



# FIRST TIME MOM



## THE #1 SURVIVAL STRATEGY EVERY NEW MOM NEEDS TO KNOW

(AND START USING THIS WEEK)

Having a baby is hard work.

If you have recently given birth, you know this to be true.

### **The Truth About Early Motherhood**

You are likely exhausted in a way you could have never imagined. We are not talking about being tired – we are talking about a level of exhaustion that is unimaginable – until you find yourself in it. The sleep deprivation is so intense and feels all-consuming. I can remember feeling desperate to sleep.

And then there is the crying. You know babies cry. It is how they communicate. You get that. But when you have checked off all the boxes – they are fed, they are burped, their bum is clean – and they are still crying, you can feel at a complete loss of what to do. Why won't they settle? Why won't they just go to sleep so you can go to sleep?

And just when you think you have figured something out about this tiny person – it changes. Nothing feels predictable or stable anymore.

One day blurs into the next in a hazy fog. You may find yourself wondering if you have eaten or brushed your teeth yet today – and it is 2:00 pm. You may wonder when the last time you showered was – you know it wasn't today or yesterday. And then you may wonder – who is the person because it doesn't feel like me.

## **I Didn't Know It Would Be This Hard**

The demand of caring for a baby never stops. Even when they are finally asleep, there is no guarantee they will stay asleep. So you are now “on-call” ALL OF THE TIME.

Having a new baby is really hard. That cannot be over-stated. And it is not just you. This is a really hard stage for most of us.

I have had the opportunity to work with hundreds of new moms helping them survive the newborn stage.

And there is one fool-proof strategy that helps new moms to cope.

## **It works every time!**

It is life-changing and brings a feeling of hope that you may not

just survive through this, but you actually might find a way to feel happy and enjoy your life a little more.

## **The #1 survival strategy you need to start using is: TAKING BREAKS!**

Every mom needs to have breaks from her baby. And when she takes those breaks, she feels better.

Initially, it may feel wrong somehow to take a break from your baby. But is it not wrong, it is healthy. We are not meant to do any job 24 hours a day, 7 days a week – even mothering.

## Some things that may make it hard for you to take breaks:

- You feel you shouldn't need breaks – this is your baby and therefore this is your job
- You hate asking for help
- You don't want to burden people
- You are afraid of being judged
- Your partner doesn't understand how hard this is and leaves you feeling like you shouldn't need breaks
- You are worried whoever cares for the baby won't do things the way you would or the way you want
- You are worried whoever cares for the baby will see that your house is a mess
- All of your friends who are having babies don't seem to need breaks leaving you feeling “weak” or like “a bad mom” if you need and/or want to take breaks
- Somehow you feel you don't deserve to take breaks

Don't set yourself up believing a “good mom” wouldn't need to take break. Good moms need breaks.

And if you don't get the breaks you need and deserve, you are left feeling depleted, exhausted and cranky. I know because I remember feeling that way!



## Key Points for Success

- Identify several people who can help
- Create a consistent day and time for them to come each week – which makes it easy for you and for them
- Ask them to help over the next 4–8 weeks at their selected day/time
- Create a calendar or schedule and put it on the fridge so you know when your breaks will be happening

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2:00-3:30 Aunt Laurie		1:00-4:00 Mom		10:00-11:30 Ally		
2:00-3:30 Aunt Laurie		1:00-4:00 Mom		10:00-11:30 Ally		
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2:00-3:30 Aunt Laurie		1:00-4:00 Mom		10:00-11:30 Ally		
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## The Benefits of this Plan

- By asking several people to help with your plan to get breaks:
  1. No one person will feel that you are asking too much of them. For most people, it is easy to commit to coming over once per week for the next month or two
  2. You will have the opportunity to get a couple of breaks each week
- By creating a schedule for the next month or two:
  1. You will have a plan mapped out that is predictable. So if you are having a rough day and you know you have a break scheduled the following day – it helps you get through that rough day
  2. You have the initial conversation to set up the plan and then you do not have to think about it again.



## How to Get the Most Out of Your Breaks

Many new moms will be tempted to use this time to do housework, get groceries or complete other chores or errands. Those activities are not allowed. Yes they need to get done, but not during the precious time of your breaks.

And if you choose to remain at home for your breaks, your support people need to understand that they should not come to get you unless the house is burning down! You can only get the benefit from the break, if you get that time to yourself undisturbed. Using noise cancelling ear buds is suggested so you don't hear the baby which could reduce your ability to relax and get the most out of this time.

**Your breaks are just for YOU!**

**You may want to consider using your breaks to:**

- Take a nap
- Have a bath or shower
- Read a book or magazine
- Go for a walk
- Meet a friend for tea
- Sit by the water
- Watch netflix
- Book a massage
- Get your hair or nails done
- Have lunch with a friend
- Hang out at a book store or coffee shop
- Anything else that is just for you and helps you "fill your cup"

Remember you are an individual person and not just a mom and taking care of YOU will help you feel happier as a mom.

## Making Breaks Work for You:

- If you are breastfeeding, you may feel more comfortable planning breaks that are 1-2 hours in length (depending on the feeding needs of your baby)
- If you are breastfeeding, you may prefer to stay closer to home
- Optimally, I suggest 3 breaks a week with 2 shorter breaks (1-2 hours) and 1 longer break (2+ hours)

As with everything related to mothering, there is no one “right way” to take your breaks. Find a plan that works for you and your support people. If it is more or less than what is suggested, that is okay. The key is having some consistent and predictable breaks to look forward to which enhance your coping.

The plan to get breaks outlined here is in addition to you and your partner also working together as you find your way as a couple with a new baby. The hope is that you are both involved in baby care and figuring out how to be a new family together while learning to balance all of the new roles and responsibilities.

Initially you may have some anxiety when taking the breaks – try to work through this so you can get to the place of enjoying the breaks and feeling the benefit from them.

Every new mom I have worked with who has put this plan in place is amazed at the positive difference it makes. It can work for you to. Give it a try.

**If you like what you have learned here, and want more:**

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- **Apply for a Free 20 Minute New Mom Survival Session to see if my First Time Mom program is right for you**

