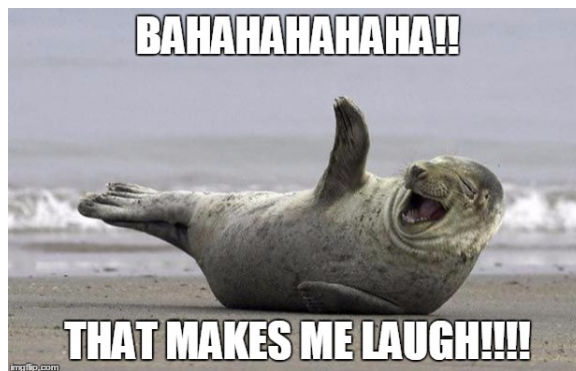


Are You Prioritizing What Actually Matters to You?

2/4/2020

[Last week](#), we focused on identifying some of your values as a mom. We hope you used the [Mom Values Roadmap](#) to start thinking about what kind of mom you want to be. Thinking about who you'd be if anything were possible can help you think outside of the box and maybe aim higher than you otherwise would. But, now what? Just because you *know* something doesn't mean that you *do* something about it. So, let's turn our attention to *doing*.

You're starting to form a picture in your mind of the mom (or person) you want to be. How are you going to make that happen? Well, you just...you just want it bad enough and you work even harder, of course. Yeah...you worker harder and you...you suddenly become more organized and efficient. You may get less sleep and have less free time...but at some point, it *will* happen.



Yeah, right. That's so sealy! But, let's get real. Do things that matter the most usually involve hard work? Absolutely. Most big things in life don't come easily. But, instead of adding demands to your already long to-do list and trying to put your best effort into EVERYTHING, you could evaluate your list, eliminate or minimize things that don't really matter to you, add things that do, then prioritize and adjust your effort based on your priorities.

Piece of cake, right? Speaking of cake, imagine you had your favorite kind of cake- a beautifully decorated, absolutely delicious cake. If you don't like or can't eat cake, imagine a pie, pizza or other circular, sliceable food. There are many ways you could slice that cake. You could cut it in

half, into quarters, into 8 slices. Some slices could be larger than others- they don't *have to be* equal. But, there's only 1 cake and once it's gone, it's gone. You can't add more cake.



As a person, you have a finite amount of time, energy, mental resources and tangible resources (e.g., money, supplies, available transportation, etc.). What if your your cake was made of your resources? You could cut it into slices but at some point, you'd run out of cake. Piling more on your plate and just trying to do it all doesn't work because you'll never have enough "cake" to give equal and/or big enough slices to everything in your life.

At this point, you could lament about how that isn't fair or argue that there *has to be* a way to give your *all* to *everything*. OR, you could focus on that amazing cake. *You're* the one who can choose whether, to whom and what size of slices you give to others. Do you want to give slices of your cake to people you don't even like, who are mean and/or never satisfied? You *could* give them slices, but do you *want* to? If you do, you take away slices you could give to people that matter to you *and* you may not have any cake left over for yourself. (Yes, you get to eat the cake too. It's your cake.)

Now, think about how you slice your "cake" in your daily life. How do you spend your resources (time, energy, mental and tangible resources)? Are you selective in how they're used? Do you give "slices" to people and places and things that matter to you? Do you save any for yourself? Keep in mind that your resources are far more valuable than your imaginary cake! And, *you* get to choose how you use them. You can let others decide for you, like your kid who stalls, hoping you'll take out the trash, so (s)he doesn't have to. You can adopt others' priorities, like your

friend who spends every weekend focused only on her kids' activities. Or, you could identify what you have to do (e.g., go to work, make sure you and your family have a place to live and food to eat) and think about the kind of mom you *want* to be. Are there ways you can be *the mom you want to be* in things you already have to do? Are there new things you want to do to be *the mom you want to be*? If you change your focus, you'll also need to change how you spend your resources.

Even if you decide to be *the mom you want to be* by bringing a new characteristic into an existing activity, it will take mental (and maybe physical) energy. If you wanted to be *present* and *have more fun* with your family, you'd need to identify what you *have to do* at work and home, then figure out how to get that stuff done in the allotted time (e.g., do boring paperwork *at work* instead of chatting with a coworker so you don't have to bring it home). That way, those mandatory tasks won't prevent family time and won't be hanging over your head while you're with your family. The stuff you'd like to do- that isn't mandatory or part of family time- you'd let go. That's right: sometimes things will not get done because you can't give your whole self to everything.

We created a [Prioritize and Emphasize worksheet](#) to help you think about where your resources are being spent and why, as well as what you'd like to focus on in the service of your mom values. We hope you check it out! Here's a great quote to keep in mind (author is unknown):
"In order to say yes to your priorities, you have to be willing to say no to something else."