

# Action-Taker's Summit *Workbook*



Empowered Parents Summit 2024



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# Introduction

Congratulations on taking the first step towards becoming an empowered parent!

This workbook is designed to complement the summit masterclasses, offering a structured approach to reflecting on what you've learned, setting goals, and implementing positive changes in your parenting practices.

With each section of the workbook corresponding to a specific day of the summit, you'll have the opportunity to dive deeper into the day's topic, explore your own parenting experiences, and develop personalized action plans tailored to your family's unique needs.

But here's the best part: you don't have to do it all at once.

We understand that parenting is a journey, not a sprint.

That's why the Action-Taker's Summit Workbook is designed to be flexible and adaptable to your schedule.

Take it slowly, at your own pace, and savor the process of growth and discovery.

The goal is to provide a space where your thoughts, plans, and experiences can be recorded, reflected upon, and revisited.

Warmly,  
Marko Juhant and Strategic Parenting Team  
Strategicparenting.com

# Day 1: ADHD, Anxiety, Depression & Mental Health

## 1. Emotional Support

When your child exhibits signs of emotional discomfort, whether it's anxiety, a bad mood, or sadness, how does it make you feel? Do you find yourself instinctively wanting to shield them from discomfort, or do you feel compelled to guide them through confronting their feelings? Take a moment to tap into your gut reactions.

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Once you've thought about it, come up with a few simple, comforting phrases you can say to them when they're feeling distressed. These responses should not only help them feel better right away but also encourage them to recognize and work through their emotions. For example, you could say something like, *"I can see you're feeling really (emotion) right now. It's okay to feel that way."* Practice using these kinds of phrases with your child to create a supportive environment.

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## 2. Identifying Triggers

Reflect on past instances when your child has experienced a meltdown. Did you notice any recurring patterns or triggers? Consider if certain situations, activities, or events

consistently lead to your child becoming upset, such as crowded places, hunger, changes in routines, or loud noises.

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Identify the main trigger(s) for your child's meltdowns, then brainstorm practical solutions to address them. For example, if hunger is a common trigger, consider carrying snacks with you at all times. Write down your solutions to ensure you remember and can implement them when needed.

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### **3. Positive Communication**

Take a moment to think about how you communicate with your child. Do you truly listen to their thoughts and feelings, or do you sometimes dismiss or invalidate their experiences?

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Now, think back to a couple of instances when you and your child didn't see things eye-to-eye. Write them down. Next to each one, add a counter-example, and explain how you could have responded more thoughtfully to show that you value their perspective (even if you don't necessarily agree with it).

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#### **4. Celebrating Individuality**

Take a moment to consider your child's unique strengths and qualities. Think about the specific traits that make them who they are (especially if they have ADHD or other neurodivergent traits). This can be anything, from kindness, sense of humor, perseverance, or their ability to think outside the box.

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Now, reflect on how you currently express your appreciation for these traits. Do you actively acknowledge and celebrate their strengths? If so, how do you go about it? If not, brainstorm ways you can incorporate more positive reinforcement into your interactions with your child.

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## 5. Personal Growth

Think about one specific challenge or area where you'd like to see your child grow (it could be something like nurturing their creativity, encouraging independence, or improving their problem-solving skills.)

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Think about how you can break this goal into smaller, more achievable tasks or milestones. For example, if you want to encourage their creativity, start by setting aside a short time each day for a creative activity. It could be drawing, writing, building with blocks – whatever they enjoy. Make sure to provide them with materials they like, whether it's colored pencils, paper, or craft supplies. Because you know your child best, you can come up with specific activities that match their interests and passions perfectly.

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## 6. Overcoming Anxiety

Write down a recent situation where your child expressed anxiety about something new or uncertain. Now, think about how you can turn this into an opportunity for their growth and resilience. Consider what specific thoughts or beliefs might be contributing to your child's anxiety in this situation. Write down examples of what you could have said to them. For

example, if your child was worried about fitting in at a birthday party, you could remind them of past experiences where they successfully connected with new people or had fun in social settings.

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Also think about other times when your child tends to feel anxious, like before a big test or a performance. What kind words or reminders of their past successes could you offer to help them feel more confident and capable?

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## 7. Guidance and Feedback

Take a moment to think about recent situations where you may have been critical of your child's behavior or actions. Write down these situations. Now, brainstorm ways you could turn those situations into opportunities for positive feedback that helps your child learn and grow.

For instance, if you catch yourself saying, *"You never remember to clean your room,"* try reframing it as, *"I noticed your room could use some tidying up. Let's brainstorm together how we can keep it organized. Do you have any good ideas?"*

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## 8. Playtime For You

Recall a fun time with your child—maybe a game of pretend or a silly moment. Think about how it brought you two closer.

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Now, think about those tough moments, like bedtime struggles or busy mornings. How can you make them more enjoyable? How can you turn them into a game, a funny experience, or a challenge? Choose one or two tough situations and write down a couple of ways to add humor and playfulness to it.

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## 9. Facilitating Playtime

Take note of your child's play preferences and habits. Are they more inclined to play alone or with others? Make a list of specific activities or games that cater to both types of play.

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Craft a weekly schedule that ensures your child has ample opportunities for both solo and social play. Consider their unique temperament and stage of development when planning activities. For solo play, incorporate activities that encourage creativity and independence, such as drawing, building with blocks, or exploring nature. For social play, schedule playdates with friends, enroll them in group activities like sports or music classes, or encourage cooperative games with siblings.

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**10. Building Connection**

Pause to appreciate your children and your role as their parent. Take a moment to think about what makes your relationship with each child special. Write down three things you appreciate about each of them, and make sure to tell them about it.

You can even turn this into a joint exercise by gathering as a family and taking turns sharing one thing you're thankful for about each other.

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# Day 2: Effective Discipline

## 1. Handling Challenging Situations

Reflect on the language you typically use when setting boundaries and expressing expectations to your child. Are there any negative language patterns that may contribute to tension or conflict? Take a moment to write down these patterns, such as using commands like "Don't" or "Stop," or using critical language that focuses on what your child shouldn't do.

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Next, consider how you can reframe your communication to be more positive and supportive. For each negative language pattern you identified, brainstorm alternative phrases that emphasize what your child can do rather than what they shouldn't (for example, instead of saying *"Don't run in the house,"* you could say *"Please walk inside."*)

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## 2. Setting Boundaries

Think about a specific boundary that's been tough to set with your child. It could be about screen time, chores, or behavior in public places. How can you communicate this boundary effectively while also explaining why it's important in a positive way?

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Now, write down some ideas for how you can have a conversation with your child about this boundary. Think about using clear and firm language to express the boundary, while also emphasizing the reasons behind it in a positive and constructive way.

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## 3. Empathetic Understanding

Recall a recent disagreement with your child where understanding their perspective was challenging. Write down three questions you could have asked to better understand their point of view.

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Now, reflect on how asking these questions could have improved the outcome of the disagreement. Consider how gaining insight into your child's perspective might have led to finding common ground or identifying solutions that met both of your needs.

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#### 4. Visions for the Future

Imagine the relationship you hope to have with your child as they grow up.

Consider the following questions:

- What kind of conversations do you envision having with your child? How do you see yourself communicating and connecting on a daily basis?
  - What activities do you see yourself doing together? Think about hobbies, sports, creative exercises, or any other interests.
  - What do you imagine spending quality time with them will look like?
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Then, take a moment to reflect on your thoughts and feelings. Can you think of any steps that you can start taking today to cultivate the type of relationship you envision and desire?

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### 5. Managing Emotional Moments

Take a moment to reflect on how you typically respond to your child's emotional outbursts or provocations. Do you notice yourself feeling frustrated or raising your voice in these situations? How do you currently handle these challenging moments?

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Think about how you can adjust your reactions to stay calm and empathetic. Consider everything you have learned today, and try thinking up three responses that you can take instead of reacting impulsively.

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## 6. Quality Time

Reflect on your family's current routines and schedules. How often do you prioritize quality one-on-one time with each of your children?

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Consider scheduling regular individual time with each child to strengthen your bond and create lasting memories together. Think about specific activities or outings you could plan to spend quality time with each of your children individually. Write down your ideas, and plan how you can incorporate them into your family's schedule.

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## 7. Modeling Values

Think about the core values you want to instill in your children—values like honesty, kindness, or resilience. Reflect on moments when you've had the chance to demonstrate these values in your interactions with your children.

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Consider the impact these moments had on your child's understanding and internalization of these values and how these interactions helped shape their character and worldview. Think about how you can continue to reinforce these values through your words and actions every day. This might involve praising your child when they exhibit these values, discussing real-life examples of these values in action, or actively practicing them in your own behavior.

Write down specific ways you can model these values in your daily interactions with your children.

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## 8. Flexibility in Goals

Think about your child's future. Do you have any specific goals in mind for them? Are you open to allowing this goal to evolve as your child grows and discovers their own interests and passions? Reflect on this for a moment.

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Now, write down one way you can support your child in exploring their unique path. It could be something as simple as asking them about their interests or signing them up for a new activity they've expressed curiosity about.

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## 9. Incorporating Past Experiences

Think about your own childhood experiences and how they might shape your parenting today. Are there things you want to keep doing, or maybe change up a bit? Consider the lessons you've learned from your past.

Write down one thing that worked well for you as a child, such as spending quality time with family or having a consistent bedtime routine. Then, write down one thing that didn't work so well, like feeling pressure to conform to certain expectations or lacking open communication with your parents.

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Reflect on how these experiences can inform your approach to parenting in a practical way. How can you incorporate the positive aspects into your family life, while also making adjustments to avoid repeating any negative patterns?

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## 10. Handling Criticism

Recall a recent tough parenting moment where you felt overwhelmed or criticized by others. It could have been a situation where your child had a public tantrum, and you received snarky stares or comments from onlookers.

How did you handle it? Did you feel embarrassed, frustrated, or judged? Did your reaction prioritize your bond with your child or external judgments?

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Now, take a moment to reflect on your commitment to prioritizing your relationship with your child over external judgments. Write down an affirmation that encapsulates this dedication and serves as a reminder of your parenting values. Think about how you can handle similar situations differently in the future to prioritize your relationship with your child.

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# Day 3: Technology Addiction

## 1. Personal Tech Habits

Reflect on your phone usage—are you using it more than you realize? Consider the apps that tend to occupy your attention, even when you're in the company of your children. Write down three specific apps that you find yourself consistently turning to and estimate the amount of time you devote to each of them daily.

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Next, set a realistic time limit for each app. Think about how much time you TRULY require to accomplish what you need versus how much time you could redirect towards meaningful interactions with your family. (Tip: many apps offer built-in features that let you monitor and control your usage, making it easier to stick to your chosen limits.)

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## 2. Setting Boundaries

Start by writing down what worries you the most when it comes to your child's online behavior. This will help you see your fears more clearly. Once you've got them down on paper, take some time to really understand why each one concerns you and what could happen if those concerns aren't addressed. After that, come up with three clear rules or guidelines that tackle these worries.

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Once you've made your rules, sit down with your child, show them what you've written, and explain why you've set these rules. Give them a chance to share their thoughts and ideas too, so you can work together to find the best way forward.

### 3. Screen-Free Activities

Brainstorm a list of screen-free activities (bonus points if you include your family in the process). Think about things like going on a trip, making art, playing board games, or building a fort in the backyard. Write down everything that sounds fun, even if it seems a bit silly.

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Then, gather your family and go through the list together. Everyone should share their thoughts. Once you've heard from everyone, pick one activity to try out this week. Mark it on the family calendar and make a plan to ensure it happens. Assign tasks if necessary, such as gathering supplies or coordinating logistics.

### 4. Learning from Online Experiences

Try to think up a couple of moments in your online life where you've learned something important, whether it was from a mistake, a misunderstanding, or just trying something new. These experiences can be great teaching moments for your child. Maybe you shared

something online that you shouldn't have, or you saw a friend fall for a scam and learned to be more cautious. Whatever it is, make it real and relatable.

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You can sit down together and talk about these moments. Discuss how these experiences have shaped your understanding of cautious online behavior and why it's important to always be learning and growing in the digital world.

## 5. Collaborative Consequences

Think about the consequences you currently use when your children spend too much time on screens. Are these consequences something you decided on your own, or did you talk about them together as a family?

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If you haven't involved your kids in deciding consequences, you can try it now. Sit down together and have an open conversation about your family's screen time rules and what should happen if those rules are broken.

To make it interactive, you can each take turns suggesting consequences for specific situations related to screen time. Write down your ideas individually, then come together to compare and discuss them. This way, everyone's voice is heard, and you can collectively decide on the consequences.

## 6. Adaptability

Think about how open you are to trying new ways of managing screen time and dealing with technology in your family. Are you willing to switch things up if it means finding better ways to balance screen time and other activities? Reflect on any concerns or worries you might have about trying new strategies.

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Now, brainstorm three simple ways you can start being more flexible and open to change. It could be as simple as asking your kids for their input on new rules or doing some research to find out what other parents are doing. Whatever it is, start small and be open to adjusting your approach based on what works best for your family.

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## 7. Educational Content

Take a moment to think about what your child usually does online. Are you happy with what they're watching or playing, or do you think it could be better? If you have concerns, explore new options for more educational or positive content.

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Start by researching websites, apps, or YouTube channels that provide enjoyable ways for children to learn and engage with uplifting messages. Write down the names of these resources, along with a brief description of what they offer and why you think they'd be beneficial. Once you've compiled your list, take the opportunity to introduce these new options to your child.

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## 8. Understanding Dopamine Effects

Consider having a conversation with your child about dopamine and how screens can affect it. How would you explain this concept in a way that they can understand? Write down a couple of ideas that could resonate with your kid.

*(For example: "Imagine your brain has a little button that makes you feel happy whenever you see something cool or fun on a screen. That's kind of like what dopamine does – it's like a happy button in your brain. But if you press that button too much by spending too much time on screens, your brain can get tired and you might not feel so happy anymore. That's why it's good to take breaks and do different things, so your brain stays happy and healthy.")*

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## 9. Channeling Tech Interests

Think about a few instances when your child was deeply absorbed in technology. What activities were they engaged in, and what fascinated them about it?

For each instance, reflect on what specifically captivated your child's attention. Consider aspects such as the interactive nature of the activity, the visual or auditory stimulation, or the sense of achievement and progression. Write down these "fascination factors."

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Now, brainstorm ways to channel your child's interest in technology into real-life, offline activities that offer similar engagement and enjoyment. Consider activities that align with their interests and provide opportunities for hands-on learning and exploration.

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## 10. Family Screen Time Reflection

Take a moment to reflect on your family's current screen time rules and routines. How often are screens a focal point in your household? How often do family members engage

with screens, and in what contexts? Consider how technology integrates into your daily routines and whether it enhances or detracts from your family's quality time together.

Write your thoughts, wishes, and hopes down. If you want, you can call a family meeting to discuss it, or you can have a talk about it during dinner. Give each family member a chance to share their thoughts and feelings about screen time. Make sure everyone feels heard and respected, even if their opinions differ from yours.

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# Day 4: School Challenges

## 1. Sparking Enthusiasm

Take a moment to think about what your child is really into at school right now. Is it a particular subject, like science or art? Or maybe they're passionate about a specific topic, like dinosaurs or outer space. Write down the topic (or topics!) that come to mind.

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Now, think about a few simple yet engaging activities you could do together to deepen their interest. Consider activities that are easily accessible and fit into your daily routine (for example, a fun science experiment, a museum related to their interests, or finding a cool art project to work on).

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## 2. Learning Support

Think about how you currently support your child's learning outside of the classroom. Do you help them with homework, review material, or explore new topics? Write down your typical routine.

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Now, consider if there are any specific areas where your child seems to struggle the most in their learning. Do they struggle with math problems, decoding texts, expressing themselves through writing, or maybe something else entirely? Brainstorm additional resources or activities that could help address them. Think about alternative approaches or supplementary materials (such as educational apps, online tutorials or seeking assistance from tutors or other students) that could provide support.

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**3. Growth Mindset**

Recall a recent instance where you provided feedback or criticism to your child regarding their academic performance. Maybe it was about a test grade, a project they completed, or their overall progress in a certain subject.

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Think about how you could have approached the situation differently to uplift their confidence and motivation. Write down a specific scenario and brainstorm alternative ways you could have offered feedback while emphasizing their strengths and progress.

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Consider how you can apply this approach in future discussions with your child to create a more supportive and encouraging learning environment.

#### 4. Optimizing Study Environment

Take a moment to consider your child's study habits and preferences. Based on what you know about them, brainstorm different ways you could optimize their study space at home to minimize distractions and enhance focus.

For example, if your child tends to get distracted by noise, you could explore options like using noise-canceling headphones or setting up their study area in a quieter part of the house. If they prefer to study with natural light, you might rearrange furniture to maximize access to windows. Write down these potential adjustments.

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## 5. Intrinsic Motivation

Imagine your child is facing a challenging task, and you want to help them find motivation from within. Take a moment to brainstorm with yourself and think about what strategies could work best. You can ask yourself questions like:

- What are some activities or goals that really seem to light up my child's enthusiasm?
- When has my child shown persistence or resilience in the face of difficulty before?
- How can I tap into their interests and passions to help them stay motivated?

Write down your thoughts and ideas.

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## 6. Engagement in School Community

Think about how involved you currently are in your child's school community.

Are there events or initiatives you've thought about participating in to strengthen your connection with your child's education? Write down specific opportunities you might be interested in, such as volunteering for school events, joining the parent-teacher association, or attending workshops or informational sessions.

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Next, prioritize these opportunities based on your availability and interest. Consider how you can fit them into your schedule and make a plan for participating.

## 7. Academic Progress

Reflect on the feedback you've received from your child's teachers regarding their academic performance. Consider specific concerns or recurring themes mentioned, even if they seem minor. This could include difficulties with certain math concepts, struggles with staying focused in class, or any other challenges identified by the teacher.

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Now, brainstorm some real-life strategies you could use to address these areas and collaborate with teachers effectively.

For example, you might schedule regular meetings with teachers to discuss your child's progress, set up a designated homework time each day to provide structure and support, or explore online resources and educational games to reinforce learning at home.

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## 8. Balancing Responsibilities

Reflect on how you currently support your child in managing their schoolwork, hobbies, and free time. Consider whether you feel successful in helping them find a balance, or if there's room for improvement.

Start by identifying your child's preferences and tendencies:

- Do they work best in short bursts of activity, or do they prefer longer stretches of focused time?
- Are they more energized in the morning or evening?
- What are their favorite hobbies and activities?
- Do they have any specific interests or passions they like to pursue in their free time?

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Once you've pinpointed these factors, try drafting a schedule tailored to your findings. Allocate specific time slots for schoolwork, hobbies, and relaxation based on your child's preferences and energy levels. Be flexible and open to adjustments as you implement the schedule, and involve your child in the process to ensure it meets their needs.

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## 9. Encouraging Self-Advocacy

Think about moments when your child struggled to speak up or get help at school. Write down specific situations like when they had trouble asking for help with assignments or voicing concerns to teachers. Reflect on why these situations might be difficult for them.

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Now, consider how you can help your child overcome these challenges and become more confident in advocating for themselves.

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## 10. Overcoming Procrastination

When you noticed your child procrastinating on a recent task, how did you feel about it? Reflect on your immediate reaction and any concerns or frustrations you experienced.

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Next, brainstorm ideas for how you can help your child overcome procrastination in the future. What strategies could you implement as a parent to support them (such as setting clear expectations, providing guidance, or creating a structured routine)? Write down your ideas and consider which ones you're most likely to try.

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# Day 5: Parental well-being

## 1. Weekly Self-Care Goal

Take a moment to reflect on what would truly make you feel relaxed and happier in the upcoming week. Without overthinking, brainstorm a list of self-care activities that immediately come to mind—things you've been missing, things that resonate with you on a personal level. Consider activities such as yoga, diving into those novels you've been eyeing, tending to your garden, or journaling.

Once you have your list, choose one activity that stands out to you the most. This will be your self-care goal for the week. Commit to spending at least an hour dedicated to this activity.

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## 2. Sleep Improvement

Take a moment to consider your sleeping habits. Do you think you get enough sleep each night? How do you feel when you wake up in the morning—are you refreshed or still groggy?

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Once you've finished answering these questions, think about the tips you've learned today for improving your sleep routine. Write down one idea that seems doable for you, like turning off screens earlier, dimming the lights, reading a book, or trying relaxation techniques like deep breathing before bed. Set a reminder on your phone to signal when it's time to start your bedtime routine.

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### 3. Social Connection

Think about the people in your life who bring you joy and support. Are there any friends, family members, or neighbors you've lost touch with recently?

Now, select two individuals from your thoughts. Write down their names and plan to reach out to them this month. Decide whether you'll send a text or make a call, and suggest a coffee chat, a lunch, or a walk in the park to catch up.

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### 4. Healthy Nutrition Planning

Think about Mediterranean-style recipes you enjoy or would like to try. Take a moment to browse online or flip through a cookbook for some culinary inspiration. Write down a couple of recipes that catch your eye and seem doable for your family's schedule (and tastes, of course).

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Once you've selected your recipes, write down the ingredients you'll need on your shopping list. Make sure to incorporate these meals into your weekly meal plan to ensure a balanced diet rich in brain-boosting nutrients.

### **5. Balancing Family Responsibilities**

Take a moment to reflect on how tasks and responsibilities are divided among your family members. Is there a specific task or duty that feels unfairly distributed or overwhelming to you? Write down your thoughts.

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Then, choose one specific action to implement this week to address the imbalance. It could be scheduling a conversation with your partner, creating a new chore chart, or simply taking the initiative to tackle the task together.

### **6. Aspirations in Parenting**

How would you describe your current relationship with your child in five adjectives?

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Are these adjectives in line with the kind of parent you aspire to be? If not, what steps can you take to align your actions with the parent you aspire to be?

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## 7. Mindful Parenting

Start by setting a clear intention for how you want to integrate mindfulness into your parenting style. Write down your intention in a statement that resonates with you. For example, *"I intend to prioritize mindful communication with my children to build trust and strengthen our relationship."*

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Then you can begin by scheduling dedicated "mindful moments" throughout your day. Set alarms or reminders to prompt short breaks (only a minute or two) for you and your children to pause, take a few deep breaths, and recenter yourselves in the present moment.

## 8. Forgiveness

Reflect on a past parenting mistake or challenging experience that still lingers in your mind. Take a moment to acknowledge the feelings it evokes and the impact it has had on you.

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How can you take all you have learned today and apply it to this situation? How can you show self-compassion and forgiveness towards yourself? And what steps can you take to learn and grow from that experience?

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## 9. Societal Expectations

Reflect on how societal expectations and myths about perfect parenting shape your own beliefs and behaviors as a parent (for example, consider the messages you receive from media, social norms, and cultural narratives about what it means to be a "good" parent).

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Then, examine how these societal pressures impact your day-to-day parenting practices. Do you find yourself comparing your parenting style to others? Are you feeling stressed or overwhelmed by unrealistic standards of perfection?

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Identify any areas where you may be internalizing societal expectations and myths about parenting. Consider how these beliefs may be influencing your behavior and interactions with your children.

## **10. Self-Compassion**

Take a moment to reflect on your parenting life so far. Consider the challenges and successes you've experienced along the way. Now, think about how you talk to yourself during difficult moments. Are you kind and understanding, or do you tend to be overly critical? Write down a short compassionate message to yourself, just as you would to a close friend facing a similar situation.