

BeliefNet

Hacks For Surviving Motherhood

How to recharge and make room for what matters most.

By Christine Knapp



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We all know that motherhood is an amazing, rewarding and wonderful experience. As soon as we see our child's face, tiny nose, and big, beautiful eyes, our hearts are melted forever. It is such an overwhelming and special time in our lives, yet we know that motherhood can be really, really tough, too.

Things today seem to be moving at such a fast pace that sometimes it's hard to slow down and enjoy the journey. Between dance lessons, dinners, soccer practices, and shuffling the kids to and from friends' houses, school, birthday parties and more, we sometimes lose ourselves a little bit in the busyness of everyday life. We need to give a shout out to the special needs moms as well for all of the additional therapies, doctor appointments and trips to the hospital that these mothers are enduring on top of a typical day. It's enough to leave anyone exhausted, forgetful, and constantly trying to keep up.

Here are some tips to hopefully help make mommyhood a little easier.

Simplify everything.

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Try to create some breathing room in your life that isn't taken up by all of the miscellaneous tasks and overwhelming to-do lists. You'll be amazed that you can actually de-clutter your life in a short amount of time. Put bills on autopay. Schedule automatic delivery of items if you find yourself needing the same things every month (diapers, paper towels, shampoo, etc). Have a yard sale and get rid of the items sitting in your garage that you no longer need. If you have the means, hire someone to handle things that take up large portions of time, like mowing the grass (especially if you have a big yard!) or cleaning your house. It might not seem like a lot, but these little things add up to large chunks of time that you can get back in your life by just simplifying. Then, after the clutter is cleared, you'll have some extra space and room to organize.

Organize the chaos.

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Sometimes the house is a mess or your home office looks like a hurricane blew through it because there has been no organization established. When the toys are overflowing in the playroom and we can't find what we're looking for because of the chaos, it's not because we're doing anything wrong. How many times have you said "Honey, do you know where xyz is?" Your local Target, Ikea or other home goods store may have some shelving, bins, or storage solutions that are perfect for your living space and provide a proper place for items to live. As a bonus for organizing, everyone in your house will know where to put items when they are not in use. It's also helpful to create a little space to put your keys, phones, and mail when you walk in the door so they're not strewn about the house and eventually lost forever.

Keep a schedule.

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Planners, family calendars and/or chalkboards are great places to keep schedules for the week so everyone can see it at a glance (and there are even family scheduling apps now available that keep the plans for the week mobile and easily accessible). Have a small "family meet-up" on Sunday evenings to review plans for the week and get everyone on the same page.

Pray in a quiet space.

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The never-ending to-do list just gets longer, and all the things that we need to do to fill our soul go by the wayside. It inevitably happens to all of us at some point or another. Try to carve out a few minutes of your day to sit in your favorite chair in the corner of the living room with a cup of coffee and breathe in a little Jesus. Subscribe to a daily [email that sends inspiration](#), or spend a few minutes listening to a podcast which offers motivational speakers to guide your heart. Many churches now offer sermons from the previous week online for viewing, either in audio or video. A good old-fashioned Bible also does the trick. Just find a time in your day to sit, be still and pray.

Give yourself a little grace.

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We're constantly bombarded by perfect messages and perfect houses and perfect families these days, and we forget we can't achieve perfection - only God can do that. Stop trying to achieve something that isn't even achievable! If you miss that super-important lunch at your child's school and mommy guilt is eating at you because you had to work a double-shift to support your family, give yourself a little grace. It is okay! You are doing the best you can, and sometimes, take-out is just fine for dinner! Did you finally go out and splurge on a new outfit, only to sit in your child's leftover lunch by accident at the kitchen table? It is ok! We're all human, and we all make mistakes. Try to laugh it off and give yourself a break.

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Recharge your batteries.

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The old saying "you can't pour from an empty well" rings true with moms today. "Self-care" is becoming a phrase that we're hearing more and more in

our society, and there is good reason for it. There's only so much that can be accomplished in one day, so take a step back. Breathe. Rejuvenate. Be selfish for a change. Call your babysitter, grab a girlfriend and a mimosa, and just kick back every once in a while. Laugh. Dance. Pursue that hobby you've been dreaming about. You matter too, and even though you're the best mama there is, it's ok to recharge your batteries!

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These simple ideas will help you better organize your life, simplify, and recharge to free up time for those things that really matter - your children. So take them out to eat ice cream for dinner, stay up past their bedtime to snuggle to watch their favorite movie, or take that third trip to the park in one day. Those are the moments that truly count. Your children made you a mama, and they are the ultimate blessing.

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