

Mommy Burnout – 6 Ways To Lose It

What is Mommy burnout? How can you recognize the signs of burnout in yourself, and more importantly, what can you do to address it when you're feeling it?

These were some of the questions my friend Jennifer Houck of <http://www.ILoveBeingAMom.com> and I discussed recently. We got feedback from other Moms and talked about our own experiences with burnout. Our hope is that sharing our stories and the tips at the end of the report would help other Moms in the most challenging job there ever was, Motherhood!

Carrie Lauth: You are back with Carrie at Natural Moms Talk Radio. I am joined this week by Jen Houck. Hey, Jen.

Jennifer Houck: Hi, how are you?

Carrie Lauth: Good. Tonight, we are going to talk about attachment parenting burnout. Do you think this is a big problem in the attachment parenting community?

Jennifer Houck: Carrie, it can possibly be because a lot of parents... we totally keep to ourselves and do not let other people know that we do get burned out. It is good to talk about that I think with other people. Moms know that this is a real thing.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah, I agree. I have never thought about that, that we may not always share our feelings because we may not have the same support network.

Jennifer Houck: Right.

Carrie Lauth: That is part of the problem I think, but let me tell you why I wanted to talk about this, this week on the show. First of all, I wanted to have you on the show because I know that attachment parenting is something that is important to you. You even have a site with information about attachment parenting.

I was with a group of moms the other week and one of the moms, she had a child. He is almost two. He is about 22 months old. The subject came up about doing things for yourself as a mom. I just had this feeling about this woman. I just had a feeling that she was stressed and so, I heard her talking about burnout.

I told her that I had just read this book that challenges you as a parent to sit down and make a list of things that you love to do. I sat down and my mind just went blank. I thought, "This is a problem" because I love my life, but I could not think of anything that I did *just for me* that was not part of my like roles. After reading the book I thought, "Well, I need to make some changes."

This mom asked me about that... she just jumped around and she was like, "Well, what did you do?" I said, "Well, one thing that I did was I joined a gym." She said, "Really?" She said, "I did too and I've taken a couple of yoga classes" and she said, "*I cried for the entire hour both times.*"

When she said that I knew automatically that why she was crying was *not because of being away from her son for that hour*, but because of **the release**.

When I asked her about that, she just started to well up and then I started to cry! It was like, "Oh, man!" The female hormones in there... I just felt for her. It was a cool moment, but **I do not think that she wanted to give herself permission to experience burnout**.

I think that is an issue probably for all moms, but especially in attachment parenting because I think, like you said, we do not have always the support network that we may have, otherwise, because we might feel that we are so different than the people around us that *we might not reach out*.

Secondly, we do not always want people to think that we are bringing it on ourselves because of the way we parent. You think that is part of it too?

Jennifer Houck: I do not think all these parents are planning anything because -- my parents are not big on my style of parenting and I do not want to have them criticizing me.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: "Well, if you want to get a break...let us watch the girls," but I just do not want to hear it and I do not care.

Carrie Lauth: Right. Yeah. It is interesting because when I was sitting here thinking about the ways that you can see the signs of burnout on yourself and how you can prevent it, I thought if we are ever in doubt, we are not really selling the idea of attachment parenting.

If you are sitting with a pregnant friend of yours and she does not have children yet and you are saying, "Oh, are you planning on breastfeeding your baby?"

If she looks at you and she sees like major bags under your eyes and you have not washed your hair in a week, you are totally stressed-out looking, she is going to think, "If that is what it is going to look like, you can forget it!"

Jennifer Houck: I did not think about that.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah. I got some great feedback from some of our listeners. I am going to share some of the things that they have said with me about **what a mom can do to prevent burnout** in her life like even from the time her little one is young.

Jennifer Houck: I do know what I have done and what helps me is: When my husband comes home sometimes he will take the girls for maybe an hour and I will just go up to the bathtub or something and soak for that hour just to get away for just a little bit. By the time I come back down the stairs, it just feels like some kind of refreshment over me.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: Because then I can get right back at it.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: Sometimes he will watch the girls while I run to the grocery store like that. I know that it is just going to the grocery store, but still it gives you another refreshment, to rejuvenate before you get back home.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah, it is funny how if you are accustomed to always doing your shopping with little ones, how it can be fun to do it alone.

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: If you get to go without them. I know my sister -- she has four boys and they're just like stair steps. She would go shopping late at night when they were in bed and my parents and I -- this was before I had kids of my own, we used to chide her about it like, "Don't you know how dangerous that is for you to be going out shopping at night?" She was like, "Are you kidding? It's my lifeline. I take my time. I've got two buggies and I get what I want. No distractions." That is funny how can that be a fun thing to do on your own.

Jennifer Houck: Then some moms hate to go the grocery store. If I can get by myself for one day out of a month, oh boy, I would probably enjoy every minute of it.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah. I used to treat myself to a coffee because that was just like my break, going grocery shopping and I would get a latte or something, treat myself to an expensive, fancy drink.

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: Well, I was thinking a lot and have been reading a lot lately about **boundaries**. It occurred to me that I do not think that attachment parents (and Moms in general) are particularly good at boundaries.

I do not mean that in terms of just setting limits with your children. That is kind of the first thing that comes to our mind when we think about boundaries, but to me **boundaries are more about setting a limit with yourself**. Boundaries are just kind of a law of the universe like gravity is a boundary. You can try to go past that boundary and you are going to get injured.

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: There is going to be pain if you push up against a natural boundary.

There is going to be pain for the people involved. Like, you have to eat and you have to drink water. Those are not things that you can escape from. It is just a natural, built in boundary of life.

I think that as *moms taking care of ourselves is something that we also need*, but sometimes we do not set good boundaries with ourselves. Like this mom that I was commiserating with a couple of weeks ago, her son is almost two and she is still not getting any sleep at night. She looked exhausted, but she was just talking about how she does not get even two or three hours of sleep at night, uninterrupted. Some of the other moms that were around were like, "It is okay for you to set limits with your child. He is not two weeks old."

Jennifer Houck: Right.

Carrie Lauth: There is a big difference for him. He can understand limits. He can understand that mommy has needs as well because he was still nursing at night. He was waking her up very frequently and having a two year old in your bed can mean more interrupted sleep for you, but if he is still waking up like a newborn baby would, it is okay to set limits there.

Jennifer Houck: Yeah and Lindsey, she did not sleep a lot until she was about 19 months old I guess. She was waking up about every two hours to nurse and finally one night it just hit me. I know she does not need the nutrition now, so I am just going to have to rock her or something when she wakes up, but it took me a long time like the woman that you were explaining to right from out of that I guess. I probably get a lot burned out because during the day, I have a 3-year-old that is enough to fall and here, I am trying to see stuff like her too with lack of sleep. It is definitely something I guess hard to come to grip with, but it is true like you said. You do need to set boundaries for you and your child --

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: I get that.

Carrie Lauth: Well, I kind of forgot my thought... I do that a lot! What was I going to say about boundaries?

Oh, you know that *there is a difference between hurting and harming*? I think parents who are attracted to attachment parenting, that philosophy, they want so badly to not harm their children with bad parenting. Maybe they have seen bad parenting or have been the child of bad parenting or maybe they had really good parenting and they are trying to emulate that with their own kids.

We want so badly to do the best for our children and not to harm them, but we sometimes forget the difference between hurting and harming. *Sometimes when you hurt ego or you disappoint them or whatever, you are not doing them any harm,*

but they might be harming you by not appreciating that you are a separate person and that you have needs of your own.

Jennifer Houck: Yeah. My husband has to remind me that all the time that, "They are still going to love you remember," but I just have a hard time with that, that I will always want to put their needs first. I want to make sure that I am doing everything that they want me to do and sometimes I have to do things, keep on doing things.

It just leads to burnout like you said if you do not clear it until you sit down and unlearn that. You may have to do it a different way now. Like you said, we do not have a support system in place like that and no one can help do that, it is hard.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah. Well, it is comforting to see groups popping up like Attachment Parenting International and Holistic Moms Network and even La Leche League, they are a breastfeeding group, but most of the women that attend La Leche League meetings are advocates of attachment parenting. I mean certainly the founders were because they promote co-sleeping and a gentle discipline style. That can be another source of people, but that is a good point.

We have to have support for our parenting style. *We have to have people even outside of our family who can support us and be a safe place to express our feelings.* Like you said, you do not always want to express your feelings to someone who may say, "I told you so or well, you need to change or whatever."

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: You need to be able to express your feelings in a safe place. I got this really great letter from [Julie Nathanielsz](#) who was actually a guest several weeks ago on the show.

She is a life coach and she talked about with her daughter, Angelica, how she was a couple of months old. She said that she walked out into the garden and she felt like she was going to burst into a million little pieces because she just wanted to have a few minutes to herself and her mom was holding the baby and then the baby starts crying. **The thing that she figured out was that she was not a failure when she felt that way.** *That it was okay to feel that way.*

Jennifer Houck: The big thing is you live with those feelings from time to time and overwhelm it. You need to get away. Do not think those are bad feelings and that you are going to be a bad mom just because of that.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: It actually makes you even a better mom. You notice the things like that. I definitely agree with you. It does not make you a bad mom.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah. Well, we are good at being empathetic with your children.

Jennifer Houck: Right.

Carrie Lauth: We are disciplining our children and we end up with, "Oh, I know it's so hard when you can't get what you want. I know, I hate it when I don't get what I want too."

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: **We forget to be empathetic with ourselves and we want to feel guilty about stuff or we want to beat ourselves up** when we lose it or whatever, but *we do not shame our children that way and we do should not shame ourselves. It is not helpful.*

Well, Julie had a couple of tips here that she said works for her. She said that she took a movement class like yoga or something like that. I think **exercise**, period, is very important because not only does it help *you work out stress and powerful emotions*, but it **gives you more energy**.

I was just reading an article on the Sunday paper about women and fatigue. It said that one of the symptoms of fatigue is actually getting worked up about small things. I never really thought about that because you would think that like if you are really tired, that you are not going to react to stuff, but if you are reacting to stuff and you are *getting really stressed out and just blowing up, it can be a sign that you are not getting enough sleep*.

Jennifer Houck: Wow. I did not know that.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah. She said **spending time with nature** by herself is helpful. I think being outside is a great thing like if you can spend some time outside with your children every single day, it seems to help them do so much better and it helps me feel better. Have you found that?

Jennifer Houck: Definitely. Luckily, my girls love to walk or just go on a nature walk. We will go down the road, looking at the leaves there, different rocks or something. They love that and it just helps us all I think. It gets us out of the house a little bit and it gets us talking and I just love them to laugh.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: Then when you come back in, they are like, "Oh!" Well, that is definitely a good day.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah. I think in a lot of ways it is powerful because number one, just being with nature it is what we are designed to be, outside.

Jennifer Houck: Right.

Carrie Lauth: We are not really meant to be in these little boxes in the dark. *The sunlight actually can shift your mood around and can help you sleep better* and stuff and with the kids, it seems like it helps them to kind of organize

themselves especially if you have a child that is a bit on the hyper or demanding side.

Jennifer Houck: Yes. It helps them unwind. I think when we go outside too it especially helps my girls nap better.

Carrie Lauth: Oh yeah.

Jennifer Houck: If we are inside all day, they do not want to nap. If they want to cry too, this seems like it helps with the unwinding or the relaxation time.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah. That is so true. Yeah. Julie mentioned **spending time one on one with a good friend**. We talked about that a little bit. Are you able to do that? To me that is very difficult to find the time.

Jennifer Houck: I think now in this area -- we have just moved to this area and there are a lot more people. Most of the area is 50% home schooled. I can just see the parents when I am out and about there. You can tell there are more with my parenting style. I am hoping now that I am in this area that I can relate to more people, but usually I have spent no one on one time with friends.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah. I have been so bad about not focusing enough energy on trying to reach out to friends, but that is so important because *women need each other*.

I am always talking about how in this country -- well, I guess all of like **industrialized society sections women off, and it is not that way in most places in the world**. Women are all together. They do their work together. They take care of their children together. They cook together. They give birth together. They do all that stuff not in a *nuclear-style family situation*. *I think that is such a recipe for depression and burnout issues and stress*.

Jennifer Houck: It is pretty sad when all of your friends that you do spend most of the time with are online virtually.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: It does help, but I cannot do that some days.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: Like if I am having a bad day, I can get on IM or something, and IM Nell. I talk to her a lot everyday and if this helps venting to someone about your day then I guess get it off your chest and sort of like start anew the next day.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah and that is convenient that we have that.

Jennifer Houck: Right.

Carrie Lauth: It is hard to get together sometimes because everybody is so busy. Sometimes I call up a friend and it is like it takes us three weeks to work our schedules out so that we can get together.

Jennifer Houck: Yeah. Everyone has busy schedules. Your child having soccer or their child having baseball.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah, all the activities.

Jennifer Houck: Right.

Carrie Lauth: That brings me to another good point because this is something that Julie mentioned. She said that one of the things that helped her is to *just hang out with her daughter* like just go somewhere and take the morning and just hang out and do not try to do anything else.

Just focus on her and just have a good time. I remember when my son was just a toddler, my first, and he was an intense kid, but sometimes when I was feeling really burned out, I would just *stop everything that I was doing and just get on the floor and play*. I realized that it was not really him that was making me feel stressed. It was all the other stuff. Have you ever found that?

Jennifer Houck: Definitely. I know during the day if I feel like I am getting sort of short with the girls then I will say, "Okay, it's time to get in the van. We're going to go to the store or something just to walk in the store" because I can just feel myself tense up and I do not want to get like that with my girls.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: It is not my girls it is this other stuff, this piddly stuff.

Carrie Lauth: Right. Yeah. I thought that was such a good point. Well, you mentioned like you feel yourself getting tensed. **What do you think some of the signs and symptoms are?** Like how would a mom know if she was reaching that point or she was going to lose it? What kind of things do you feel when you are getting burned out?

Jennifer Houck: If your child is -- like they're both picking at each other, sometimes you can tolerate it, but if this gets on your last nerve and you cannot tolerate it no more and you just feel yourself getting short. It is just piddly stuff like that or even if they are filling a bottle in the house or something, days like that you can usually tolerate it, but if you feel yourself getting short and you're just going to go like, "Grr! Don't do that any more," but I think I can just feel my blood pressure is going to blow or something or like Madison, I will say something like, "Madison, you need to stop whining now. This is not a good time to be whining anymore." She said, "Mommy, I'm not whining. I'm crying."

Carrie Lauth: That is cute.

Jennifer Houck: It is just certain things like that. I do not know if they said she wails like that or not.

Carrie Lauth: Are you kidding? Oh boy. It is so funny to me how -- oh goodness. It is funny to me how I can see it so clearly that most of the time when they are doing that, it is because they are trying to get my attention. I think even us; grown-ups will do that sometimes like have you ever picked a fight with your husband just because you are feeling kind of neglected or something? You do not even realize it at that time, but later on you are like, "Man! I was totally getting worked up over nothing just because I felt lonely."

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: It is so funny, but -- yeah, they totally do that. This other mom mentioned that **spending a lot of time snuggling and cuddling and just getting physical with your kids** can help if you are feeling that you are about to snap. I think that is really true because anytime you are overreacting to things, it is like you are not really looking at your child. You might be going around the house, hollering about stuff. You are not really looking them in the eyes and you are not touching them. *It is nearly impossible to be upset with someone when you are looking at them in the eye.* Like if you want to argue with somebody, you are not looking at them in the eye.

Jennifer Houck: Right.

Carrie Lauth: Never. I think it is impossible because it is intense and that is kind of intimate to look someone in the eye or to touch them so that is important. You have such an advantage when you are breastfeeding because you have that oxytocin flowing in your veins. It is funny because I have talked to moms who weaned abruptly and they were just wiggling out. Emotionally, their emotions are just all over the place and they were snapping at their husbands and snapping at their kids. This one mom, I asked her. I said, "Well, have you ever thought about that maybe because you weaned your daughter that abruptly that is why you are feeling that way?" She was like, "Oh, my gosh. I didn't even think about that." She was like, "You're right! It started just exactly when I weaned her." When your body abruptly stops that flow of oxytocin, it is like "Whoa! Withdrawal."

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: It really does help you cope and be relaxed. It is like nature's little parting gift.

Jennifer Houck: I definitely agree with that because -- and this was sort of when I was uneducated because if I were to know now what I know then, I would have never weaned Madison. Madison was 14 months old when I got pregnant with Lindsey so I thought, "Well, I gotta wean Madison. I can't breastfeed her while I'm pregnant" and I hate that because I wish I would have known that I didn't have to stop. I did not even give her notice or anything. It really stressed us both out. I could tell that I was really short with my husband and so with Lindsey when I did start doing it with her I spent over like two months time. It was so much easier this

time than last time. I think it is like your body is so shocked because you just got cut off the breastfeeding that quick and your body is so used to doing that everyday and then you just cut it out.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: It is like a shock to the system.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah. Yeah, it really is. What else? What else can help or help you identify burnout? I know for me sometimes, it feels like a physical thing like *you can feel your chest getting tight and you are kind of gritting your teeth* and going, "Oh, I'm not myself today.

Why?" Then you realize, "Oh, man. It's been a week since I've been out by myself or I haven't taken a bath alone in a while."

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: "I need to have a bath by myself."

Jennifer Houck: Sometimes I can feel my face getting red too, but definitely ending now with Madison being in preschool. It gets us out. Three times a week, we are doing that. We also join the playhouse here in our town and it is mostly made up of attachment moms. Since we have been going there, it just seems like it helps to do something everyday and not stay in the house all day.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah. I have to do that too. I have to leave the house every single day.

Jennifer Houck: It gets to be too much.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: Even for the kids. They need different surroundings too. They do not need to be looking at four walls all day.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah. Yeah. I remember this mom told me once, she said, "I love driving." She had a bunch of kids, but she said, "I love to drive because it is so relaxing." Mine were really much younger. They were just babies. I think I had just one and I was like, "Are you kidding? I don't enjoy driving anymore now that I'm a mom." I used to love to drive when I was younger, but now that I am a mom, it is like I am thinking about the serious aspect of having these lives in my hands, but now I feel that way. Sometimes when I am in the car, that is the only time of the day that I do not have somebody either in my lap or on my hip or pulling on me.

Jennifer Houck: Right.

Carrie Lauth: They are just listening to their little audio book. Maybe my almost 4 year old will actually fall asleep.

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: Which she will not do at home. It is like my little built-in break.

Jennifer Houck: I am happy that you see it that way because I see it that way.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: I do not know. I guess I have a little way of thinking that it is true with Madison most of the time. She is almost four now and she will always fall asleep in the van. She will refuse hands down to do that unless they have been outside playing hard. It is like an hour or two that she would come in and will sit there and she just falls asleep on my lap or something.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah, that age is so challenging because they still need a nap, but they do not fall asleep. I can sit in here, my laptop is in my daughter's room and she will say, "Mommy, I want you to work with me." That means, "I want you to come in and get on that computer while I lay in bed." She can lie in that bed for an hour and she will never fall asleep, but I take her in the car, we do not get out of the neighborhood and she is out cold. She still needs a nap because by dinnertime, she is just out of her head. She is so tired. Anyway, that is challenging. I think that a lot of times what happens is that **when our children get a bit older, we start expecting more of ourselves than we did when they were babies when really it has not gone easier to get things done.** That pressure creates feelings of burnout like, "Oh well, now that my baby is two, I should have my clean house back."

Jennifer Houck: Not that way.

Carrie Lauth: No. It is not realistic because now you have got baby on wheels. You have got a baby who can climb and move chairs across the kitchen and open all the cabinets and drawers, open the shampoo bottles.

Jennifer Houck: Right.

Carrie Lauth: All that stuff. My daughter pushed one button on my laptop and I was not familiar with this one button and it disabled my wireless network card. I spent an hour trying to troubleshoot. I was like, "Oh, my gosh. What's wrong?" I tried all my stuff that I always try if lose my connection and then I got on the phone with tech support and they were like, "Okay, there is this little button on the top of your laptop" and I was like, "Oh, my gosh. I can't believe I just spend an hour because of one tiny little button all I had to do is mash it for as quick as just one second."

Jennifer Houck: Definitely, I will just tell other moms about when you just start feeling those tense day or the stress coming on you, but you cannot stop them just take time out when your husband gets home and just take that short bath or whatever have you or **go outside and just take a walk by yourself** or even if you

cannot, your husband is not home, just take the kids with you. Put them on a wagon or stroller and just enjoy it. Do not think that you have to keep on going and going because you do not have to. You do not have to be -- **women, you are not going for an award for the most perfect mom.**

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: Your kids are going to love you no matter what.

Carrie Lauth: I think we *teach them good habits when we respect our own needs. We teach them how to take care of themselves and that is important for them to learn.* That is an important skill for them to learn in their relationships with other people.

I blogged about this the other day, but my 5 year old, he was trying to build some little Lego structure, that is his favorite thing. He usually always comes and shows us what he has made and he is very proud of it, but this particular instance, he did not want his sister looking at what he was building. She kept trying to stick her nose over his shoulder and look and he was like, "Lana, I don't want you to look at it. I don't want you to look at it" and she kept trying. Finally, he goes, "Respect my boundaries!" I thought, "Oh, I love it."

Jennifer Houck: That was a good one.

Carrie Lauth: Right. I was proud of him for not reaching out and slugging her, but using his words, but very firmly telling her, "Look, I said no."

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: "I don't want you looking at my stuff." That was pretty cool, but they need to learn how to do that. We even have to do that with our friends and our family. **We have to learn healthy limits with people, how to say no.**

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: We are teaching them good life skills, but well... To sum up, I think the thing that I really wanted to get across with this show is that **feelings of burnout does not mean that you are a failure as a mom and it does not mean that you do not love your children.**

Jennifer Houck: Right.

Carrie Lauth: Parenting is an intense job.

Jennifer Houck: It is definitely a fulltime job.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: Like you said, we are teaching them things too.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah.

Jennifer Houck: We are their best teachers if anybody. If they see us getting burnout all the time, they are going to think when they are grown up, they are not going to learn how to take a break and kids need a break so much.

Carrie Lauth: Oh yeah. Absolutely.

Jennifer Houck: It is a win-win situation for both you and your kid.

Carrie Lauth: Yeah, that is a great point. They do need a break from us. They need to miss us. That is a good thing for them to miss us sometimes. I know sometimes my oldest three will go off to my parent's house for the weekend. I enjoy the break, but I am definitely missing them.

Jennifer Houck: Wow.

Carrie Lauth: They come back and I can tell that they have missed me and that feels nice. They love grandma and grandpa, but they do not want to live there.

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: They miss mom and dad. That is a good thing. I think it helps them to appreciate us more because they do take us for granted a little bit, but that is a good thing. That is a healthy childhood. You take your parents for granted when you have good parents until you are much older and more mature.

Jennifer Houck: Yeah.

Carrie Lauth: Well, Jen, thanks so much for talking with me about this. Your website on attachment parenting is <http://www.attachmentmoms.com> is that right?

Jennifer Houck: Right.

Carrie Lauth: Okay. Well, I enjoyed talking with you.

Jennifer Houck: Well, thanks for having me, Carrie. I really enjoyed it too. I think it is a good thing to let parents know about this.

To Sum Up: 6 Ways To Prevent Burnout

Feeling burnout is very common, and it does not mean that you are failing as a Mom. It's probably mostly due to the isolation that a lot of Moms face in our culture, as

well as the overscheduling and overwork that a lot of us deal with. Here are 6 things you can do to prevent burnout and treat it if it comes up.

- **Find your tribe**

Find a support group of like minded Moms. Some resources were mentioned earlier, but there are also neighbors, people you worship with, family, Moms at storytime, the park, or anywhere else Moms hang out. It's extremely important for Moms to have a social network. Talk about your feelings with someone who won't judge you, and return the favor. Spend time with good friends, and don't forget to nurture your relationship with your spouse.

- **Set boundaries**

Setting good boundaries isn't just about limits with your kids. Boundaries are something that protect you from being overburdened with other people's responsibilities. Learn to say no to things that don't honor your values, and don't overextend yourself.

- **Lose the guilt**

Don't feel like you're a bad Mom because you feel burnout from time to time. In fact, you are probably a very conscientious Mom who is neglecting her own needs! Be as forgiving and empathic with yourself as you are with your kids, and remember, when you take care of your own needs, you're in better shape to care for your family. It's kind of like when the flight attendant tells you to put on your own oxygen mask first in case of emergency!

- **Take care of your body**

Eating poorly leads to fatigue and stress. Nurture your body with healthy foods and avoid excessive caffeine and sugar, which only deplete you.

Exercise is also very important because it helps you deal with stress and floods your body with endorphins, the "feel good hormones". Don't make excuses! Get moving for 20 minutes a day. It doesn't have to be expensive or complicated. Walking is one of the best exercises you can do.

Exercise is also good for the kids because it helps them discharge excess energy that they may have from being inside too much.

Spending some time every day in the sun is also a good idea. Sunlight improves mood and helps you sleep better.

- **Take a break**

Nurture yourself every single day in small ways. Take a hot bath by yourself. Go outside for a few minutes and breathe deeply. Say your prayers, journal, pursue a hobby that you love. Even if all you can do are 5 minute increments, take the time!

- **Focus on what's truly important**

If you're feeling overwhelmed, remind yourself that the most important things on your to do list are your children, not the dishes or the dusty blinds. Put everything aside for 15 minutes and just play with your kids. Have fun, laugh together, spend time in nature together, and enjoy life. The rest can wait. Kids have a way of growing up despite us. And keep hugging those babies! ☺

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