARE
NOT
ALONE

I Survived.
I Am Surviving.
I AM A
WARRIOR
MOM.

POSTPARTUMPROGRESS.COM

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