

## The Greatest Gift

When you became a parent, you began living for someone else.

Your drive to protect your child sometimes overrode your desire to meet your own needs. But if your goal is to build a happy, resilient child who is prepared to thrive through good times and bad, it's critical that you care for yourself with the same degree of commitment you give your child.

We parents are role models. By viewing challenges as opportunities for growth, we display a resilient mindset. We're the models who demonstrate healthy coping strategies. We're the ones who, through our example, make it safe to admit vulnerability and personal limitations. When we acknowledge and address problems, we reject stigma associated with imperfection. When we reach our limits and reach out to others, we model that strong people seek support and guidance.

The well-being of your child rests on your health and personal resilience as well as on the strength of the partnership between you and your spouse. Caring for yourself is *not* selfish—it is a selfless and strategic act of good parenting. Parenting is a long haul proposition; burnout is simply not an option. Maintaining your interests, addressing your needs, and relieving your stress with healthy coping strategies are precisely what give you the energy to give to others.

*The greatest gift you can give your child is to live a balanced life and to demonstrate that when life inevitably offers you challenges, you take the active steps needed to get back on track.*