

No More Drowning & Feeling There's No Time for Yourself. Find More Time for You...Without The Guilt!

By Alice Seba

Copyright FindTheTimeMama.com 2007, All Rights Reserved Tell your friends about FindTheTimeMama.com and Get Paid: <u>http://www.momstalknetwork.com/affiliates/</u>

Table of Contents

Foreword by Mila Sidman – MomsTalkNetwork.com	3
Welcome and a Little Nudge from Alice	4
Why You Need to Find the Time Mama	5
How to Find Time to Yourself	5
Does Being a Mom Mean Having No Life?	8
What if You Have an Unsupportive Partner	9
How to Get Rid of the Guilt	13
Fun Ideas for a Mom Out on Her Own	14
Final Thoughts & Encouragement	17
Resources for the Mom Who Needs to Find the Time	18

Copyright FindTheTimeMama.com 2007, All Rights Reserved Tell your friends about FindTheTimeMama.com and Get Paid: <u>http://www.momstalknetwork.com/affiliates/</u>

Foreword by Mila Sidman – MomsTalkNetwork.com



I can relate to this book so much, many moms really do get stuck in a situation where they can't be bothered to make time for themselves or they feel they don't really need the time or worst they think it's just not possible... As you'll learn in this book, that's really not the case.

I speak from personal experience when I say I've often been the mom who makes excuses - "but when do I have time for a pedicure?" "I don't have time for myself, there's just too much to do" ... If you find yourself marking excuses like I have in the past, this book will help you realize you really can find the time – and you'll feel much better for it (so will your family).

Alice also shares her personal experiences with not making enough time, not only for herself but to enjoy friendships. This is a trap many moms fall into, we feel our families are enough to fulfill us and we don't need any outside influences – the thing is that yes, we adore our kids and partners and they do fulfill us in a way others can't, but that doesn't mean we have to let go of friendships which play a vital role in our lives.

Being a mom is not easy at the best of times and having an understanding friend to share your fears, joys, crazy "mom moments" and just have a good laugh with really makes a difference to your overall life.

I, again, have also been guilty of letting go of friendships due to "lack of time" or just plain not thinking I needed the support. Now I know this isn't true at all... moms need support, we're not super women and can't do it all on our own.

I hope you enjoy this book, I have, and it's also been a good reminder to me that we really do need to take time for ourselves. You *can* find the time mama!

MilaSidman

Copyright FindTheTimeMama.com 2007, All Rights Reserved Tell your friends about FindTheTimeMama.com and Get Paid: http://www.momstalknetwork.com/affiliates/

Welcome and a Little Nudge from Alice



Congratulations on taking the first step to finding more time for you, Mom. We've all heard the saying, "If Mom's not happy, nobody's happy," and it's possible that truer words have never been spoken.

As mothers, we have a lot of responsibility resting on our shoulders. Our spouses depend on us, our kids depend on us and we still have plenty of other daily responsibilities to fill up our lives. It doesn't matter if you're a

career mom or a stay-at-home focused on running an efficient household, if you don't have enough time just for you – you need this guide.

This guide was originally created to be a follow-up to my original free guide for moms called *Hot Mama Makeover*. It's not required that you read this guide first, but if you feel like you could use a confidence boost, definitely grab yours at:

http://www.hotmamamakeover.com/thanksabunch.html

Our readers loved *The Hot Mama Makeover* and told us how they immediately started feel the difference the simple steps made, but they also told us they needed just a little bit more help in finding the time for themselves...away from their motherly responsibilities they cherished so much. That's exactly why you're reading *Find the Time Mama* now.

Copyright FindTheTimeMama.com 2007, All Rights Reserved Tell your friends about FindTheTimeMama.com and Get Paid: <u>http://www.momstalknetwork.com/affiliates/</u>

Why You Need to Find the Time Mama

I love being a mom. You love being a mom. It's the most important thing in our lives and we wouldn't trade it for anything in the world. But like anything else we do, if we let it consume our lives and forget about the individuals we were before we became moms, we are headed for inevitable burnout...and a burned out mom isn't good for anyone. B

A little time out for yourself...and for you and your partner is essential. You need and deserve a break. Your relationship needs extra attention to keep it close.

In other words, you need to find the time, Mama!

How to Find Time to Yourself

It's easy enough to say that you need time to yourself. Accomplishing that feat is a whole other story. One thing you need to do is really STOP making excuses. If your friends have stopped calling because you always say you're busy, now's the time to make changes. Being a mom should never come at the cost at giving up your precious friends.

Friends are for:

- Sharing experiences with
- Laughter and fun
- Giving and receiving advice
- Relaxing with
- Support in tough times

Just because you became a mom doesn't mean you don't need these things from friends. In fact, you probably need them more than ever. We all need advice support and plenty of stress-relief through the ups, downs and challenges of the roller coaster world of being a parent.

My Story – It Might Hit Home: When I became a mom, I pretty much let my friends go. There were a multitude of reasons I did that, but the important things is that it all caused me to be unhappy, near depression and I decided the solution was to separate from my husband.

It was complicated and I'll try to sum it up for you.

I had a spouse who encouraged me to go out and have fun, but I didn't do it. I was wrapped up in growing a new business. One of my best friends was in an immensely controlling relationship and he made it uncomfortable for us to get together, so I gave up. She gave up too. It seemed easier that way. While I was separated from my husband, he called me to tell me that my friend was now separated from her husband and she could use my friendship. Her husband had cheated on her and left her. He also still felt some sort of "ownership" over my friend and decided that he'd come to her house, knock down her garage door and throw around the computer, furniture and other personal belongings when he felt she wasn't acting in a way he thought appropriate.

My friend needed me. And you might think that she needed me more than I needed her. You'd be wrong. I needed a friend to help me appreciate the good things in my life and to make me a good person. Interestingly enough, my friend never said, "You should get back together with your husband," or anything like that. I just came to appreciate what I had...and lost...as we shared and interacted.

Thankfully, I took some time to realize I was an idiot and my husband gave me a chance to make it up to him. I just now know I'll never go down that path again. Mom, don't let this happen to you.

Here are some tips to get more of that down-time every mama needs and deserves:

- Share kid visits with a trusted neighbor or friend. Sometimes the kids all come to your house and other times they go to hers. If you don't know your neighbors please now's the time to get out there and make some friends.
- Arrange visits to Grandma and Grandpa's house...or any other family member. Even if you just drop them off for a couple of hours, while you get some shopping done, your kids can get quality time with their extended family.
- Go to kid activity centers or the park. Places like Chuck E. Cheese, the park or community-provided mom & me places are a great place to get a bit of a break and connect with other moms. If your kids are very young, certainly you'll be spending most of the time with your kids, but that doesn't mean you can't strike up a new friendship.
- Get your partner to take over for a while. Even if you're a stay-at-home mom and think you shouldn't ask for "time-off" because your partner works a long hard day, you REALLY do deserve a break now and then. If your partner isn't supportive of you exploring me-time, I'll have some tips for you in the next chapter.
- Enroll younger kids in preschool. Give them a sense of independence and some time to make friends and have fun. It's a great experience for kids and extra time for you.

- Stop cleaning or doing other chores/errands every minute the kids are in school. If the house has to be a little less perfect, so be it. Establish a routine for your cleaning and make more time for fun. Note: for help with organizing your time, check out the Mom's Talk Guide to Organizing Your Life
- Find a local teenager with babysitting experience. Even if you're not comfortable leaving your child at home alone with a young sitter, have him/her come over while you enjoy a nice long soak in the tub or something else you enjoy.
- Set a strict bedtime and stick with it. This is particularly important for younger children. Some parents find it easier to just let the child stay up and go to bed with them, but a routine is good for your kids and gives you that much-needed time to yourself...or with your partner.

There are simply no more excuses for not finding time to yourself. Whether it's 20 minutes, a few hours or a whole weekend, you can get the time you need.

Copyright FindTheTimeMama.com 2007, All Rights Reserved Tell your friends about FindTheTimeMama.com and Get Paid: <u>http://www.momstalknetwork.com/affiliates/</u>

Does Being a Mom Mean Having No Life?

Not too long ago, on the Mom's Talk Forum (<u>http://www.momstalkforum.com</u>), one of our members posed the question, "*Does being a mom mean you have no life*?" She wrote:

"When I think about the all things I would love to be doing in my life and can't, it is upsetting. I would love to travel, see the world, go dancing, and experience life in general.

I feel like being a mom and a wife, in some ways, limits how much of your own wants and needs you can really fulfill.

I LOVE my kids and they are #1 in my life. But do you ever feel like you are sacrificing a piece of what you envisioned for your life?"

As the discussion continued on the forum, moms posted their opinions, all from different perspectives. Many moms reminded us that we need to realize that our children won't be young forever. In a blink of an eye, they'll be grown up and we need to enjoy this time. It's absolutely true. We need to cherish these moments with our kids and we also need to cherish time to ourselves. Being a mom should *never* be an excuse for not enjoying *some* of the adult things you enjoy in life. Yes, there will be some sacrifices, but sacrifice it all and you'll be a stressed out, grumpy mess. That's not good for anyone.

Many of the things you enjoy can be done with the kids in tow and many can be done solo. If you want to travel, you can travel with kids. Depending on their age, there will be some limitations to the traveling you want to do, but having kids does not mean being stuck in your hometown.

If you're traveling with young kids, look for all inclusive vacations, cruises that often cater to families and even provide fun-filled daycare while you enjoy yourself for a few hours. If your kids are older, get together to plan a great vacation; it's a great experience for you and your entire family.

Of course, travel is just one example, but the point I want to get across is that if you want to do it, you can very likely do it.

Now, if you're finding it hard to find the time because your partner is unsupportive, that makes it even more challenging. Please read on for some support with that...

What if You Have an Unsupportive Partner (Including Tips to Enhance Your Relationship, Even if yours is Supportive)

It's not uncommon to find a couple relationships where the partner puts limits on the mother's interaction outside of the family unit. If you're in this situation, please understand that you're not alone. But realize something else – if you're in this situation, it is often a recipe for unhappiness, marital discontent, and even depression.

I've seen it over and over again. On the Mom's Talk Forum we've seen mothers who are not content in their marriages and on deeper investigation, they realize it's not because they're not in love anymore. It's simply because they've been forced into a corner of unhappy isolation. But the good news is, there is hope to get out of it.

Before I get into that, yes, I have to say, there are some moms who are content in their mother role and only socialize in a family context. What I mean by the "family context" is they will only go out with friends in a couple unit, they'll talk to other parents at their children's events, etc. My Mother was like this and she was very happy. My Father didn't put limitations on her...she was just content. That's perfectly okay and I make no judgment on someone who is happy with the way her life is.

But you decided to read *Find the Time Mama*, so I'm guessing you may not be so content. You want time to yourself and you deserve it.

One thing to realize, and something you probably shouldn't throw in your spouse's face, is that this type of controlling behavior often stems itself from insecurity. Whether he's insecure:

- About being left alone with the children to care for on his own
- That you'll talk to your friends about him and they'll turn you against him
- That you'll meet somebody else

...it makes it hard for him to let go and allow you the time you desperately need for yourself. A more secure man will understand that he will be happier if his is wife is happy. He also realizes that the 2^{nd} and 3^{rd} points above are more likely to happen if you are stifled and controlled.

Side note: Controlling behavior can also be influenced by culture, but I don't wish to comment on anyone's cultural beliefs. I'm a Canadian woman who has equal rights to men and in my eyes, a marriage is a partnership where the couple works together to define roles they are both happy with. I write from that perspective.

If you feel that your spouse may be insecure, don't confront him about it, make him feel secure. Remember the old adage is true, "You'll catch more flies with honey." Getting angry or throwing out accusations does very little to mend a problem. Make him feel secure instead.

To get him ready to give you more freedom, go slow, and always make sure you make him feel special. Encourage him to go out and have fun with the guys. If you're preventing him from enjoying his "Daddy-time" it's time to check your insecurities at the door too. If you *really* can't trust your spouse, there are deeper issues to look at.

If he's still not ready to let you go, start building up to it by:

- **Going out together.** If it's been FOREVER since you've had a date together, now's the time. Reconnect and make him feel like you not only value your solotime, but time alone with him too.
- **Inviting a friend over after the kids are in bed.** That way, you're still at home and many of the insecurities are removed, for the time being. He can also see and hear you and your friend interact and see that there really is nothing to worry about.
- Talk to him about things you'd like to do. When he's feeling more confident (and don't rush things read the rest of this chapter first!), you can talk to him about things you'd like to do. Tell him about upcoming events you'd like to take part in. Some things he may be interested in doing with you; some things will just be for you and your friends. You don't have to give him any pressure, but gauge how he reacts and he should come around.

When you do go out on your own, give him extra security by:

- Giving him a big, passionate kiss before you go out
- Give him a quick call or a text message while you're out
- Give him another big, passionate kiss when you return home...and then some.

If you come home and you're happy, that'll make him happy. Even if you had a heart-toheart with your friend while you were out and talked about how stifled you feel in your home, don't bring that home. Your partner wants to know that your time out has had positive effects on you, him and your family.

But let's get back to building up your man's security:

Here's some more ideas to help him feel loved and secure, provided by members of the Mom's Talk Forum:

"Hold hands in the grocery store, leave notes in their lunch box, emailing them a sexy note," says Kris.

Arika suggests, "Say I love you before you hang up a phone or close a door. Pinch their rear end as you walk by. Give them a hug while they are sitting on the couch watching their favorite TV show."

Stacie says, "Kiss him goodnight before falling asleep. Wake up early to make him breakfast before work. Walk up behind him, without him knowing and give him a hug."

Vanessa shares that, "One thing that I have done and instantly works for me is writing a message on the mirror in our bathroom. I will write, 'I love you,' or something hot and steamy."

Luann suggests, "Call him whatever you called him when you were dating, engaged, or first married". She also says, "Before you leave, run back like you forgot something, and say I love you. My husband likes that one and falls for it every time."

Kari recommends, *"take a shower together once or twice a week. Works well in my marriage."*

And more ideas for enjoying couple time (wherever you can get it), which is great your relationship:

Prior to a Mom and Dad ONLY grocery shopping trip, forum member Nell shared, "I never thought a trip to the grocery store would excite me, but can you believe I've actually been looking forward to it all week," and then she came back after the grocery shopping trip and reported, "Oh, we had such a great time. Smooching and snuggling in the store. It felt like when we first started dating..."

What's the lesson here? Grocery shopping could have been the usual hum-drum experience, but Nell decided to make it fun and exciting and it did a lot for her relationship with her husband.

Here are some fun date ideas, at-home and out-of-the-home:

- Movie night at home Enjoy snacks and snuggling after the kids have gone to bed.
- Going out to dinner and without the kids, you can even go to places without the paper place mats!
- Meet for lunch while the kids are at school.

- Meet at home for a "nooner" while the kids are at school. ©
- Go out to a movie and snuggle. You can make out too, but don't complain to me if people in the movie theater ask you to cut it out!
- Give the kids Mac & Cheese for dinner early, and then have a romantic candlelight dinner of your own when they go to sleep.
- Slow dance you can do this at a dance club, party, wedding or just at home.
- Back massage. It's relaxing and makes you feel closer.

Whatever you do, show your love. If you're unhappy and you wish to continue the cycle of unhappiness by being unloving in return, nothing will change. But when you start opening up to your husband and showing him you love him, his security will grow.

Copyright FindTheTimeMama.com 2007, All Rights Reserved Tell your friends about FindTheTimeMama.com and Get Paid: <u>http://www.momstalknetwork.com/affiliates/</u>

How to Get Rid of the Guilt

Even if your spouse is supportive of you going out or you're a single mom who has managed to get time away, sometimes that inevitable pang of mommy guilt comes along. We might wonder what kind of mother would leave her children alone. Or will they be well cared for while we're gone or we might even worry that the grandparents might be too challenged by your unruly children. We've all felt this before and on occasion, I still do.

Here are a few ways to obliterate the guilt you feel when going out:

- Remember, you deserve mommy-time. Mommy time relieves stress, refreshes mommy and makes her a better mommy when she gets home.
- Don't compare yourself to other mothers. Who cares if your mother never went out, never hired a babysitter, and never thought of getting a pedicure for herself? You're not your mother!
- It's okay to admit you're not perfect, that you get stressed out and sometimes you just need a break.
- Yes, you're a great mom, but that doesn't mean that others aren't perfectly capable of taking care of, entertaining, and having a great time with your child.
- If you have young children, it's not uncommon for them to cry when you leave. Just realize, it's usually temporary pang of separation anxiety and within minutes, your child will be having a great and so should you!

For more Mommy Guilt Help (in all of those guilty-feeling situations): Pick up a copy of by Julie Bort, Aviva Pflock and Devra Renner's book <u>Mommy Guilt: Learn To Worry</u> Less, Focus On What Matters Most, And Raise Happier Kids.

> Copyright FindTheTimeMama.com 2007, All Rights Reserved Tell your friends about FindTheTimeMama.com and Get Paid: <u>http://www.momstalknetwork.com/affiliates/</u>

Fun Ideas for a Mom Out on Her Own

So you've finally got the time to go out on your own and you're ready to overcome the guilt while you enjoy your free time, but what are you going to do?

The sky's the limit!

If it's been a long time since you've gone out on your own, think back to what you used to love doing before you became a mom, or if necessary, before you got married or found your current partner. What hobbies did you enjoy? What things did you do with your friends? What did you to relax?

Here are some ideas for at-home mommy time – just make sure the kids are wellattended to or out with Daddy so you can enjoy your time:

- Have a bubble bath.
- Cuddle up with a good book.
- Have a friend over to watch a movie or enjoy a glass of wine.
- Give yourself a manicure &/or pedicure.
- Try a new hair color.
- Invite your friend over to help each other with the manicures, pedicures and hair colorings.
- Call up an old friend you haven't talked to in a while.
- Have a friend over for a game night.
- Email your friends to catch up.

*Important Tip: If you have young kids, you'll find you'll get to enjoy plenty of more YOU time, if you set a regular bedtime and stick to it. A regular schedule is good for your kids and it's good for you too!

Take your time on the run:

If you spend time waiting for your kids outside extra-curricular classes, in doctor's offices or in play areas for younger kids, consider this a little YOU time too. Bring along a book, a journal, a hobby you enjoy, your cell phone or whatever you'd like.

Really get out and enjoy yourself:

To really get full relaxation, rejuvenation, and adult interaction, you've got to get out once in a while. In fact, it's even better if it's regularly than just once in a while. Schedule a once a week outing just for mom. If you're a single mom and need a

babysitter, this may not always be possible, but do try for at least a couple times per month. Once you get into the hermit-at-home habit, it's hard to break free from it. B

Fun things for a mom to do to lift her spirits, boost her confidence, and relieve her stress:

- Get a pedicure
- Get a manicure
- Get your hair done
- Get a massage or other spa treatment
- Go to a movie
- Go out for lunch or dinner
- Go out for drinks
- Catch a live theatre performance
- Go shopping and get yourself something nice. It doesn't even have to expensive!
- Check your local newspaper or community website for current events
- Go to a friend's house for drinks, for a movie or what have you
- Have a lady's only dinner party your house or theirs.
- Go biking, hiking or enjoy some other outdoor activity

Other "Time for Yourself Ideas" from Moms Like You:

You know our Mom's Talk Forum members are never short on ideas. Here's what they said they like to do for "Mom Time":

Jill likes to, "go to the gym. Or send my husband on an errand with the kids and a long list."

Note: Gyms are a great place for stress-relief and as you get into better shape, it's a great motivator to keep going. Many gyms also have affordable childcare while you work out or may even include childcare in your membership fee.

Kari prefers to, "go to the mall, get pedicures, get my hair done, join a pilates reformer class, go to the book store."

Mel's "me-time" includes enjoying, "a long, relaxing soak in a warm tub, while reading a book."

Karlyn also enjoys at-home activities and spends time, "on the computer chatting with my friends in my forum. I also like curling up in bed with a good movie. That's relaxing to me."

Aurelia has, "a standing bi-weekly appointment at the nail salon [for a] manicure and brow wax." She also goes out every other Saturday with friends for dinner and/or dancing. Aurelia also adds about her husband, "Each and every Friday night (like clockwork), he packs up his pool stick and heads to shoot pool with his friends."

Note: We already covered that, but make sure HE has his "ME-TIME" too! But another important lesson in what Aurelia said is to **schedule it**. That way, both you and your partner know what to expect and you can stop making excuses for why you don't get out there more often.

According to single mom, Tishia, "I get my nails done – I can't live without my acrylics, my hair done when I can afford it, read books, take bubble baths, get together a friend or friends for lunch."

Melissa enjoys, "lunch or dinner with friends. Hubby insists!"

Kris enjoys a lot of at-home mom-time and a spiritual awakening. She says:

- "I do about 2 bubble bath's with candles a week."
- "I have been taking 10 minute little me-time pampering sessions at night now. I give myself a nice facial, I use my pedicure kit and then get into my pajamas. Just having that quiet time all to myself feels really nice."
- "I am trying to get back to church on Sunday's, that is me time."

Copyright FindTheTimeMama.com 2007, All Rights Reserved Tell your friends about FindTheTimeMama.com and Get Paid: <u>http://www.momstalknetwork.com/affiliates/</u>

Final Thoughts & Encouragement

Where you go from here is completely up to you. My hope is that I have not only shown the importance of finding the time for you...but how important it is for your happy family.

There's no need to go on strike and demand that you get your independence or else...that's not what Find the Time Mama is all about. It's about creating happiness and balance within your family and your relationship with your partner, so it is more natural for you to spend time to yourself, cultivating those long lost friendship and relieving the stress that can build up.

Start small and keep it within your family's comfort zone. When your family sees how happy you are when you get time to yourself, they'll start encouraging you to do it over again and over again.

If you're still struggling to get organized and really find time for yourself and the things you need to do in your day, I'd really like to encourage you to pick up a copy of the *Mom's Talk Guide to Organizing Your Life & Making More Time*.

This guide will show you:

- The true benefits of being organized
- Organization tips just for moms
- Getting rid of clutter
- Organizing your home, room-by-room
- Getting the whole family involved

...and more. Check it out and grab your copy at:

http://www.momstalkebooks.com/organizing.html

You and your family will be glad you did.

Resources for the Mom Who Needs to Find the Time

- Forum for Moms: <u>http://www.MomsTalkForum.com</u>: Talk to other moms going through the exact same things as you.
- Hot Mama Makeover: <u>http://www.hotmamamakeover.com/thanksabunch.html</u>: Get your free *Hot Mama Makeover...*the guide that inspired *Find the Time Mama*.
- Mom's Talk Guide to Organizing Your Life: <u>http://www.momstalkebooks.com/organizing.html</u>: Get organized and find even more time for yourself, your family and the things that are important to you. An organized family is a happy family.
- **Mommy Guilt:** <u>http://www.momstalkrecommends.com/mommyguilt.html</u>: It's normal to feel the pangs of "mommy guilt", whether we're taking time for ourselves, or we're feeling like less than perfect mothers. This guide shows you how to get rid of the guilt to raise happy, well-adjusted children.
- Get Paid to Tell Moms about *Find the Time Mama*: <u>http://www.momstalknetwork.com/affiliates.html</u>: Get paid when other moms sign up to read the free Find the Time Mama guide.

Copyright FindTheTimeMama.com 2007, All Rights Reserved Tell your friends about FindTheTimeMama.com and Get Paid: <u>http://www.momstalknetwork.com/affiliates/</u>

Brought to you by Alice & Mila at http://www.MomsTalkNetwork.com