



# ARE YOU HEADED FOR BURNOUT?

## CHECK YOUR INPUT/OUTPUT BALANCE

As humans, we are input / output systems. We need energy inputs to be able to output at our best. It's so easy to fall into the parenting trap of doing so much for others that you neglect yourself. While we feel we are doing this for our families, it can actually be a disservice to our kids. As they watch you they are learning how to be in the world. Are you showing them how to live a happy balanced life?

Here's a simple way to check your balance and make sure you aren't headed for burnout!

1

As you go through your day, write down everything you do (even the small stuff like showering, getting the kids out the door etc.). You may want to do this for 2 or 3 days.

2

Give each item a score between plus 2 and minus 2. Plus 2 is an activity that gave you lots of energy, minus 2 was very draining, 0 is neutral.

3

Check your balance. Are most of your activities draining your energy or recharging you? It's sometimes surprising to see where our energy is going in a day.

4

Although a weekly day at the spa would be a nice solution to this problem, as parents this is probably not going to happen. Step 4 however is very doable. Change some outputs to inputs.

### STEP 4

## CHANGING OUTPUTS TO INPUTS

After working with parents for many years, I have realized that big changes aren't always necessary or possible. Sometimes stopping parenting burnout is about paying attention and turning some of our outputs into inputs. Pick out a few of your energy drains come up with a plan to make them energy boosters or at least neutral. Here are a few examples of changes I made after my last check in:

1

After noticing the time I spend driving around is very draining for me, I now intentionally choose music I love or listen to a podcast to make that time more of an input.

2

Meals for me can be an input or output depending on what else I'm doing. I now stop work/Facebook and all technology and eat mindfully as often as possible

3

The last 10 minutes of getting the kids out the door in the morning is a struggle that sometimes leaves me wanting to crawl back into bed. To help this we implemented a rule of "no free time in the morning until all mandatory tasks are done". When the kids are ready and school bags are prepped and at the door, then they are free to read and play until we leave.

*End result? Less struggle, more recharge time, and a better balanced day.*