



MANY PARENTS MAKE their children's happiness their top priority. But the secret to nurturing a rich relationship with your child actually lies within you. Take care of your own emotional health and the rest will follow. After all, a happy parent means a happy family, and a happy child! Here's how:

Happy Parents, Happy Children

#1 MAKE A COMMITMENT – TO YOURSELF

Promise yourself to take care of yourself so you can become the patient, kind, encouraging parent your child deserves. Take stock of your current life, and make sustainable changes to your lifestyle so that you are calmer, healthier and happier.



#2 TAKE TIME OUT

There is always pressure to do more at work. But maintaining a work-life balance will help you find enough time for yourself and for the family. "Start work on time and leave on time," advises Mrs Sarojini Padmanathan, a Council member for Families for Life and a Health Sciences Authority director.

Leave your work worries in the office – where they



The key to having a better relationship with your family is to first take care of yourself.

belong. First, this enables you to be fully present for your child at home, which in turn will improve your relationship with him or her. Second, it shows that you can manage your own responsibilities within a given schedule, and this is a way of teaching your child how to manage his time.

#3 HEALTHY = HAPPY

Make your own physical health a priority. Eat well, find the time to incorporate a little daily exercise, and get enough rest when you are ill. "Illness affects mood and influences the way you react to the little irritations that happen around the home," says Mrs Sarojini.



KEEP THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN

If you're upset, talk to your spouse about what is bothering you and don't wall yourself off from your family. Besides, having your spouse support you by listening

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and offering advice, models good coping skills for your children. "In fact, this is a positive way of helping them to help you," says Mrs Sarojini.

#5 GROW TOGETHER, NOT APART

"Grow with your children. Don't talk down to them," suggests mother and lawyer Mrs Claire Nazar, who is also a Council member with Families for Life. "Learn to talk to them, using their lingo. Create opportunities where they can develop and explore new hobbies, sports or interests together with you."

#6 CULTIVATE VALUES

Here's another way in which leading by example can help. "Be intentional about investing life skills and character values with age-appropriate content during your child's growing up years, and you will be rewarded with mature and socially responsible adults," adds Mrs Nazar. ♥



👉 For other tips and advice on family and parenting, you can visit Families for Life at www.familiesforlife.sg