THE STAY SANE MOM'S GUIDE TO

Keeping Your Cool

An informal guide to surviving motherhood without turning into a screaming, ranting, ragemonster when your progeny accidentally steps on your toe.

www.theStaySaneMom.com

15 Strategies to Be More Patient as a Mom

Strategy #1: Take 10 Deep Breaths

By taking deep breaths, you're helping your body physically relax, but you're distracting yourself from whatever you're frustrated about with the task of counting numbers. They actually use a similar technique for people who struggle with panic attacks.

Strategy #2: Prioritize Your Tasks

By keeping an eye on the relative priority of different tasks you can put the correct emphasis on the important tasks, and stress out a little less on the ones that can wait for a day or two without the world imploding.

Strategy #3: Be Aware of Your Own Unmet Needs

You're a mom now, so there will be days when you are tired, hungry, busy, stressed, or all four and there is nothing you can do about it. By being aware that you have certain unmet needs at any given time, it helps you not take out those needs on your unsuspecting children.

Strategy #4: Look at Your Behavior from Your Child's Perspective

If you fly off the handle for something your child perceives as minor, or, worse, don't even understand is wrong, then you're not teaching them a lesson about behavior, you're freaking them out because all the sudden their world isn't a safe place anymore. By thinking of my behaviors from her eyes, it makes it easier to keep my cool and reinforces why it's important that I do.

Strategy #5: Don't Be Afraid to Take a Step Back

In the height of frustration, it might be way more healthy for our child to learn that it's okay to need some space sometimes than to see us in the depths of whatever we're going through. You are not a bad person for needing space. Next time you feel frustrated, make sure the kiddos are safe and give yourself a few minutes.

Strategy #6: Think "Will this Work?"

When you're frustrated, keep in mind that your actions will only decrease bad behaviors if your child understands what they did wrong and why that caused something bad. Angry shouts or behaviors don't actually teach kids not to do bad things, they just frighten them.

Strategy #7: Help the Kid Fix It

Even if it takes some extra time, help your kid clean up their own spilled juice. Make them apologize for what they broke. Have them do good behaviors to make up for the bad ones. Not only will this help them learn that in the real world they will have to clean up their own messes (whether literal or metaphorical), it will also help you feel like this isn't all coming out of your hide.

Strategy #8: Remember Patience is a Muscle

If you repeatedly exercise your patience, but insert small breaks in between in which your emotional reserve can build back up to normal levels, it will actually increase how patient you can be, just like training a physical muscle.

Strategy #9: Evaluate Your Impatience (Afterwards)

It's totally normal to have a meltdown every once in a while. However, if you find yourself getting frustrated regularly or getting frustrated by things that seem ridiculously small after the fact, You should definitely take a look at larger-scale things that might be causing frustration.

Strategy #10: Don't Be Afraid to Apologize

You are not going to be perfect 100% of the time. What happens AFTER you lose your cool is incredibly important. Don't be afraid to tell them that you messed up, explain which behaviors were unacceptable, apologize, and tell them what you should do differently next time. By using honesty and explaining what happened and why it happened, you can turn this into an important teaching moment.

Strategy #11: Remember Kids Grow Up Fast

Yes, your children are incredibly frustrating right now. However, as any mom can tell you, they grow up way too fast. Try to remember that they'll only be this age for a little while. It'll help you remember the positives, realize the negatives are temporary, and possibly help you back into a better state of mind.

Strategy #12: Remember Kids' Brains are Not Developed Yet

Sometimes your little ones do things that seem to be out of sheer malice or stupidity. Chances are, they just don't have the cognitive capacity to execute the correct behavior in that circumstance.. Your kids are not evil, they're just kids. (I promise.)

Strategy #13: Pretend You're Being Watched (Spoiler Alert: You Are)

It's usually when it's just us and the kiddos that the frustration hits. We rarely scream and yell in the middle of a grocery store or school assembly, because we know we'd look like a right nutjob if we did. Hiring a "pretend audience" to socially shame you into good behavior is a great short-term fix. Also, your kids actually are watching you and they're the most impressionable audience you could ever have.

Strategy #14: Figure Out What Triggers Your Frustration

This one shouldn't be so late in the list, because it's actually incredibly important. Track what types of situations make you lose your mind, and come up with ways to ensure these specific situations occur less often and make backup plans for when they do happen.

Strategy #15: Remember What You're Doing is Hard

A lot of times I lose my patience because I feel like I should be doing better than I am. Remember, parenting is a crazy hard gig. You are not a weak person failing at something that is easy, you are a warrior struggling at something that is very, very hard. It is totally normal for you to get frustrated from time to time, so give yourself a break.

Motherhood is not for the faint of heart.

It is impressive how many balls you are juggling all at once, and It is totally normal for you to get frustrated from time to time.

Stay strong, Mama. This too shall pass.

GET TO KNOW

THESTAYSANEMOM

The Stay Sane Mom provides tools and support for driven, multitasking, soul-hungry moms who want to master their domain so they have time and energy to be more than just "mom".

The Stay Sane Mom was born out of one mom's journey into wife-dom and motherhood.

She noticed that wife-ing, momming, and keeping a clean house were all possible by themselves, but when done all at the same time they had started to make her feel like she was (to be honest) slowly losing her mind. Worse than losing her mind, she also felt like her identity as a person other than "Mom" was slipping away as well.

So what happens when a nerd encounters a problem? Research. Lots of research. Also empirical tests, case studies, and anything else that could help her be "Liz" and "Mom" at the same time.

When she started coming to actual, useful conclusions, she decided to start building The Stay Sane Mom to share her revelations with other moms who wanted to be a real person as well as being "Mom".

Find more wisdom, tools, sarcasm, and sanity on our website.

WWW.THESTAYSANEMOM.COM