

## Socializing 10: Working as a Single Parent

### Practice 1 | Useful Expressions

---

**Directions:** Listen and repeat.

- **toddler** - a young child, usually one between the ages of one and two and a half
- **toddle** - to walk with short, unsteady steps
- **pass away** - to die (used to avoid saying directly that someone has died)
- **cope with something** - to deal with something, usually something difficult
- **run a fever** - to have high body temperature caused by an illness.
- **an ounce of something** - very little of something (1 ounce = 28.3 grams)
- **catch up on something** - to do whatever you don't have time to do
- **take some time off** - to take time off from work; to stop working temporarily
- **ask some time off** - to ask to take time off from work, to ask to stop working temporarily
- **nanny** - a woman whose job is to take care of young children
- **literally** - used to emphasize the truth of something that may seem surprising

## Practice 2 | Dialogue

---

**Directions:** Read the dialogue aloud with your teacher.

*Jessica has been working as a single mom for five months, since her husband **passed away**.  
Even after five months she is finding it hard to **cope with** the situation*

**Christine** : Hi, Jessica. How are you? You look a bit pale.

**Jessica** : Hey, Christine. I suppose I do. Jackie kept me up all night. She was **running a fever**.

**Christine** : Oh, I see. No wonder you look so terrible. Is she better now?

**Jessica** : The fever did go down a bit towards morning. I barely got **an ounce of sleep**.

**Christine** : But other than that, how are you holding on, having to deal with work and Jackie all by yourself?

**Jessica** : It's not easy, that's for sure. I am exhausted. When Richard was around, we could alternate in taking care of Jackie. That way we at least each had time to **catch up on** our sleep. Now, I always have to be the one being there for Jackie.

**Christine** : Maybe you should ask for a bit of time off so you can find a suitable **nanny**.

**Jessica** : I suppose I could do that. I **literally** can't take much more of this.

**Christine** : I could also recommend someone. My sister in law hired her and she was very pleased by the way she handled her twins. She also said the kids loved her.

**Jessica** : I would really appreciate it if you could give me her number.

**Christine** : No problem, Jessica. I can see you really need the help. Well, I have to get back to my desk. See you later.

**Jessica** : Bye.

**Check your understanding:** Answer the following questions.

1. Why is Jessica so tired and pale?
2. How did Christine offer to help?
3. Why is Jessica a single mom now?
4. What is the name of Jessica's late husband?

## Practice 3 | Role-Play

---

**Directions:** Have a role-play with your teacher in the following situation.

### Situation

You are a single mother/father working at a firm and have a **toddler** you also have to take care of. You are consulting your co-worker about your situation over lunch.

### Expressions:

- cope with something
- ounce of something (sleep, time off, etc.)
- literally
- show signs of exhaustion
- need to balance everything out

## Practice 4 | Discussion

---

**Directions:** Discuss these topics and exchange thoughts with your teacher.

1. Are you or do you know anyone who is a single parent?
2. Do you think it is hard being a single parent? Why?
3. Do you think children raised by a single parent grow in the same way as children raised by both parents?
4. What do you think is the biggest challenge in being a single working parent?
5. Do you think the government should support single parents? If so, how should they do it?