



PG 02

Self-Care for Parents and Caregivers

Tips for Parents:
Small Acts of Self-Care
That Make a Big Difference

PG 03

Books to
Check Out

PG 04

PG 05

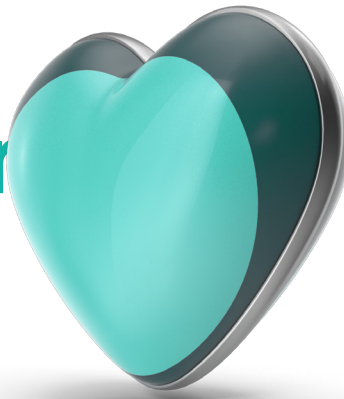
NEW

Interview

DECEMBER 2025

NO. 20

Self-Care for Parents and Caregivers



Dear Triumph ABA Parents,

Parenting a child with autism can be one of life's most meaningful and fulfilling journeys — but it also comes with unique challenges that can test your patience, energy, and emotional reserves. In the midst of therapies, appointments, and daily routines, it's easy to put your own needs on the back burner. Yet, self-care isn't selfish — it's essential.

Taking care of yourself allows you to show up as the best version of yourself for your child. When you feel rested, supported, and emotionally grounded, your ability to connect, problem-solve, and stay patient improves dramatically. Self-care doesn't need to mean spa days or long vacations (though those are nice!). Sometimes it's as simple as a

deep breath, a short walk, or giving yourself permission to pause.

And remember — you don't have to do it alone. Your child's BCBA is not only there for your child's behavioral goals but also to support you as a parent. Reaching out to your BCBA for guidance, strategies, or even reassurance can make a big difference in maintaining consistency and confidence at home. Collaboration and communication are key parts of progress — for both you and your child.

As we close out the year, this is the perfect time to reflect on what fuels you. This edition is all about helping you find small, sustainable ways to recharge — because when parents thrive, children thrive too.



NEWSLETTER



Tips for Parents: Small Acts of Self-Care That Make a Big Difference

1

Schedule Your Own “Therapy Time.” Just as your child has sessions for growth and support, block off a small window in your week that’s just for you. Use it to read, walk, rest, or enjoy a hobby that refills your energy.

2

Build Your Support Network.

Lean on friends, family, or parent groups who understand your journey. Connection reduces isolation and reminds you that you’re not alone in this.

3

Set Realistic Expectations.

Perfection isn’t the goal — presence is. Celebrate small wins and give yourself grace on harder days.

4

Create Calm Moments Daily.

Find short, grounding activities like breathing exercises, journaling, or quiet tea breaks. Even 5 minutes of calm can reset your mood.

5

Learn to Say “No” (Without Guilt).

It’s okay to decline extra commitments. Protecting your time and energy helps you be more present for what truly matters.

6

Recognize Burnout Early.

Irritability, exhaustion, or lack of motivation are signs to slow down — not push harder. Rest isn’t a reward; it’s a requirement.

NEWSLETTER

Books

TO
CHECK
OUT

The
Self-Compassion
Workbook for
Parents by Susan
Pollak

Burnout: The
Secret to
Unlocking the
Stress Cycle by
Emily & Amelia
Nagoski

Raising
Human
Beings by
Dr. Ross
Greene

Parenting with
Acceptance and
Commitment
Therapy by Lisa
Coyne & Amy
Murrell

The
Whole-Brain
Child by Dr.
Daniel
Siegel &
Tina Payne
Bryson





Interview



Rachel is an energetic and bright 8-year-old girl with ASD. She's somewhat verbal and continues to find new ways to express herself. When she gets overwhelmed or triggered, she can have some tough moments, including verbal aggression that sometimes turns into aggression toward peers, siblings, or adults, as well as escape and attention-seeking behaviors.

She attends a private ABA-based special education school during the day and has also been receiving ABA services through Triumph for the past year. In that time, she's made huge progress, especially with her communication, behavior, and how she interacts with others. She still has challenges, but her mom is quick to celebrate the little wins along the way. Those small successes have helped create a more positive, encouraging environment for her to keep growing.

How would you describe your overall journey parenting a child with autism so far?

It's been a mix of love, exhaustion, learning, and constant adapting. Every day feels different, and while it can be overwhelming, my child has taught me patience and strength I didn't know I had.

What have been some of the most meaningful moments in your parenting experience?

The small milestones mean the world to me, things other parents might take for granted. When my child makes eye contact, tries a new food, uses a new word, or gives a hug, those moments stay with me.

What challenges tend to drain your energy or

emotional reserves the most?

Meltdowns, unpredictable behaviors, and the constant need for supervision are very draining. Scheduling therapies, school communication, and juggling work on top of it all can feel like a full-time job.

Do you feel that you are able to prioritize your own needs? Why or why not?

Honestly, not really. My child needs so much hands-on support that my own needs often fall to the bottom of the list. Even basic things like eating or resting sometimes get pushed aside.

What does self-care look like for you on a practical, day-to-day basis?

Right now, self-care is very simple, maybe drinking my coffee while it's still warm or taking five minutes to breathe when my child is calm. Small moments feel like victories.

Are there any small habits or routines that help you feel grounded or recharged?

Taking short walks, listening to music, or stepping outside for fresh air helps me reset. Even a quick shower in silence can help me feel human again.

What barriers make it difficult for you to engage in self-care?

The biggest barrier is a lack of time and reliable support. My child needs constant supervision, and it's hard to find someone who understands their needs well enough for me to step away.

In what ways does taking care of yourself help you show up better for your child?

When I manage to rest, even a little, I'm more patient and less reactive. I can handle challenging moments with a clearer mind.

How do you find support, emotionally, socially, or practically, when you need it?

I rely on a few close family members and our therapy team. Online support groups have also helped me feel less alone, especially during tough weeks.

As the holiday season can be especially hectic, how do you make time for yourself during this period?

It's hard, but I try to give myself permission to

step away when things get overwhelming. Sometimes that means taking a quick break in my room or asking a family member to watch my child for 10 minutes.

What strategies help you manage stress or maintain balance during the holidays?

I simplify everything, fewer events, fewer expectations, and more structure at home. We stick to routines as much as possible because sudden changes are hard for my child.

Looking back on the past year, what practices or moments helped you feel most renewed or supported?

Anytime someone offered help without me having to ask felt huge. And celebrating small wins throughout the year, like progress in therapy or calmer days, helped keep me going.

What is something you'd like to do for yourself more often in the coming year?

I'd love to take even one hour a week just for myself, maybe reading, walking, or meeting a friend. I want to feel like more than just a caregiver.

If you could give one piece of advice to another parent navigating a similar journey, what would it be?

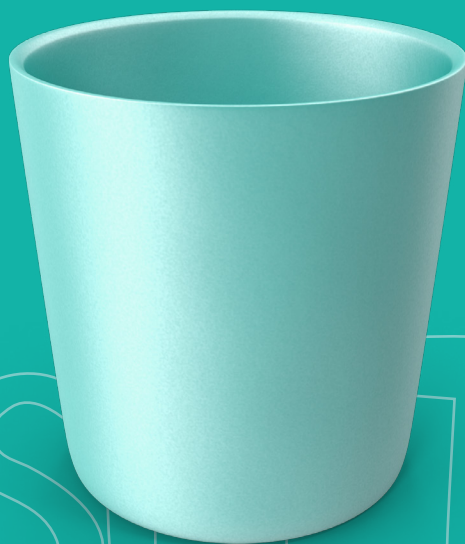
You're not failing. You're doing your best, even on the days that feel impossible. Celebrate the small victories, accept help when it's offered, and remember that your well-being matters too.



Quote of the month:

**You can't pour from an
empty cup. Take care of
yourself first.**

— Eleanor Brown



NEWSLETTER