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10 LESSONS

FROM A
NEW
MOM

How to stay sane in your new normal



As a new mom, I learned early on the importance of a few key items to help me stay sane, balanced and allow me to focus on what's truly important. A year and a half into parenthood, I finally managed to find time to write this.

Browse our eBook for 10 lessons that I have learned so far from my adventures in parenthood...



LESSON

1

Have a parenting circle of friends

As a new parent, it is extremely helpful to have other parents to look to for advice, ideas and to share a good laugh. Try having a family potluck dinner with friends who have children close in age to your own. Not only is this a great time to relax and catch up, but you may just get more out of those nights than any childcare book that you've been meaning to read, as well as some much needed down time with other adults.

Holiday cookie swap, anyone?

Catch up with friends and wrap up some tasty homemade gifts in one night.



LESSON

2

Ask for help

Speak up, ask for help and delegate tasks. People love to help, but they just might not know how. Have a newborn? Ask a friend or family member to cook a meal or watch the baby while you shower, sleep or even just go for a walk without your little one.

Doing everything yourself is overrated.



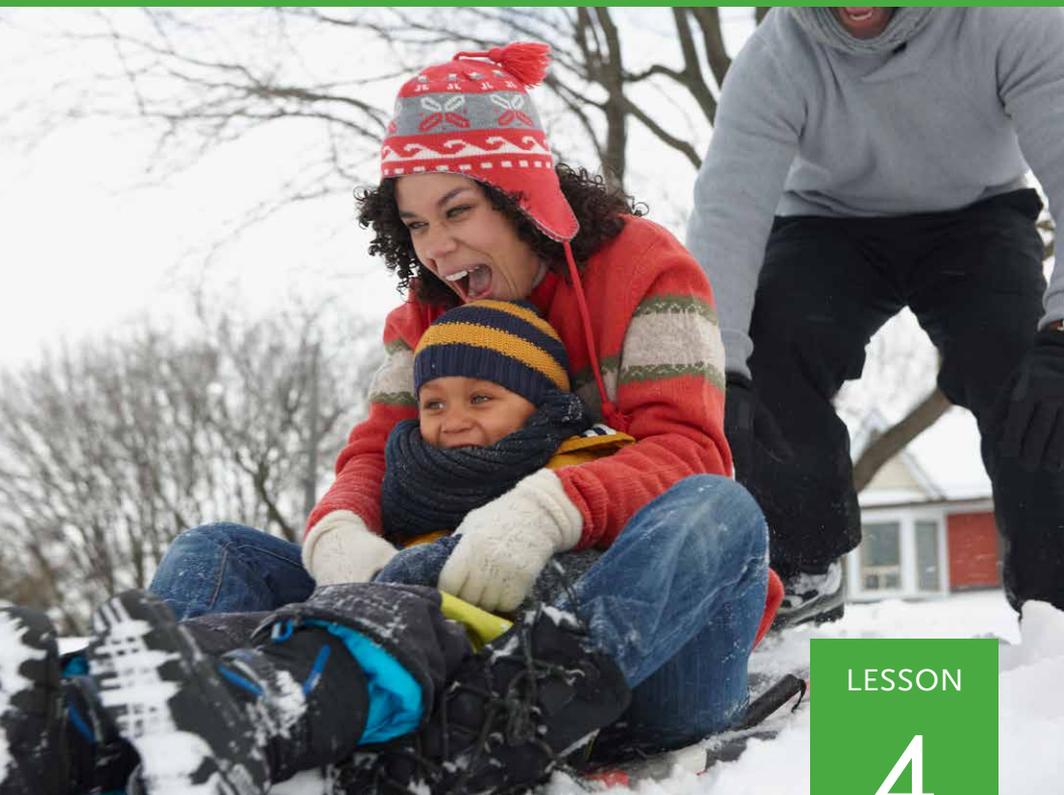
LESSON

3

Take care of yourself

Life gets complicated when mom (or dad) gets sick. Take care of yourself to stay healthy. Eat well, sleep when your baby sleeps as much as you can. There is no shame in going to bed early. You'll need more and more rest in order to keep up with your growing child! Get an annual physical, even if you consider yourself to be healthy. It's also important to make time for friends, so schedule a girls' night out once in a while to stay connected, and to unwind.

There is no shame in going to bed early.



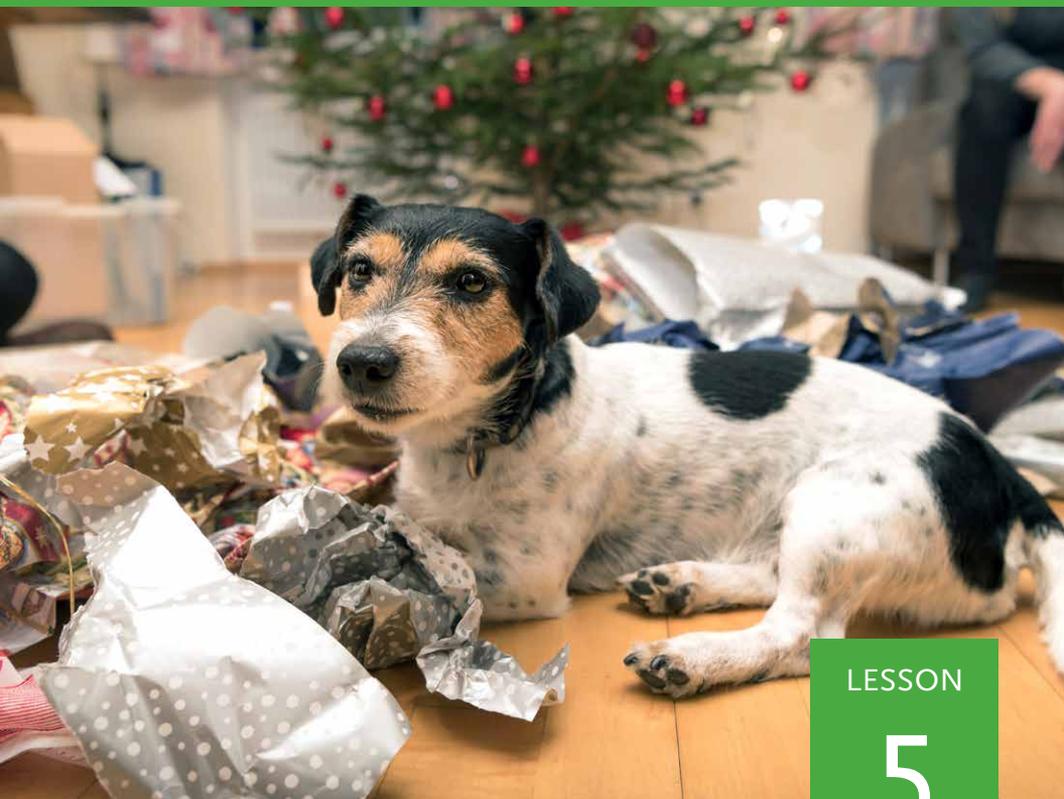
LESSON

4

Create memories, not debt

For many, the holidays bring unnecessary pressure to spend, spend, spend. Resist the urge to run out and buy gifts and gadgets galore for your little one. The truth is, babies and toddlers don't need much to stay entertained. Get crafty and plan a low key art project at home. Make a date to explore a new place together as a family. And remember, making forts from cardboard boxes and couch cushions never gets old.

Focus on the experience, not the expense.



LESSON

5

Take it in stride

I try to remind myself of this when my toddler son jumps in our dog's water bowl and soaks himself when we're already running late in the morning. Or when he refuses to let go of any variety of household items (belts, spatulas, tubes of toothpaste, shoes) and they all must join us on the morning commute, I just have to laugh.

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to laugh.



LESSON

6

Make your life easier

Save precious time and money with auto-delivery for diapers and other baby essentials (many online retailers offer discounts when you set up auto-ship). The less I have to remember to do on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, the better. That includes having automatic payments for bills, including my life insurance policy, because it's one more thing that helps me worry less. Yes, having life insurance helps me worry less.

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LESSON

7

Say no

With limited time, it's important to focus on what matters most to you and your family. Weekends are short. It's OK to decline an invite to a birthday party for that one year-old you only see at daycare drop-off and live 30 miles from. Trust me.

It's important to focus on what matters most.



LESSON

8

Don't count yourself out

Having a child means you have more on your plate, but that doesn't mean you should automatically stop reaching for what you want. And it definitely means you should not let others dictate what you can and cannot do. If there's something you really want, whether it's a new job, taking a class, or training for that charity bike ride, if you really want something, you can figure out how to make it happen. This is where your support system comes in.

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LESSON

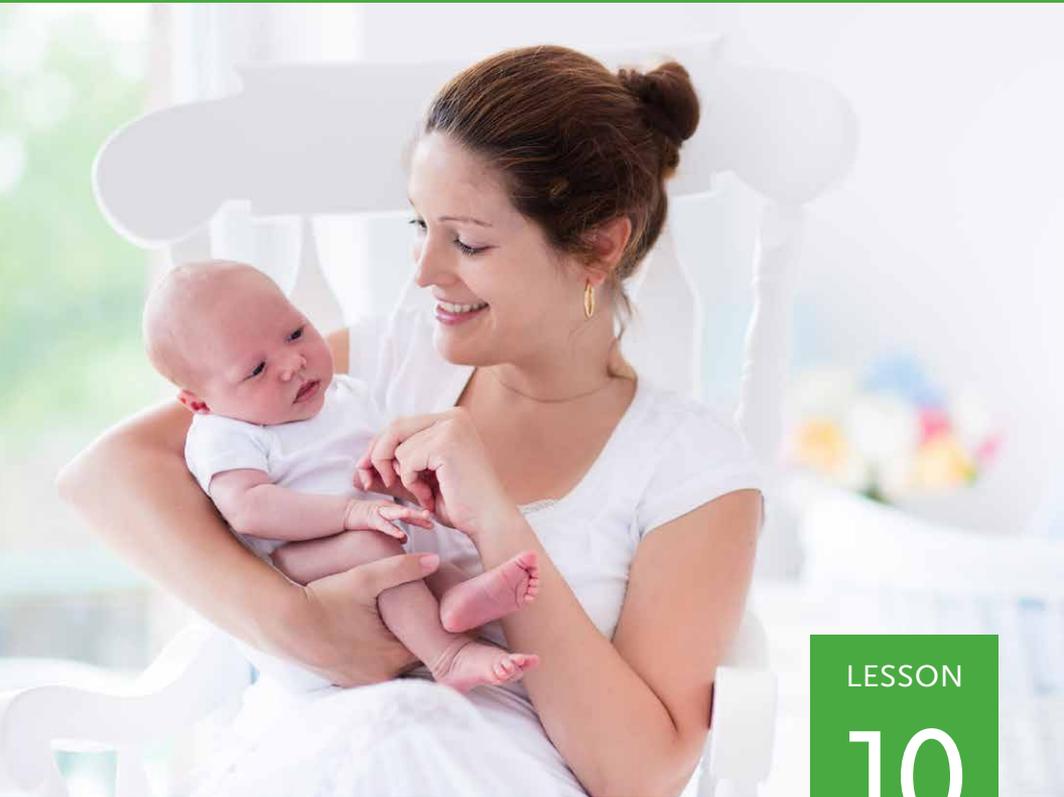
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Get to know your crockpot

A little prep beforehand frees up valuable time in the evening and makes meals easier. Both my son and I get cranky and angry when we're hungry. I have come to accept that, and try to do what I can to avoid the family "hangry" zone and make the post-work dinner dash more peaceful. That is why I love to walk into my home at the end of a long day and be greeted by the aroma of a warm home-cooked meal. It makes the weight of all those evenings to-dos just float away. No crockpot? No problem, batch cooking works well too. Having an ample supply of healthy leftovers for the week allows you to enjoy more family time in the evening.

BBQ Chicken Drumsticks

Drizzle olive oil in your crockpot. Place 10 frozen chicken drumsticks in your crockpot. Whisk together 1/2 cup bbq sauce and 1 cup water, give or take. Pour over chicken. Cook on low for 8 hours. Serve over rice and veggies.



LESSON

10

Slow down and be grateful

Time flies, so slow down once in a while to give thanks and to soak in those memories. What may seem like a monumental challenge now, will be a distant memory in the not too distant future. Parenting is a marathon, a completely worthwhile and enjoyable one. So work hard, play hard and be grateful for all the good that your child brings to your life.

Parenting is a marathon, a completely worthwhile and enjoyable one.

Now go enjoy your adventures in parenthood!

As a new parent your financial picture changes.
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