

**Top Ten Ways To
Cope When
Caring For
Someone
With Autism
by Ben Sidman**

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No matter who you are or what you do, caring for someone with autism is difficult and can often stretch you to your limits. Every now and again you can end up feeling like things are getting on top of you. The trouble is that more often than can become every day.

There is no magic wand to take all the difficulties away but there are many ways to improve the quality of your life so that it is much easier to cope with the day to day caring for people with autism.

This is a list of ten simple things that you can do to help you get back on track and help you cope better:

1 - Don't Sweat The Small Stuff

We all go over the top when it comes to worrying about the minor things that can happen. Really you only need to worry about something that can harm your safety or can seriously affect you in the future. Anything else doesn't really matter. So don't worry about juice all over the floor if it can be wiped up easily - even if it has happened 5 times already that day. You won't solve these problems but stressing about them.

2 - Don't Take It Personally

So your autistic child said - 'I hate you and wish you were dead.' These are almost never words of sincerity but words of insecurity or frustration, and you can't take it personally. As soon as you take things personally they become personal and the bad feelings between each other get worse. Let your child test their frustration and test anger, and show them why it is bad and how to

deal with it properly. This is hard to do but remember one thing, as soon as you see red and get angry, you are not in control. So don't take it personally.

3 - Don't Try And Fix Your Child

There is no known cure for autism and if you try and fix your child to behaving and acting like someone that doesn't have autism then you are going to get really frustrated. The best thing you can do is to accept it and try to make things feel better. This can be hard, especially for those people who have a natural instinct to fix problems. The problem is that autism often comes across as bad behavior which can be fixed. Don't be fooled into thinking you can fix autism - just make it better.

4 - Try To Recharge Your Batteries

So many parents continue to deal with the day to day that they don't take time for themselves. Whenever you can or whenever you feel you need to, get some help and take a break. If this means a few hours of sleep or a whole day of retail therapy then do what you need to do to make sure you take a break. Be productive and make sure you come back feeling recharged and ready to cope again.

5 - Get Organised

This is a big one. Organised people get more done. Caring for autistic people takes extra time, so if you organise all the medical papers, routines, school takes then you will become more efficient. If you organise your time effectively then you won't drag your heels doing loads of things that just take up time.

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6 - Make Chores Second Nature

There are usually many chores that need to be done, like, helping with exercises, making special meals and so on. If you organise these into a list of chores and carry them out as a set daily or weekly routine then they should become second nature. If you can make them second nature then it is easier to do all those tasks as if they are as necessary as brushing your teeth. Then they don't seem like a chore anymore, they are more like one of those things you do everyday and won't feel like you are taking up time to doing things you don't want to do. It also sets a really good example.

7 - Relax

There are lots of people that will tell you about stress management and even more that would like to sell you something to cope better. This is more than just taking a time out to sit down. It is more like not getting stressed. Getting stressed increases your heart rate and gives you a feeling of uneasiness. This then makes you irritable and less able to cope with what is going on. Caring for autistic people can be very demanding. But people usually get stressed about the same things that happen every day, such as tantrums and broken furniture or shouting. If these things happen every day then they will probably happen tomorrow as well, and so there is no point in worrying about it. Just be ready to deal with it the next day, and if it doesn't happen then rewards all round.

8 - Be Prepared

There is no better way of dealing with difficult things than being prepared. This may mean you put a plastic sheet under the dining room table to catch the mess, or it may mean getting an ID tag for going to the park. What ever you need to do to get yourself prepared will be a step closer to helping you cope better with whatever happens.

9 - Reward Yourself

No matter what you think, you are doing a great job. Caring for autistic people is difficult and take a lot of time and energy. So reward yourself for all your hard work because you deserve it. And when you have coped with a particularly hard day, reward yourself even more.

10 - Talk To Others

Please don't underestimate the benefit of talking to other people who are going through the same thing. There are many people who are dealing with what you are dealing with and many more that are probably dealing with worse. And if you seem to be dealing with a very difficult family situation then there are many people that would love to speak to you. The autistic community is a group of unique people that are probably the best educated and trained people to understand what you are going through. So use them.

About The Author

Ben Sidman is a Parent of an amazing autistic child and founder of <http://www.autism-support-community.com> - an informative and friendly web site for parents with autistic children.

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