

6 Powerful Tips for Moms on the Edge

I called a mom with three active young children the other day. When she answered the phone, I said, “What are you up to today?”

I laughed at her reply.

With a sigh, she said, “Trying not to kill anybody.” She’s a wonderful mom, and I knew she didn’t mean that, but I could hear the exhaustion in her voice.

Oh, how I remember those days when my sons were still at home! Days when they’d tromped on my last good nerve, when my batteries were on empty and I was so tired I felt like I needed to be in bed—but I couldn’t because I still had to cook dinner, do twelve more loads of laundry, referee squabbles—and, oh yes, try to keep from killing anybody.

One of my husband’s favorite memories is of a day when I met him as he stepped into the house. Hands on my hips, I glared at him and said, “Whose idea was it to have children?” He still laughs about that.

Can any of you relate? I’m sure every parent has experienced those rough days, those moments when their patience is pushed beyond the limits.

So here are six tips to help you keep your sanity in the midst of parenting mayhem:

- Step outside for a few minutes. If your children are little, you can keep an eye on them through the window. Sometimes just a change of scenery and a breath of fresh air can make a difference.
- If necessary, put yourself in timeout until you get

control of your emotions.

- Stop and pray. Ask God to give you strength for the moment.
- Pray with your children about their behavior.
- Ask your spouse, a family member or a friend to watch your children for a bit to give you a break. Go somewhere. Take a nap. Recharge your parenting batteries. My daughter-in-law's mom came to watch the three little ones while Lydia and Jeremy put up the outside Christmas lights a while back. Lydia said, "The kids were watching through the windows, but it still almost felt like a date since it was just the two of us. We laughed and held hands and ran to the end of the yard to look at the lights." It's amazing how even a little break can make a difference.
- Lose the guilt. All parents are pushed beyond their limits at one time or another.

The good news is that one day (before you know it) you'll look back, and those moments will be your funny memories.

I promise.

Michelle Cox is the creator/developer of the Just 18 Summers® brand of parenting resources and products. Her novel, Just 18 Summers, is available now. Michelle would love to speak at your event! Visit her at , on Facebook at and and on Twitter

This post originally appeared at .

One Question You May Not Want to Ask Your Child

“How are you?”

If you read my last three blogs, you’re beginning to understand that this question that we are often asked, and that we ask our children, isn’t simple.

If your son answers while thinking of his intellectual identity, he might answer “Great!” But, if answering with his emotional self in mind, he might have said “Lonely” or “Frustrated.”

If your daughter thinks of her emotional identity, she might answer “Terrible!” But, if answering while reflecting on her intellectual self, she might have proclaimed “Super!”

Maybe the internal contradictions are why children often just grunt, shrug their shoulders or respond “OK.” And this is only while considering two of six identities!

Today, let’s consider the social identity. No matter the age of your children, this matters. It’s about friendship, being friendly, community, establishing belonging and being connected in meaningful ways.

What goals do you have for this identity for your children? What do you hope they’ll strive for? Talk with them about your hopes and goals as another school year begins. But, do more than talk. Help them. Model for them what’s healthy. Be available for their questions. Share wisdom. Dry their tears. Be vulnerable about your past struggles. Identify missing skills and teach them. Think strategically and plan intentionally. Progress is very possible!

As in my past blogs, I’ll share here what groups of 7th-

graders listed as a high compliment when I taught this concept to hundreds of them back in June. Perhaps this will help you think about how to present this issue to your children and how to choose important goals:

- Teamwork
- Friendly
- Outspoken, friendly
- Nice, helpful
- People like being around me
- Outgoing
- A lot of friends, interactive, open, trustworthy, compassionate, fun to be around, respectful, perky, responsible
- Outgoing, funny, friendly
- Nice, kind, optimistic, caring
- Optimistically outgoing
- Good at talking to people
- Self-control
- Funny, easy to get along with

I wish I could follow up with the five groups who listed “friendly.” If your children answer with this goal, I hope you’ll follow up. What do they mean by the word? What’s the evidence that someone is friendly? What does it look like and sound like?

I’ve been observing people from afar. It’s been interesting. I’ve assumed someone is friendly based on body language, facial expressions and how closely they sit next to someone. Am I right? Could I be wrong?

If you ask your children what “friendly” is like with peers they don’t know yet and what it’s like when they know peers well, I’d love to know what they say. Be prepared for an interesting discussion. I’ve been observing my own behavior at church, for instance. I’d like to be known as being friendly. How do I present myself to guests? How do I present myself to

those I'm already friends with?

There's much to think about! Again, the question, "How are you?" isn't as simple as we used to think it is. {eoa}

Dr. Kathy Koch is the author of *Screens & Teens: Connecting with Our Kids in A Wireless World*.

This article originally appeared at .

Watch: Joel Richardson Explains God's Role in Anti-Semitism

From their inception as a race, the Jewish people have experienced hatred and ensuing persecution. But does God have a plan and a purpose in even this? *New York Times* best-selling author Joel Richardson believes so. See if you agree with him after you watch his discussion on *The Jim Bakker Show* of what he calls "the manifestation of Satanic hatred against the broad plan that God put into place."

How God Brought Breakthrough

to One Man

“This church culture kind of turned God into a formula,” says Larry Sparks in this video. Here, he describes how God transformed his life—and brought him back to the church after a period of burnout. Watch the video to learn more.

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Why This Pastor Avoids Drinking Alcohol

Pastor Shane Idleman shares some enlightening truths from Scripture as they relate to the question of whether or not Christians should drink alcohol. “The person who consumes alcohol walks a very fine line between freedom and sin, responsibility and carelessness, liberty and abuse,” he says.

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3 Essential Steps to Fulfilling Christ's Final

Commandments

Before Jesus ascended to heaven, He left us with the command to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19a). But how do we start the conversation? Learn three vital steps in personal evangelism in this video from premier mission-sending organization Youth With A Mission (YWAM).

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Are These 5 Pastors Among ‘The Deplorables’?

Why would the former mayor of Houston subpoena sermons from five area pastors? Todd Starnes discusses the matter with Pastor Hernan Castano, one of the “Houston Five,” in this Fox News clip.

“We believe .. they want to intimidate the pastors of America, and they want to use us five to send a message to those pastors and to everyone that would oppose their way of governing here in the city of Houston,” says Pastor Castano.

Alliance Defending Freedom agreed to take on the pastors’ case. Watch the video to learn more about Houston’s war on religious liberty.

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What the Unborn Really Need

“The call to each of us, wherever God places us and in whatever time in history we find ourselves, is to occupy till He comes and to charge the gates every day we live,” says Rep. Trent Franks, R-Ariz.

Matt Lockett and the Justice House of Prayer D.C. are making a difference as they faithfully intercede before the Supreme Court building. Watch the video to hear more about their vital ministry and why Rep. Franks says we “cannot be timid” in our pursuit of righteousness.

What do the unborn really need? Watch the video to find out!

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Personal Revival Is for You, Says Daniel Norris

Traveling evangelist Daniel Norris takes time in this video to unpack the term “personal revival” as well as explaining why the words “fire” and “revival” go together.

Out of obedience to God’s directive, Norris, his wife, Jenna, and their family are dedicating a year to travel the U.S. in the Trail of Fire tour.

“I believe God wants you to experience personal revival, and

that can happen right here, right now, as you watch this ... You can meet with Him right now and your life will be forever transformed and changed," Norris says.

Watch the video below to learn more.

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Prophecy: Native Americans Hold the Key to Spiritual Awakening

Over the past 40 years, countless prophecies have been released about Native Americans holding the key to spiritual awakening. In his documentary *Awakened: The Spiritual Destiny of Native Americans*, filmmaker Greg Miller reveals some of these prophecies and features accounts of what God is doing among First Nations people.

Watch the documentary trailer here: