

Episode #41: 3 Guidelines to Effective Self-Care



Full Episode Transcript

[*Mom on Purpose Podcast*](#)

with Lara Johnson

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Welcome to *The Mom on Purpose Podcast*. I'm Lara Johnson, and I'm here to teach you how to get out of your funk, be in a better mood, claim more with your kids. Manage your home better, get your to-do list done and live your life on purpose with my proven method. This is possible for you, and I'll show you how. You're not alone anymore.

We're in this together.

Hello. Welcome to *The Mom on Purpose Podcast*. You are here with Lara Johnson. That's me, and I have to tell you that today the sun is shining. It has been one of the longest winters we've ever had in Utah. So much crazy snow and I just took time today. I had a, one of my clients cancel this morning and I went outside, and I just cleaned my yard, and it was so good for my soul.

And one of the things I absolutely love about being in my yard is that my mind is totally open. It is like a portal to the other side is the best way to describe it. I think about you and where you are at, and the things that you need, and the things you're struggling with, and how I can better explain it.

I just want you to know that you are on my mind, and as I was out soaking in the sunshine, the thing that kept coming to my mind was the difference between self-care versus self-preservation. And so, as I present this to you, I want you to know that this is like, from my heart to yours, from my garden to yours.

My, my spiritual being wants you to know this message for today. So, I hope it really resonates with you.

So of course, you'll know this episode is for you, is if ...

- You know that you're really good at keeping commitments to other people, but not to yourself.
- You'll also know this episode is for you is if you do self-care when you have time. It's like an afterthought and also, if it feels like it's

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one more thing on your to-do list that you just can't get to, it's with between the kids and the house and marriage and volunteering and community responsibilities and all of that, and it just feels like one more thing you're supposed to do.

- You'll also know this episode is for you if you think that self-care takes time, money, and energy, and either you don't have it, or you don't want to spend it on self-care.
- Or that you think self-care is manis and pedis and taking bubble baths and going out on a girl's night, or getting your hair done.

I've seen this a lot, and I've coached my clients, and these are the biggest obstacles they have to self-care. It sometimes feels like just one more thing that they have to do, or they're supposed to do, instead of something enjoyable, it just becomes something that you feel guilty for not doing, or you're shaming yourself or you're just so overwhelmed with life that you don't actually get the benefit out of the self-care when you actually do it.

So, I wanted to just briefly go over what the history is of self-care. And so, I was curious about this for myself. So, I spent a couple minutes researching it on like, where did self-care come from?

I like a lot of historical fictions, it's not like they're talking about sitting and taking a bubble bath like back in the 1930s. It's like, no, they were outside working on a freaking farm and working so hard. So, like where did this start to come into play?

And so, as I researched it, what I found was in the 1950s was kind of the first idea of self-care, and it was actually a medical idea, which is kind of fascinating to think about. It was once, beyond normal language that you should do things at home in order to better care for your health. Like, that's such a normal thing that we talk about now.

It's funny to think about that being a new concept, and so this idea that came from the medical industry, self-care was that for those that were elderly or those that were very ill, that there were measures you could take at home to be caring for yourself to have a better outcome. Working

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with medical professionals, which is kind of fascinating again to think about, like it's kind of surprising that didn't exist before of, of course you take care of yourself at home, but that was once a new concept, and so at that point it started to evolve and trickle into other areas.

So, what started as a medical idea actually became like a political movement to where then it was taken into the Civil Rights Movement and to the Women's Rights Movement on, you know, my body, my choice kind of thing.

You know, back in the sixties with the Women's Rights Movement, or I guess that's more seventies, and then, you know, the Civil Rights Movement, equality. Everybody has the right to self-care. Which of course I believe in. And so that's where, you know, I'm, I'm sharing the history on this, like, yes, equality, there should be self-care, right?

Like, it's crazy to think that these were new concepts, but that's where it then started to trickle down into like the Civil Rights Movement. So, then there became another shift starting in like the eighties and nineties to where wellness, like holistic wellness kind of came onto scene. This is where, yoga places started to pop up.

This is where we were looking beyond just Western medicine and, you know, pharmaceuticals to what else could we do to improve the quality of our life? And that's where self-care kind of started to evolve a little bit more into just wellness. And then 911 happened, and 911 brought a lot of burnout a lot of PTSD a lot of struggles for people.

So once 911 hit, self-care came back onto scene in like a really big way to where people started to see that self-care was essential. It wasn't just wellness, improving the quality of your life, although that is a very good thing. Self-care was essential to avoid burnout and to avoid what they call "compassion fatigue."

And someday I'll do like a whole different podcast episode because I feel a lot of moms fall into that category of compassion fatigue. So that kind of leads us more to present day. And I love this quote. This is actually from a book of essays by Audre Lorde, back in 1988, and it's called *The Burst of Light*.

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She said that caring for myself is not self-indulgent, it's self-preservation, and it was really cool that I found that quote after I was thinking about all of this this morning as I was working in my yard, that it reality it's not indulgence. In fact, it's essential for our preservation. And when we think about it as a should do, we are forgetting the immense benefits, but also the necessity of it in order for us to survive, not just thrive, but also survive.

So that leads us to, okay, so what do we do about it? Because we are busy moms, we do have a lot of things that we're juggling, and we don't want it to just be on the back burner is something we're going to get to eventually.

So, first, before we talk about the different areas of self-care and how to incorporate that, I wanted to first bring into play a couple of mindset shifts that I use for myself and that I've also used for my clients so that they stop viewing self-care as a “nice to have” and they start viewing it as an “essential for survival.”

You know, that's where the self-preservation comes in. So, the first mindset shift is, this is as important as food. Now, if like, I think about that with myself and, and I fall into this category too, where it's like, okay, the kids are always demanding something. I got to keep going. But you know, I never go, I might miss a meal, I might even miss two meals, but I'll tell you what, I never go a full day not eating, and I for sure don't go two or three or four or five days not eating because I will die, and I know that. Okay? And I know that you know that.

So, you're not going without food either. It's the same thing with self-care. Once you start viewing it as just as important as food. Sure, you may not be going and cooking a huge gourmet meal that takes hours.

You may be getting a protein bar and scarfing that while you're taking care of your kids. That is preservation. Self-care can be like that. We often think of self-care as something long and drawn out and all these different pieces to it when in reality, Self-care can be very small, simple things you do on the go so that you are still getting that preservation for yourself.

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So that's the first mindset shift. The second mindset shift I have for you is there are thousands of ways to fill myself. I wouldn't even, let's even change that. As I say that, that sounds stupid. There are millions of ways. We put ourselves in these funny boxes on like, oh, we have to exercise, and I need to be leaving the house and I need to go and spend money, or I need this hobby and, yeah, those things are great, but you know what? That's not self-care. Those things are so fun, but when I'm talking about self-care, when I'm talking about like self-preservation, there are literally a million ways, just like there are millions of different kinds of food and all of those foods are, are things that can fuel your body.

Same thing with so many millions of ways that you can fuel yourself with, you know, in some kind of self-care, self-preservation. So, I want you just to consider that there is not a handful of ways, there is a million ways that you can fill yourself. The next mindset shift is that, again I bring this back to food because I think it's so important to think about self-care in the same way is that self-care does take time, money, and energy, but that doesn't deter you from doing it.

Like, yes, if you're hungry, you can spend 50 cents on an apple and it's going to preserve you. It's the same thing, I promise you. You don't have to spend a lot of money. But yes, sometimes it will take some money to drive your car somewhere as part of your self-preservation.

It may also take some time or some energy to put on pants to leave the house. And I say that with a joking manner because once in my life, Okay. It has been more than once where I really don't want to wear pants, but I know I need to leave the house. Okay. That's the kind of self-preservation that I'm talking about.

So, then the last one is that self-care or self-preservation gives me time back. This is a huge one for me where when I get going and I'm doing one thing after another and I forget to actually slow down, I forget that. Self-care and self-preservation, they actually give me time back and it, it's an exchange of time where when I'm getting burned out and I'm starting to slow down, or my anxiety's really hard, really high and I'm not being as productive as I want to be, I stop and I think, okay, where do I need to stop and preserve myself?

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And I imagine myself making this exchange with someone on like, okay. Here's my anxiety. Here's all the things I need to do. I'm going to hand them to you for a time and you are going to hand me some time back. I'm going to preserve myself and then when it's time I'm going to pick up right where I left off.

I'm not going to miss a beat because I'm rejuvenated and there is a difference in the way that we, we work and the way that we parent when we are rejuvenated because of the self-preservation things that we have done. That is the exchange of time. That is how you get time back, and I really learned this for myself when I was working, what I call my hobby job.

Long time ago I worked for the city I live in, and I loved it. I did most of it from home, but I went in a couple times a month and I found myself procrastinating just a little bit. Okay. That's a lie. It was a lot of bit, and as I was procrastinating, I had like this set deadline where I had to get things in and I found myself, the more I pushed it off, the more I realized, and I started getting panicky and anxiety-driven that I had to like push through all the way, stay up till two or three in the morning, get this done. I mean, I had had like a week and a half to do it and I was doing it the night before.

Okay. So, like just hear me out on this, like this was a me problem for sure, and I realized at that moment, like my self-preservation was sleep. Like that's really what it boiled down to was I knew that if I stayed up till two or three and pushed through that, it would take me longer to do it. I would be meaner the next day with my kids, and I was just a generally depressed person like sleep is such a huge thing for me, and so I would have to make that exchange at times where I would either let them know that I wasn't going to have it in right on time, or I would set my alarm. I would go to sleep, and I would wake up early and do it, but what happened was instead of taking three hours to finish up my project, it may have taken 20 minutes because I was awake and refreshed and rejuvenated.

So that's where I want you to really start to see that when you are caring for yourself from a preservation type mindset, you are giving yourself time back. It is a wonderful exchange, and it is just one of those

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universal laws that. We don't talk about enough. So now that we've covered some of the mindset shifts, I want to outline a couple guidelines.

When I am talking about self-care, there are three guidelines that I follow and that is: the mind, body, and soul.

So, as I'm moving forward, I want you just to think about this for yourself and your body, your mind, and your soul will speak to you. As I outline each of these areas, I want you to check in with yourself to see where it's best for you to start your self-preservation practices.

So, the first one, the mind, and I find that, I know when I need to do some self-preservation with my mind because it feels very jumbled, very busy, or very noisy. And when it's almost like there's a lot of noise and it feels really, really loud in my head. I'll usually get some kind of headache.

I'll feel like my mind is spinning a lot, but I'm not actually getting to a resolution on some of the problems I have, and it's almost like it's just cluttered and really, really busy. So that's when I know that I need to use a couple of my resources. So, a couple of the ways that I have self-preservation with my mind of course, is coaching.

Coaching is an integral part of my self-preservation, and if anything, I ever teach you resonates with you, reach out to me because I want you to experience the joy that comes from that because it is amazing when we start to clean our mind up.

A couple other ways that I really focus on this is I free write a lot. There are times where I'm like writing and being specific on the thoughts I'm practicing and I'm journaling where I'm like, it's the stuff about my day. And then there are times where I put a pen to paper, and I write until I feel done. It is like a birthing a baby is the best feeling, and if you haven't experienced it, it's because you haven't written long enough or you're judging yourself while you're writing.

I will always write in a notebook where I can tear the pages out and I toss them after rip them up and nobody ever sees them, but I give myself permission to take everything inside of me and put it on a paper,

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get it outside, and I find that that alone is one of those perfect ways to preserve my mind.

The next is body. Our body is amazing. It has like this internal compass for where our brain is like the way that our body feels when we listen to it, when we process our emotions, it is like we tap into it's, I call it like the shortcut, the life hack to our brain. We can bypass a lot of stuff that's happening in our brain.

When we first check in with our body, and at this point, this is where, like for me, there's lots of different ways of processing emotions, but I know if I'm in a self-preservation state, I might be laying on the floor, like looking at the ceiling. I might be listening to some relaxing music. I might be doing, you know, some really deep breaths.

I might be driving my car like in a wakeful meditation type place with children in like, I'm still very conscious, still very aware, but I'm giving my body a chance to be and to breathe into whatever emotion I'm feeling that goes beyond self-care, that is preservation. I can handle so much in my life when I am focusing on preserving my body.

And then the last one is, our soul, and to me, this is one of the more fun ones, but also one of the hardest. Our mind and our body can shut us down, but we can do a lot with our soul offline, and you'll know that this has happened for you because you'll feel really unsettled inside like you're supposed to be somewhere, but you don't know where, or there's like a ringing inside of you.

Those are all invitations, I believe, from God. And those are showing and inviting you to get back into alignment with your purpose. So, spending time there again, that's what I do in my coaching. We use the discover your purpose formula, spending time in prayer and in the scriptures, wherever you worship, going to the mountains, like all of this is where we get to spend some time fueling and preserving our soul.

A couple other ideas that I wanted to also illustrate was that sometimes we use multi-dimensional things in order to reach different areas. Like when you're watching a really good movie and you have a good cry.

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You kind of know going into the movie, you're going to cry, but you kind of want to, right? Like that's a perfect way of like your soul is hungering for this preservation and your body needed some kind of emotional process.

Another thing that I will also say is that when you are following your joy, that is one of the best ways that you can preserve yourself because it takes your mind, your body, and your soul all mixed together in one to where you're making those decisions, you're working in partnership with God, you're processing your emotions and returning to your home base of joy.

This takes a lot of thought work, you know, to work through some of these challenges, but I will tell you that it is hands down the best way to preserve yourself.

So, I want you to spend time. Following your joy. As you do that, that's where you get the mind, body, and soul all coming together in this like perfect trifacta of, of just goodness.

Okay, so that's where I'm going to leave you today. Remember that self-care is not something that is fluffy. Self-care is a way of preserving yourself, and you may choose to take hours and hours where we're going to use the metaphor of cooking again, where you may want to cook a full meal of self-care type things. That is okay, but also recognize that the protein bar option of self-care is also available to you. It's okay to turn your phone on do not disturb and put it in another room for a couple of minutes.

That's the protein bar type version of fueling yourself. Okay? And as you do that, that's where you get so much more preservation.

All right, there you have it. I'll see you next time.

Thank you for listening. Please share, review, and subscribe to this podcast so that together we can live life on purpose.

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