



Co-Parenting: Investing in Yourself



During times of stress, investing in yourself is especially important so that you can be the healthiest version of you. Just like depositing money into the bank is investing in your savings account, every time you do something for your physical, emotional, or mental health you metaphorically make a deposit into your self-care bank and invest in yourself. The experience of divorce can cause many negative feelings like grief, stress, loss, anxiety, and anger. Many parents attempt to stay busy to avoid experiencing those negative feelings. With so many changes in your, and your children’s life, finding time for self-care might feel impossible or selfish, but it is one of the best gifts you can give your children.

The following self-care options are ways for you to begin investing in yourself and likewise improve your physical and mental health.

- **Balance Your Health** - Find time to exercise, eat a healthy diet, and get a good night's sleep.
- **Get with People** - Find time to hang out with your friends or even join a new group of people with shared interests.
- **Practice Gratitude** - Find value and appreciate the good things in your life, instead of focusing on what is lost or what you do not have.
- **Relax, Meditate and Practice Mindfulness** - Focus on being in the present moment instead of worrying about the past or the future.
- **Self-Compassion**- Treat yourself with the love and kindness you would give others.
- **Make Time for Fun** - Bring out your inner child with play or learn something new.

Self-care allows you to be a healthier version of you, so you can be better equipped to be the parent you desire to be for your children.

Refer to this article to learn about more ways to take care of YOU!

Investing in Yourself:

https://humansciences.okstate.edu/fcs/coparenting/site-files/resources/coparenting_investing_yourself.pdf

Source: <https://mailchi.mp/2e455c033f41/co-parenting-investing-in-yourself-2749869>

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If you receive the monthly newsletter by mail and would like to receive it by email, please call Roxanne at 918-746-3706. Receiving it by email would greatly reduce our printing and postage expenses.

Thank you!

7 Ways to Protect Your Mental Health Against Social Media Envy

If you've ever felt miserable after scrolling through Instagram, Snapchat or Facebook, you're not alone. Research published in a 2018 issue of the Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology links social media use and increased feelings of depression and loneliness.



Why Does Social Media Make Us Depressed?

The unhappiness people feel when they spend time on social media relates in large part to social comparison, says psychologist Melissa G. Hunt, the author of the study. "When you look at other people's lives, particularly on Instagram, it's easy to conclude that everyone else's life is cooler or better than yours," she says. That's because, according to social comparison theory, people base their value on how they stack up against others. And this urge to compare goes way back before social media even existed. Long ago, it was key for survival: Humans needed to quickly gauge their rivals' strengths and assess threats. These days, people measure each other's attractiveness, success, intelligence and desirability to see where they rank. Since comparison is hard-wired, there's no easy way to completely avoid it. And, unless you plan to move off the grid, a total social media detox is highly unlikely. You can learn how not to fall prey to the comparison trap.

1. Pinpoint Your Social Media Triggers

The first step to maintaining your sanity on social media is knowing what sets you off. When you scroll, do specific types of posts or certain people always make you feel inadequate or depressed? According to this train of thought, you're more likely to covet someone else's life if it feels attainable — a life path you might've sought or achieved but didn't. That's why a casual romp through Facebook can leave you in an unexpected emotional funk. "When we see a friend or acquaintance who seems to be doing much better than us, it's hard not to let it affect us negatively," says Erin Vogel, Ph.D., a postdoctoral fellow in the department of psychiatry at the University of California, San Francisco.

2. Practice Mindfulness

"Mindfulness is a great technique for putting things into perspective and helping us counteract the negative effects of social media," says Vogel. With practice, you can learn to mindfully observe these emotions without getting lost or stuck in them. First, don't resist or avoid the uncomfortable feelings. Pay attention to how envy feels in your body. Is your jaw tight? Your cheeks flushed? In addition to learning the physical signs, notice your thoughts. What's your inner voice saying? Acknowledge these thoughts from a distance like a nonjudgmental spectator. Once you recognize your reflex responses, you can break the unconscious cycle. Instead of passively experiencing an envious feeling on autopilot, you can make a mindful choice to untether yourself from it. Try breathing deeply and saying, "I acknowledge this envy (inhale); I release this envy (exhale)."

3. Give Yourself a Reality Check

Most people don't share their epic life fails on social media. "People tend to present the 'highlights' of their lives," says Vogel. "So, when we compare ourselves to others on social media, it's not a fair comparison." Even for the most level-headed person, it's easy to forget that social media is a distorted, filtered version of life.

4. Reframe Your Perspective

Just as social media depicts a distorted reality, your thoughts that result from scrolling can be distorted, too. For example, when your friend posts pics of her polite, dutiful preschoolers, you might instantly conclude that you're a terrible parent because your kids don't behave like angels all the time. This is what's called a cognitive distortion — an irrational, false, or inaccurate thought or belief — and it can run amuck in your mind if you let it. Increasing your awareness around cognitive distortions might take some practice, but over time, you'll develop a personal radar and learn to reframe maladaptive beliefs into healthier, reality-based thoughts.

continued on page 3...



7 Ways to Protect Your Mental Health Against Social Media Envy, *continued...*

5. Focus on What's Good in Your Life

Amid an onslaught of perfect posts reminding you what you're missing, it's tough to remember all the good things you already have. Reflecting on and being thankful for what's positive in your life is essential when it comes to counteracting the negative impact of social media. A little gratitude goes a long way, says Sonja Lyubomirsky, Ph.D., a professor of psychology at UC Riverside and the author of The Myths of Happiness. In fact, a 2017 study Lyubomirsky co-authored suggests gratitude reduces stress and depressive feelings while boosting overall satisfaction, well-being and the motivation to improve oneself.

6. Turn Envy into Motivation

Comparison might be the thief of joy when you judge yourself as not up to snuff, but it doesn't have to be. In fact, a little envy might be just what you need to kick your self-improvement goals into high gear. According to Vogel, "Social comparisons are most beneficial when they're used as inspiration." In some cases, it can be motivating to compare yourself to someone. For instance, you might be on a track team and compare your race times with other teammates. In doing so, you're motivated to improve your own performance.

7. Cultivate Authentic Connections (Online and Off)

Despite evidence to the contrary, it's entirely possible to create authentic interactions with others on social media. Sometimes, letting your guard down and sharing your imperfections can be the antidote to all the posturing and posing. "People often appreciate seeing some honesty and vulnerability from their social networks. Forging genuine connections not only reminds us how complex life is for everyone but also reiterates how essential support, empathy and compassion are to all interactions, whether online or off.

Source: <https://www.leaf.tv/13716395/7-ways-to-protect-your-mental-health-against-instagram-envy/>

~~~~~ Screen Time Guidelines for Children ~~~~~

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) encourages parents to help their children develop healthy media use habits early on. Source: healthychildren.org



- For children younger than 18 months, use of screen media other than video-chatting should be discouraged.
- Parents of children 18 to 24 months of age who want to introduce digital media should choose high-quality programming/apps and use them together with children, because this is how toddlers learn best. Letting children use media by themselves should be avoided.
- For children older than 2 years, media limits are very appropriate. Limit screen use to no more than 1 hour or less per day of high-quality programming. Co-view or co-play with your children, and find other activities for you to do together that are healthy for the body and mind (e.g., reading, teaching, talking, and playing together).
- All children and teens need adequate sleep (8-12 hours, depending on age), physical activity (1 hour), and time away from media. Designate media-free times together (e.g., family dinner) and media-free zones (e.g., bedrooms). Children should not sleep with devices in their bedrooms, including TVs, computers, and smartphones.

Parents are encouraged to develop personalized media use plans for their children. Media plans should consider each child's age, health, personality, and developmental stage. Create your Family Media Use Plan at <https://healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx#wizard>. Remember to communicate your plan to other caregivers, such as babysitters or grandparents, so that media rules are followed consistently.

Is Take-Out Food Safe During the COVID-19 Pandemic?

For several months, Oklahomans have been hunkered down in their homes as a safety precaution during the COVID-19 pandemic. While this extra time at home has prompted some to spend more time in the kitchen trying out new recipes, others have opted for takeout, curbside delivery or home delivery for their meals.

What safety precautions should you be taking in order to ensure your personal safety?

Christine Walters, Oklahoma State University Extension maternal and child nutrition assistant specialist, said takeout meals are a great option for many people.

“Although the restrictions are being lifted around the state and many restaurants have reopened their doors, the dining in experience still may not be a great idea for everyone, especially those with underlying health concerns,” Walters said. “However, there isn’t any current research to suggest COVID-19 can be transmitted by food or food packaging, and there haven’t been any reports of food transmission made to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration or the United States Department of Agriculture.”

Takeout and curbside food delivery is still a great option for many Oklahomans, not only for those with a weakened immune system. It also helps support current recommendations for social distancing.

Walters did say that if food were to become contaminated with COVID-19, stomach acid, which is very acidic, would inactivate the virus.

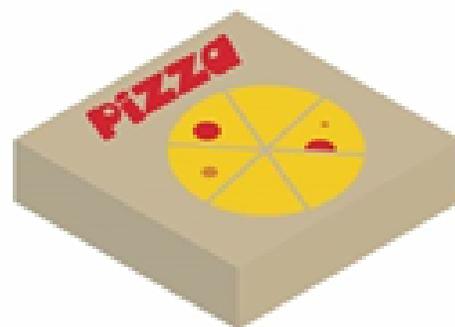
“Because COVID-19 is a respiratory virus, it isn’t well-suited to infect the gastrointestinal system,” she said.

To help alleviate chances of cross contamination, many restaurants have instituted no-touch options, which further minimizes the risks. Once the food goes into the oven, it is not touched again by anyone other than the consumer.

“However, to further cut down on risk, it’s always best to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with warm water and soap, or use hand sanitizer after handling food packaging from your takeout order,” Walters said.

Consumers also can continue to take advantage of home food delivery services from their local grocery stores. This will help eliminate coming into contact with crowds of people.

“Personal safety is the key message and we simply want people to know they have options for food and groceries that will help keep them safe,” Walters said.





SHOUT OUT FROM SHARI

Wow, this year is going by so fast! I know we are missing not having our Tulsa County Fair this year, but I know we will be able to have a great one in 2021!

Please be looking for information on our Membership Tea! We are hoping to be able to still have this and are working out the details! (The date is unknown at this time.)

A BIG "SHOUT OUT" to the Scholarship Committee! They have worked super hard and I know that we all say "THANK YOU" for your hard work.

I know several of our groups are meeting/getting together this month - Keep inviting your friends to come and join us! Fingers crossed - hopefully we will be able to have our September Business Meeting if conditions are safe to meet - again, please check with your Group President.

Exciting News - we are hoping to have a big "Rummage Sale" in the OSU Extension Parking lot on Saturday, September 19th! We will be sending out more information soon so mark your calendars!

Finally - I'd like to "Shout Out" to Michelle and Roxanne. We miss you all so much! Thank you for continuing to take care of business and be there for all of us! WE APPRECIATE YOU!

Nuts about OHCE!

Shari



We are so proud of the efforts from Tulsa County OHCE. Together, you have created and donated approximately 1,272 masks! Thank you and CONGRATULATIONS!!! (Total as of 06-15-20)



WHAT'S HAPPENING



ALL EVENTS CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!



Please Note:

The difficult decision was made to cancel the **Tulsa County Free Fair for 2020.**

The health and safety of our volunteers, the community and the staff are paramount. At this point, there are too many uncertainties that prevent us from planning accordingly. Please share this information with your groups, your friends, family and neighbors.

The unknowns, surrounding COVID-19, are something we cannot change at this time. However, please know that you are vital to our mission and goal of improving the lives of Oklahomans. We will look forward to planning the 2021 Tulsa County Fair.

Oklahoma Home and Community Education (OHCE), consists of eight groups that meet in and around Tulsa. The groups meet once a month, at various times. The groups meet in at libraries, churches or community centers. To start or join a group in your neighborhood or community, call the Tulsa County OSU Extension Office at 918-746-3706.



OHCE UPDATES



DID YOU KNOW...

Many of our OHCE Members have been hard at work making beautiful Handmade items that were going to be sold at the County Fair?

If you are interested in purchasing some of these items please contact Sharilyn Munroe for further information at 918-408-6918.



The Healthy Living THRIVE focus this month....

With COVID19, the quarantine and the re-opening, I hope all of you have made it through with good health and continue to thrive. It is being recommended for all of us to wear cloth face covers in public. Here is an article for us to read from the CDC. Also check out the left sidebar for other COVID19 information. Don't forget...wash your hands often.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-gettingsick/cloth-face-cover.html>

~Charline Romine, Healthy Living Committee Chairman



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