



Self Help For Mums

How to be a happy Mum

My gift to you from my Depression & Anxiety

What an honour. What a gift....that I've been given. I have 2 beautiful healthy boys aged 16months and 32months old. These boys light up my life and bring it an innocence and a mindfulness that was long ago lost in my mind to the perceived 'pressures' of my adult life.

My boys teach me about life, and show me the path to true happiness. They are forever present in their daily adventures, and curious about life's beautiful simplicity, and they reteach me how to enjoy these simple pleasures in life.

So why do I spend most of my time inside my head thinking about my problems, or the problems they seemingly cause me, instead of practicing being present and enjoying life, like they do? Knowing that they hand me this truly priceless gift, why do I choose to continually ignore their simple acts of preciousness, and instead see their playfulness and their mischievousness as acts of disrespect and personal attack? Why do I choose to see this honour and human gifts as being 'hard work' and 'draining' on my energy rather than acknowledging the joyfulness of what I have in front of me? Why is it that I enter into conversations with my friends about my lost freedom and allow their innocent learning journeys to be a source of a vicious anger inside me full of self-pity and resentment? Why is it that I spent the first 6 months of my second son's life depressed and hating my role as a mum?

I'll tell you why? Because my boys and my depression and anxiety has taught me the true art of selflessness and an insight into managing my emotions, taking control of my happiness and enjoying motherhood. Through this gift of motherhood, and the adversity of living with depression and anxiety, a desire has been awakened to change the way I view motherhood and the way I experience this truly miraculous gift of having children, and now, to help other mothers to do the same.

Through my own struggles with the transition into motherhood and my own personal growth, I have analysed myself, researched other points of view, and redefined the person that I am to

become the person that I want to be. I now want to share with other mothers, a different perspective to motherhood that I have come to practice in my life, which has now become my passion, and the honour I bring to the months lost in depression and anxiety.

Motherhood changes you physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and morally. You can use this time of your life to let go of the past and discover the truly miraculous world of parenting and the new phase of womanhood that you have entered into. You are no longer the single minded young adult that you were before children, and now is an awesome opportunity to define the new person that you want to be in the context of raising your children, and become a full-blown adult.

Please allow me to share with you a few of the many insights that have arisen from the low points of motherhood that have helped me to become a better, happier and healthier mother and woman.

Truly Giving

Mothers are often described as always giving, but are you? When you truly give someone something, you often do it to make their day better, to improve their life, or to genuinely give them pleasure. By doing this, in turn, it gives you an immense feeling of joy, and satisfaction. Is that how you feel about being a mum? If not, could you be giving out of obligation, rather than from love? You give the most precious lessons of life to your children in the first 5 years of life? If you are 'giving' and nurturing your children with anger and resentment and self-pity, what are you really giving your children, and what are you giving yourself? Learn to see the best of a situation, by making it a habit of saying to yourself, in a seemingly frustrating situation, "WHAT DO I LIKE ABOUT THIS SITUATION? Teach your mind to find positives in a negative situation in order to decrease your frustrations.

Also genuine giving to others is a spiritually uplifting thing to do. I recently found a website called www.helpothers.org that is dedicated to giving you ways and inspirational stories about doing random acts of kindness, and how to play the 'pay it forward' game. You may think that you don't have time to truly give, but you might be surprised.

Be Solution Focussed

Self-pity lurks its ugly head as we complain to our girlfriends that we no longer have a social life. But what are you going to do about it? I often used to get stuck in what was going wrong with my life, and never even thought to do something about it. The two questions that I am teaching myself to answer whenever I feel self-pity or a lack of something, is; What do I want right now? How can I get it? The truth is, there is always a solution. Putting your attention on finding a solution is uplifting and pro-active. Let go of the habit to whine and complain and become active in your efforts to improve your life and fix your problems. If you have money problems research ways to bring in income, and do something about it. If you have behavioural issues with your children, find disciplinary methods to handle it appropriately. If you have relationship problems, step up and be the answer to your problems. Be the example of how you would like your relationship to be. Find a counsellor, research relationship advice online. If you have personal aspirations, or needs not being met, be specific about what you want, and make yourself worthy enough to find the time to achieve it. If you look in the direction of solutions, you will find the answer eventually.

To learn more about getting what you want, see [Tutorial 4 – Know what you want and How to Get it](#)

Be Grateful

Live your life with gratitude. Start a gratitude journal, and every night you go to bed, write 10 things you feel grateful about. Chances are you will find lots more than that and will get on a roll. You feel really grateful once you get started, and it changes the way you see your life. Try it every day for a week and see how it changes your perspective on life. Download the FREE e-book called The Daily gratitude journal at www.dailygratitude.com to help you, it's brilliant (this is not a plug for anything personal either. It is just a brilliant gift to lift your spirit and help you increase your happiness).

Use your imagination

In order to handle your frustrations and anger, use your imagination. When your child is showing undesirable behaviour, imagine that you are looking at your child laughing uncontrollably. Try to imagine a recent time that they laughed like this and they were happy. You will find a smile starting to spread on your face at the memory. You begin to see past the

present behaviour, and see the pleasantness that is in their inherent nature, rather than the behaviour.

When your baby won't sleep, try this: Put some meditation music on, or not, it doesn't matter. Sit beside the cot with your hand either patting, or just resting on the child. Make the traditional Sssh sound, but make it long and drawn out. Time it with your breath. Inhale, and on the exhale you make the long Sssssshhhhhhh sound. With every exhale, feel yourself getting calmer and calmer. Imagine a warm golden light surrounding your child and yourself and visualise your baby sleeping. With every exhale and sssshhh sound you will emit a calmer and calmer energy and that energy will be passed onto your baby. You will be amazed at how quickly they settle if they are genuinely tired. I have had awesome results with both of my children using this technique in visualisation.

Listen to you internal conversations

Firstly you need to practice becoming aware of how you feel. When you become aware of a negative feeling, start to take notice of the thoughts and conversations that you are having with yourself. What you say creates the feelings that you feel, so if you don't want to feel bad, then you need to control how you think. Start to challenge and question your conversations as to the level of truth that you are telling yourself, or as to whether the conversation is productive. Notice any negative conversations, without criticism, but with acknowledgement and an effort to change it. Once you control your thoughts, you will control your feelings.

To learn more about controlling your mind, see [Tutorial 2 – Control your mind to Control your feelings](#)

These are just a few tips out of "[The Happy Mum](#)" Manual created by [Self Help for Mums](#), designed as a Self Help tool for mothers of young children.

I know that motherhood can be seemingly tough, but I have personally seen myself through the darker side of my emotions and know in my heart that this journey through motherhood can be enjoyable, energetic and incredibly rewarding - you just need to teach yourself this new skill.

Please be kind to yourself and I wish you all the best for you and your beautiful children.