

The Ten Commandments for Parents of Children with Special Needs

1. Take one day at a time, and take that day positively. You don't have control over the future, but you do have control over today.
2. Never underestimate your child's potential. Allow him/her, encourage him/her, expect him/her to develop to the best of his/her abilities.
3. Find and allow positive mentors: parents and professionals who can share with you their experience, advice, and support.
4. Provide and be involved with the most appropriate educational and learning environments for your child from infancy on.
5. Keep in mind the feelings and needs of your spouse and your other children. Remind them that this child does not get more of your love just because s/he gets more of your time.
6. Answer only to your conscience; then you'll be able to answer to your child. You need not justify your actions to your friends or the public.
7. Be honest with your feelings. You can't be a super-parent 24 hours a day. Allow yourself jealousy, anger, pity, frustration, and depression in small amounts whenever necessary.
8. Be kind to yourself. Don't focus continually on what needs to be done. Remember to look at what you have accomplished.
9. Do stop and smell the roses. Take advantage of the fact that you have gained a special appreciation for the little miracles in life that others take for granted.
10. Keep and use a sense of humor. Cracking up with laughter can keep you from cracking up from stress.

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Remember: "What we give others is what we need ourselves."

- Gerald Jampolsky