

Anthem of *Hope*

Caring for Yourself While Caring for Others

On airplanes, flight attendants tell parents to put on their own oxygen mask before assisting their child. Parents and other caregivers need to be stable before they can help others.



Do Not Isolate: Parents often isolate themselves because they don't want to talk about "it" with others. Unfortunately, you will end up depressed and dysfunctional. Talk with people who are safe and helpful. You will find many people share similar stories. **YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**



Join A Support Group: A support group is a good place to share your story and find community. Al-Anon is helpful when a loved one with mental illness is also using drugs or alcohol. Psychology Today has an on-line resource for finding support groups: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/groups>



Get Your Own Therapist: Dealing with a child's mental health challenges is exhausting. No parent is prepared for this journey. A therapist can guide you on next steps and help you think through problems and see potential solutions. One place to find a therapist: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us>



Tend to Your Whole Family: Mental health challenges with one family member impact everyone else too, even if you don't talk about it. Everyone could use support; help them find a therapist or support group.



Other Ways to Take Care of Yourself: Get outside. Walk. Feel the sun. Say a prayer. Meditate. Take a bath. Grow a plant. Text a friend. Paint. Write. Turn up the music. Dance. Take a class. Snuggle with a pet.

Note: This document was written by one mom who wants you to know that it is not selfish to take care of yourself. You will need all the strength and stamina you can get for this journey.