

Parent Wellbeing Toolkit

Caring for a child with SEND is one of the most rewarding things, but it can also be exhausting. There are days when the forms, appointments, and constant caring feel overwhelming. This toolkit offers simple, low-cost ways that parents and carers often use to keep going when things feel heavy.

Remember: looking after yourself isn't selfish. It helps you show up stronger for your child and family.

Quick Calm Tools (for when it all feels too much)

- Breathe 4-7-8: Inhale for 4, hold for 7, exhale slowly for 8. Repeat three times to reset.
- Grounding 5-4-3-2-1: Name 5 things you see, 4 you feel, 3 you hear, 2 you smell, and 1 you taste. This simple exercise calms racing thoughts.
- Stretch and shake: Roll shoulders, stretch arms, and shake out tension for 2 minutes to release stress.

Small Acts of Self-Care (the little things count)

- Micro-breaks: Even 5 minutes with a cuppa, a book, or fresh air in the garden makes a difference.
- Bath or shower reset: Treat it like a mini spa moment, using scents that calm and restore.
- Celebrate you: Recognise victories, big and small, completing a form, attending a meeting, or simply making it through a tough day.
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Mind & Spirit (feeding your inner self)

- Journaling: Write down 3 things to be grateful for each evening, even tiny moments like enjoying a hot tea or a smile from your child.
- Faith or spirituality: Prayer, reflection, or meditation can bring peace and grounding when life feels heavy.
- Music moments: Play uplifting songs, dance, sing, or simply listen to music that brings joy.

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Social Support (you don't have to do it alone)

- Coffee with a friend: A quick chat can ease isolation and lift spirits.
- Parent groups: Connect with others through SEND coffee mornings or online groups (**Fusion of Hearts CIC**, Facebook).
- Ask for help: Lean on friends, family, or community for breaks when needed, it is okay to share the load.

You cannot pour from an empty cup. It is easy to put yourself last, but your wellbeing matters too. Looking after yourself is part of caring for your child.

If things ever feel overwhelming, support is available:

- **Mind:** 0300 123 3393 (info and support for mental health)
- **Rethink Mental Illness:** 0808 801 0525 (practical help and advice)
- **Samaritans:** 116 123 (free, 24/7 listening support)
- **SHOUT:** Text SHOUT to 85258 (free, confidential 24/7 text support)

♥ Fusion of Hearts CIC is here to walk alongside parents and carers, because no one should feel they have to face the journey alone.