



## ‘Good’ Moms Sacrifice For Their Kids... Right?

By Kelly E. Nault, M.A.

“Pick up your feet. We’re going to be late for school!” I hiss. What I actually want to say is, “I’m going to be late for work for the third time this week because of your dawdling!”

It is barely eight in the morning—I’m tired, I’m cranky and I’ve used up all my parental ammunition as I’ve taken away every single privilege they have and even some privileges they don’t even have.

So while on the brink of parenting burnout, now over a decade ago, I can’t even muster up the strength to use my default self-care line, “My energy batteries are low right now and I need to take five minutes alone to recharge them so I can enjoy my time with you. “ But that morning, I was beyond deep breathing! Instead, I continued to nag, and then nag some more.

Just then, this eight-year-old looks up and says, “You know, I am starting to think your batteries just aren’t the rechargeable kind.”

In four seconds flat this child has called my superwoman bluff. Forever burned in my memory, this is the day when I began to realize that ‘Super Moms’ are no more real than the abdominal snowman. Yes it was with some shock that I realized ‘Super Moms’ only end up ‘super stressed’.

Later that day, while sitting opposite my counseling client lecturing her on self-care, a little voice in my head says, “You fake! You wouldn’t know self-care if it ran past you naked” .

Thus began my commitment (and later my mission as a parenting counselor, mother and author) to help enlighten other Moms about the reality of what a ‘Good Mom’ truly means.

### Our ‘Good Mom’ Myth Exploded

Most of us (myself included) have bought into the ‘Good Mom’ myth which states:

The measure of a 'Good Mom' is counted by how much she sacrifices for her kids.

In reality, however, **woman and mothers who use selfless devotion wind up having less 'self' to give to their loved ones. And we've all heard it before, when Mom ain't happy ain't nobody happy!**

The selfless Moms are often the ones plagued by colds, short tempers and even depression. These Moms often find themselves visiting a therapist's office like mine, when they have lost their passion not only for parenting, but for life.

So what's the solution? Do I suggest mothers become selfish? No, although in small doses selfishness can be very healthy! From working with thousands of mothers, I've concluded that what we need is an entirely different parenting approach. Becoming 'self-full' is what I most recommend. **'Self-full' mothering occurs when mothers choose to become fulfilled in their own life, so they can inspire their children to do the same.**

When Moms don't take care of their own basic needs, they become grumpy, grouchy and sometimes even witchy (just ask your kids!). We all know that self-care is good for us—but who has the time to do what's good for *us*!

### Parenting Self-Care, The Easy Way

If you are just too sleep deprived and too frazzled to squeeze in anything for you, then you may find the following questions an easy way to start or reignite your self-care process, without adding more to your parenting to-do list!

Before you do *any* task, ask yourself the following question:

**“Will this task deplete or fulfill me?”**

If you answer 'deplete'—seriously consider not doing the task. If this seems impossible then ask yourself:

**“How CAN I make this next task fulfilling?”**

Every day you have a gazillion things to do. It is *what* we choose to do and *how* we choose to look at our life that creates or destroys our sense of fulfillment. **Ask better questions to make better choices—then you can experience a better life.**

With practice, you can transform your to-do items from draining to entertaining. Listen to your favorite music while scrubbing the toilet; make up silly rhymes with your kids while making dinner; even wear your most colorful p.j.'s backwards when picking the kids up from school. There are all kinds of ways to infuse your tasks with fun and meaning—repeat your favorite affirmation or prayer, or simply think of all the things you are grateful for. Ask your kids to join you in this commitment and watch how you not only survive your days, but begin to thrive.

## The One Thing I Know about Your Family

Even though I don't know you personally, I know that your family deserves to have a Mom who is fulfilled, happy and a joy to be around—one whose footsteps they will be inspired to follow. That Mom is you! Commit to doing fulfilling tasks that nourish you, and see how moment after moment your life and your family's life can become more than it is already.

**Kelly Nault-Matzen**, MA, family counselor, corporate parenting spokesperson and award winning parenting author of *When You're About To Go Off The Deep End, Don't Take Your Kids With You* shares time-tested tools that motivate children to want to be well behaved, responsible and happy! To gain access to more parenting tools and to access your free online parenting course visit <http://www.ultimateparenting.com>

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