

Parent Capacity Check

WHAT YOU NEED, TOO · SOPHIA KUEI

Before you search for another parenting strategy, check the condition of the person who is expected to use it.

Six Things That Affect Capacity

1 • Sleep Hours slept the last one or two nights? Interrupted? Body settled?	2 • Sensory Load Noise, lights, clutter, touching, competing sounds?
3 • Body Needs Hunger, thirst, pain, illness, medication timing?	4 • Emotional Load Recent conflict, criticism, worry, or unresolved stress?
5 • Time Pressure Rushed schedule, too many transitions, no buffer?	6 • Recovery Have you had any real pause, quiet, or support today?

Three Capacity Levels

ENOUGH	REDUCED	VERY LOW
You can think about the need, offer choices, explain a boundary, listen.	Patience is shorter. Shorten words, reduce demands, ask for a handoff.	Close to shouting or shutting down. Focus on safety, distance, basic care.

THE CAPACITY QUESTION

“Do I need a new parenting strategy, or do I need support for my current capacity?”

My Low-Capacity Plan

Choose three early signs that tell you capacity is falling. Write one first action beside each.

Early Sign	My First Action
I start repeating the same sentence	Give one short instruction and pause
Every sound feels too loud	Turn off background noise and step away
I feel trapped by ordinary questions	Ask another adult for a 20-minute handoff

Low-Capacity Emergency Card

WHAT YOU NEED, TOO · KEEP THIS VISIBLE

WHEN A FAMILIAR PROBLEM SUDDENLY FEELS UNBEARABLE, ASK

“Do I need a new strategy, or do I need support for my capacity?”

What to Do at Each Level

Enough Capacity

You can work with the underlying need.

Offer choices · Explain a boundary · Listen · Adjust a strategy

Reduced Capacity

Lower the demands on yourself and the situation.

Fewer words · Quieter space · Postpone teaching · Ask for a handoff

Very Low Capacity

Focus only on safety and basic care.

Create distance · Ask someone to step in · Water, food, quiet · Deeper talk later

Choose One From Each Group

One Body Action

- Drink water
- Eat something
- Sit down or change position
- Close your eyes for 5 min
- Use your pain-care routine

One Load Reduction

- Turn off background noise
- Move to a quieter room
- Postpone non-urgent talk
- Give one instruction only
- Remove one task from schedule

One Support Action

- Text another adult
- Ask for a short handoff
- Request a 20-minute break
- Ask someone to bring food
- Tell a trusted person you are low

My Early Warning Signs

Write the two or three signals that tell you capacity is dropping. Use them before the situation peaks.

THE QUESTION TO CARRY FORWARD

“What would make the next ten minutes easier to carry?”