

Maintaining Yourself- May 10, 2026

Teachers /Directors /Administrators whatever we call ourselves we all want to do what is best for the child and family, I feel that goes without saying.

So, are you a recent graduate or have you been in Montessori for a while?

Do you prioritise self-care?

Most of us have family, extended family and school responsibilities! What are some of the strategies you use to maintain your enthusiasm for your work?

Do we do inclusion right/correctly? (I am sure you ask yourself this question regularly, and of course there is no right or wrong answer.)

How do you prepare yourself for supporting your classroom for inclusion? Do we have enough mental space or physical time to research and prepare for inclusion?

We are all (sons or daughters, partners, parents, teachers or educators, administration teams) people in professions that require us to give more than 100% of ourselves.

I think you are probably more than one of those categories I mentioned, maybe you have more responsibilities than I have outlined. I am a daughter, a mother and a retired teacher. I have had over my life's journey many more roles and have not always done them justice, I think on reflection. Not a criticism, more a thought about what could I have done differently?

One thing I have learned from all my experiences is that taking time out for "me" (yourself) is often very hard, however I am sure you would agree that everyone around you is better off for that time out/off. It doesn't have to be a long time away/separation, it can be a matter of moments, minutes, hours, days and very rarely weeks. Life happens and these moments shouldn't be dismissed or discouraged.

So, what have I done over the years?

- I have an interest in the arts, sometimes I dabble in drawing, taking a sketch book to a park or somewhere away from everyone and sketch for a little while. I will make time to go to an exhibition or a gallery just to admire others' work, and be inspired for an activity for the classroom. Have you looked at some of the galleries around the world, they have great



teacher resources. <https://www.tate.org.uk/schools> ; <https://www.artic.edu/tools-for-teaching-learning> ; <https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/learn/learning-resources/> ; <https://www.qagoma.qld.gov.au/learn/education-resources/> These are but a few galleries that have online resources, I'm sure you could find more possibly local to you.

- Of course, going for a walk and finding leaves/natural objects to inspire the children with art activities is a good way to also combine “work and pleasure”.
<https://www.botanicgardens.org.au/discover-and-learn/curious-kids> ;
<https://www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk/schools-learning/latest-school-resources/> ;
<https://www.usbg.gov/kids-and-families> ; <https://www.usbg.gov/schools-families/field-trips-resources>
- Attending live performances - be it music or theatre - can also stimulate you and then it can flow onto your classroom - drama activities or sharing the music that you have heard.
- Reading a book and nourishing yourself is also valuable, take time to see what it is that helps you re-centre yourself.

Think about what it is that gives you joy, to be able to go back to the classroom and share that excitement. We are fortunate to have many online resources to access, however be careful not to over plan and overwhelm yourself - just because they are there.

As I mentioned, I have recently retired and I now realize that I was dealing with way more stress in my roles as Early Childhood Director and then Learning Support Director than was healthy for me. Please don't misunderstand and take this blog as being critical or judgemental at all. Those who know me, know I am as passionate as anyone else when it comes to inclusion, I am just aware that it can take its toll on us personally too. Be gentle with yourself and remember, we are all human and it is okay to say, “I need a break.”



Philippa