

PEDAGOGICAL INPUT

for the adventure of family life



59_ That's when you get out of breath

The toddler is creaming, the older child is running like crazy through the apartment and then the phone rings. At the same time dinner must be prepared. The mountain of laundry is not getting any smaller and the next morning at work full performance should be achieved again. With the burden multiplying, permanent stress is the result. "Most of the time it's the mothers who burn out first", says Friederike Otto, certified pedagogue.

If the body is constantly on alert, health suffers in the long term.

Then it is difficult not to pass the overload on to the child. Stressed mothers are more likely to be irritable, dismissive, and sometimes even aggressive towards their children. Even the smallest problems increase the stress level. Relaxation is out of the question. Resting on mothers' shoulders is a lot of work and great responsibility, which often gets little recognition.

Overwhelmed parents find it difficult to respond appropriately to their children's needs.

The old myth of "the self-sacrificing mother" often reigns in people's minds: A mother must always be there for her family. But where are the mothers' needs and limits? Often fallen by the wayside. This emotional state can affect the entire family system. If the mother can't take it anymore, the children can react with uncertainty. They often become restless, whiny, have trouble concentrating and are therefore less able to solve problems.

The mother's well-being is a top priority.

Subordinating this to everything else harms not only the mother herself, but the entire family. Many mothers feel selfish when they say "no" to the wishes of other family members. But precisely this "saying no" needs to be learned. This is easier if it is understood as "yes" to oneself. If I agree with (say yes to) myself, I'll find it easier to say "not now" "no, I don't like that", "no, I don't have any inclination/patience/energy, ... any more" without feeling guilty. Or I'll burn out. Women can learn to say "stop" when it gets too much.

In a competent family, everyone helps the others say "no."

Jesper Juul, book: Grundsteine für die Familie (Foundation Stones for the Family), page 32

It is important to look for breaks, build networks, involve the partner more, ask relatives for help. It is striking how difficult some mothers find it to ask others for help. This is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of taking responsibility for oneself. Adults who take responsibility for themselves are a wonderful role model for their children.

Relaxed and satisfied parents are good for children.

Open conversations with your partner (or with friends if you don't have a partner) are important. Together we have to look for ways where the woman can regain strength. These paths are different in every family. But it is important that the situation is taken seriously and solutions are sought together. No child is better off than its parents. Children feel guilty when their parents are not doing well. If you do good to yourself, you automatically do good to the children. Relaxed and happy parents allow children to be themselves, relax and develop.

That's why: Take yourself seriously as a woman and mother. Take responsibility for your well-being. This is not only good for you, but for the whole family.

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