

If you are traveling with a child, first put the mask on yourself, and then on the child.

Little is said about the mental functioning of parents. At the same time, for a parent to survive in today's world and meet the expectations set by themselves and society, it is essential to prioritize their well-being and mental health. Though it may seem difficult, it is necessary. To be a support for the child, we must take care of our own resources because you can't pour from an empty cup.

What is an oxygen mask?

Caregivers often forget the principle of the 'oxygen mask,' which emphasizes taking care of one's own well-being and meeting basic needs first, without which survival is impossible.

We remember to always have our phones charged but forget to charge our own 'mental health battery.' Children mirror themselves in us like mirrors, feeling and learning from us how to take care of their emotions. If we are not calm, our children won't have the chance to develop well.

A parent's daily life

In everyday situations, when we are overworked and focused on others, it's very easy to lose our internal balance.

Every emotion is information and a signal that we need something, that something threatens us, that we are not coping with something, that something gives us pleasure or not. If we don't allow them to speak, judgmental thoughts may arise, fatigue, and our mixing of emotions, anger, sorrow, and sadness, reach their peak, and at that point, we may only scream for help. When dealing with a child in such a state, it can be assumed that nothing constructive will result for either us or the child.

How to take care of yourself?

Psychological functioning is an integral part of our lives. It is worth adopting a perspective in which we care as meticulously about our psyche as we do about our physical health.

- **Let's decide to let go of certain activities for the child** - after all, it's impossible to do everything. Let's try to integrate our needs with the needs of the child.
- **Let's take care of relationships with other people.** Social contacts improve our mood, giving us a sense of happiness. The social support we experience from the outside also helps us perceive life's difficult situations as less threatening. This makes it easier for us to endure stress and cope better with crises.
- **Limit the use of electronic tools.** Excessive screen time affects both mental and physical health negatively. Let's do small things that bring us pleasure, such as walking, reading, cleaning, sports, bathing, etc.
- **Introduce some movement into your life.** Engaging in physical exercise promotes improved health, helps cope with stress, and lowers the risk of self-destructive behaviors.
- **Ensure that you get enough sleep and relaxation.** Sleep and rest are fundamental tools for taking care of mental health, including emotional balance and stress resilience.
- **Name the emotions you experience and talk about them with your children.** This way, we will be able to build sincere relationships and openness in sharing the difficulties we experience with our children.
- **If it's challenging for us to openly talk about the emotions we are experiencing, write down what we feel on paper, in simple words.** When speaking or writing, remember to be honest; after all, we're doing it for ourselves.

If we notice an intensification of problems in ourselves, and previous coping strategies are not effective or worsen our well-being, if we can't manage our emotions and don't know how to improve our well-being, let's allow ourselves to seek help from psychotherapeutic assistance.

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Seeking help? Remember that HearMe is here for you, and our team of specialists is ready to provide you with the necessary assistance.

