

Self-care for parent leaders

Why

Did you really just ask why?

Yes, you are that busy.

Yes, your goal is that important.

But no, you cannot work nonstop and be successful.

You need to replenish and take care of yourself.

The practice of rest and self-compassion are essential for long-term success in organizing because they prevent burnout, sustain motivation, and preserve mental and emotional well-being.

What

Rest: To relax into something and let it support you.

Self-compassion: An attitude of kindness toward the self in the face of life's difficulties and challenges.

-Unity Wellness Collective for BIPOC Leaders

How

First: address the barriers by asking yourself the following questions:

What is my biggest challenge when it comes to resting or practicing self-compassion?

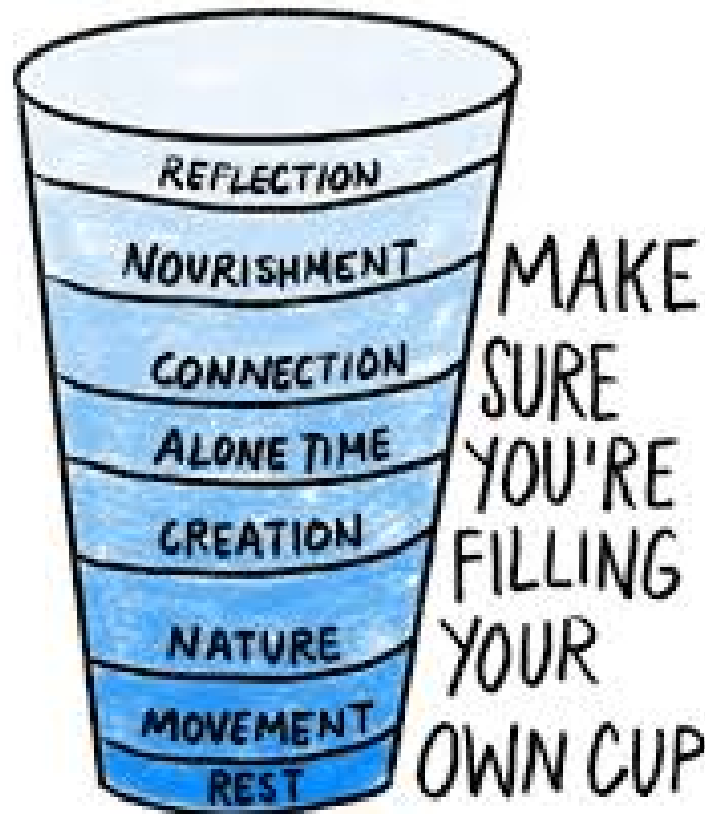
What do I most need to hear right now to feel supported and cared for?

What would I tell a friend in my position to encourage rest?

Next: find what works for you

- **Deep breathing 3-4-5:** Inhale for 3 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, exhale for 5 seconds. Repeat 4-8 times. Relax, focus on your breath, and let go of stress.
- **Micro-breaks:** Take 5-minute breaks to recharge during the day. (Dance breaks, laugh breaks, stretching breaks, breathing breaks, closing your eyes, etc.)
- **Boundaries:** Set small but firm boundaries, like no email after a certain time.
- **Daily self check-ins:** Acknowledge accomplishments and give yourself grace.
- **Journaling:** Set a daily habit or journal when you feel like you want or need to.
- **Exercise:** Walking, dancing, and going up and down the stairs all count.

- **Eat a fruit or vegetable:** A healthier diet can make a world of difference.
- **Get closer to nature:** Trees, water, birdsong, all of nature is healing.
- **Get a massage, reflexology, take a spa day:** Even in your own home!



Tips for bringing more joy into your life as a parent leader:

- ❖ Celebrate small wins

Whether it's a successful meeting, a new partnership, or a supportive interaction with another parent.

- ❖ Build connections with fellow leaders

Building strong connections with other parents, leaders, and organizers can be a source of joy and support.

❖ Revisit your "Why" regularly

Take time to reflect on the reasons that led you to become a parent leader.

Revisit your personal mission and the impact you want to have.

Source: Pause with Purpose: Cultivating rest and self-compassion for parent advocates, by
Tafshier Cosby, Senior Director of Parent Organizing and Partnerships, National Parents Union