

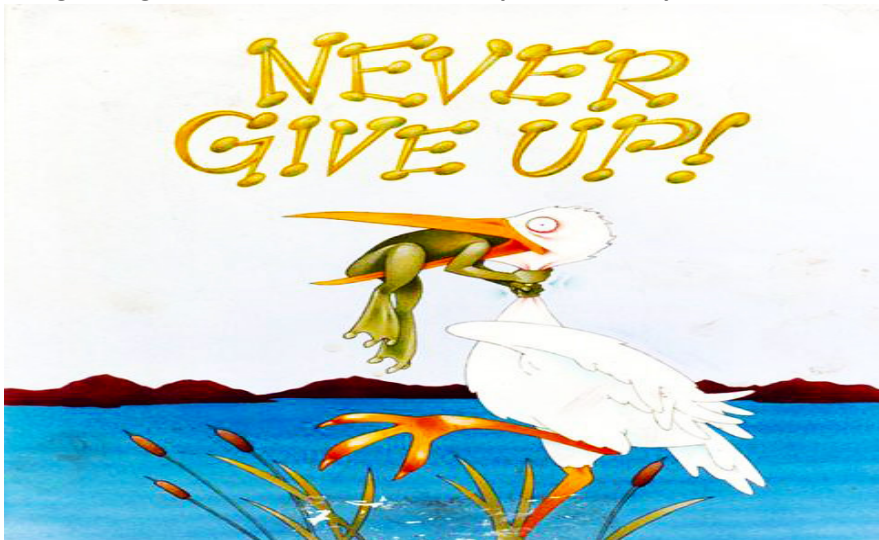
Some thoughts on Parenting during Stressful times!



1. **Limit your personal exposure to negative thoughts and media.** Also limit your child's exposure to negative media, especially if you have a child that struggles with anxiety. (It's important that children aren't watching the news, or other media that will cause them to worry!)

Note: Stress has a way of making people focus in on the bad stuff. Focusing too much on the bad stuff, **will increase the stress that you're feeling**. If you assume the worst, focus on the worst, you're liable to find yourself down on yourself and others. It's sad, but when people are feeling stressed out, they are more likely to provoke negative behavior from others, (even the people they love the most), which makes their life even more stressful. **Look for the good in life...things will get better!**

2. **Things will get better, but we need to be patient and optimistic!** Your children many times will

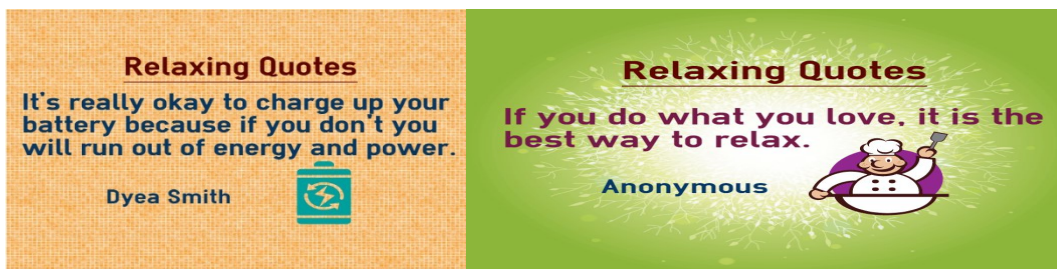


handle stress, the same way they see you handle stress. If you act and talk like everything is going to work out with time, patience and hard work, they will likely adopt your attitude. Try to see the positive about everything. Adopt a **"When life hands you a lemon, make lemonade!"** attitude.

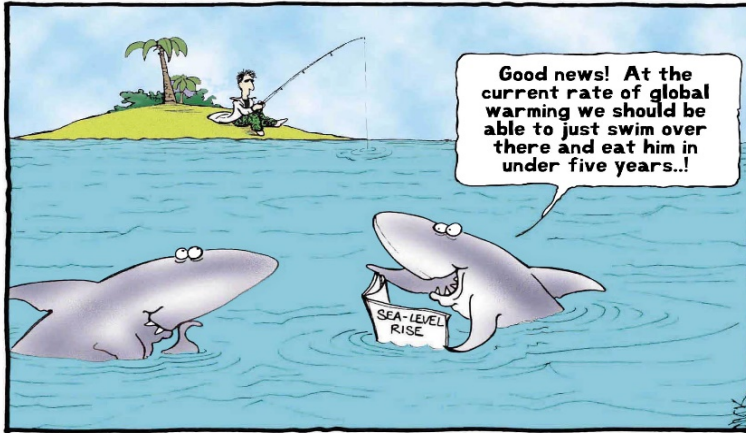
3. **Simplify - Do the most important things first!** (Take care of the dragon, before you free the princess!) Decide what things are the most important and do those things first.



4. **Find some ways to have some time to yourself.** I saw a mom on the news that took a half hour break when she got home from work. The children were not allowed to talk to her during that half hour. She spent that time coloring and doing art work to relax her mind and body. After the half hour was up, she felt renewed and was ready to help the children. Many parents will send their children to their bedroom early so they (the parents) can have some time together. The children don't have to go to sleep at that time, but they must find things to do that are relatively quiet. I have a granddaughter who will sometimes call me (facetime me) during her quiet time at night. At Barnett school we teach the students that it is important to take some time to relax, and "sharpen the saw." ***You'll sleep better and will have more energy to get things done the next day.***



5. **Be a good news junkie.** We can create good moods by downloading positive content into our brains. Some of these positive downloads could be hugging our children, telling them that we love them, telling jokes, smiles, family activities, spending time with a pet and acts of kindness to name a few.



6. ***Have some fun together*** – have your kids find some ***minute -to -win - it*** activities on the internet to do periodically throughout the day. They can also lookup some fun activities that they can do indoors/outdoors on the internet. The children need to take some responsibility to find things to do. *You don't have to do everything for them!*
7. ***Social distancing doesn't mean you can't talk to those important people in your life.*** Knowing that you have someone that you can constructively talk to about your life can help you reduce toxic stress. Phone calls, face time and zoom can all be used for this purpose.
8. ***Exercise can protect the body from the effects of physical and psychological stress.*** It can boost your mood and lower anxiety levels. In my neighborhood I have seen people going for walks, and children playing in their own yards. (making sure to follow social distancing guidelines)
9. ***Take some time to feel grateful for the many blessings that we all have.*** Even though life is tough, there is a lot to be grateful for!

