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Mom guilt: 94 percent of us have we ditch it for a week?

Do you ever feel guilty? Let's put it another way: Are you a mom? Because the t together. BabyCenter declared last week "Guilt-Free Parenting Week," and, wel post this response a week ago, but then things got really hectic, and it sort of sli cracks... and now we have another thing to feel guilty about.

By Sue Kidd, TODAY Moms contributor

The guilt storm came in a flurry. An incomplete homework assignment he had pr week meant he was staying inside on a sunny Saturday. My son sat at that table v know, the one that makes you feel like the Worst Mother Ever.

And then the insta-guilt hit. What kind of mother was I to deny my child riding h neighborhood park? Kids need fresh air and exercise, all the fitness experts say s obesity by making him sit inside and finish his homework! What a mean mom!



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Then I talked myself down off the Ledge O' Guilt, that fun place all moms seem to be. It's a responsibility, playing outside is a reward. I couldn't let guilt override that.

That moment was one of a million of my guilty mom moments. I experience them sometimes in pairs or triples. It's always an undercurrent.

I'd like to learn to let it go just a little bit better. And moms everywhere would agree. Even the source of a [campaign at Baby Center](#), which reports that 94 percent of parents experience parenting-related guilt. The challenge: live your life for a week with guilt-free parenting.

What the heck, is that even possible?

Maybe.

I turned to parenting expert and author of "Addicted to Stress," [Debbie Mandel](#), for what she had to say: "We learned from our mothers and grandmothers that we were responsible for everyone's happiness. By the same token we were taught to feel guilty if we didn't express our individuality at school or a house of worship. 'Don't show off,' 'Don't own our unique ability. This kind of guilt stifles identity and spontaneity."

Well, amen. Every mother reading that had some sort of internal twinge of recognition.

She continues, "And when we feel guilty, we try to make amends by engaging in self-care or overworking. This makes most mothers a low priority on the daily to-do list, as they don't do something for the self which does not involve the family."

Her advice? Leave the good-girl zone and get some healthy balance in your life. I can't do that. I feel that nagging tug when you engage in a hobby that doesn't involve your family. Bike, knit, scrapbook, roller derby or start a fight club -- just squash that guilt, m

Healthy moms, she said,
"advocate for themselves,
delegate, and do not dwell on
mistakes," she said.



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So back to the kitchen table, my son, and my Mean Mom Moment. He settled into his homework after I laid out my own special brand of guilt about how he'll never get into a good college if he doesn't decode fractions. (See, guilt can work the other way, too!) He completed half of the math worksheet; I let him off the hook to go play. Yes, the obesity experts will be happy to learn, he rode his scooter to our neighborhood park. It's a challenge to forgive yourself the guilt, but sometimes you just have to get over it and move on with your life.



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[Add a comment](#)**Maria Mogg** · Medina High School

So sorry to hear about all this Mom guilt? I've been a military spouse for 23 years and I have 2 daughters 20 and 19. I did the best that I could for them and never had any guilt for what I couldn't give them or mistakes I made. I never had guilt when I took time for myself or when I couldn't always have our quarters looking perfect. I'm lucky I was able to stay at home with them, but I was also a single parent much of the time. So give yourself a break and no guilt!

4 · [Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 15 hours ago**Cassandra Core-Holt** · University of Maryland University College

thanks for sharing Maria!! Your girls turned out great!!!

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 14 hours ago**Mike Mogg** · OH-58D Helicopter Pilot at U.S Army

Maria my love, you did an awesome job with our girls and if there was any guilt, I believe it should be mine for having your life "path" diverted to stay at home and take care of us. I cannot recover those 20+ years for you, but can only promise for the next 20 to pamper and take care of you.....I love and miss you very much and I am counting the days (81) till I am there with you. Take care. PB.

1 · [Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 13 hours ago**Kerrie Turcic** · Copywriter at Topics Entertainment

Training for a marathon brought on the mom guilt...big time! And let's not even talk about the wife guilt...

2 · [Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 19 hours ago**Kellie Wallerstein-King**

I feel guilty if my house and housework are not perfect (or at least 90%) ---i don't know why, its weird. I wonder if other moms have this type of guilt? I NEVER feel guilty about making my kids live up to their responsibilities i.e. homework, piano practice, walk the dog, clean their rooms. Its my job to be their mother not their friend... I'm sure they do periodically hate me but I am extremely fair and eventually they come around for cuddle time.

:)

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · 19 hours ago**Jennifer Gerlock** · Frederick, Maryland

Oh my goodness! I JUST wrote a whole post about mom guilt but from the working mom's perspective. How odd! <http://www.hipasiwannabe.com/2011/10/working-mom/when-work-forces-you-to-make-tough-decisions/>

I don't think I could ever live guilt free.... No matter how hard that I try! Wish I could though...

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I seem to write about guilt all the time. I think it's because we, as people, can see how our own parents affected us, and don't want our kids to be thinking the same thing in 20 years.

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