

Ep #24: Mastering Time Management With a New Baby: Practical Tips for Parents



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Devon Clement

Ep #24: Mastering Time Management With a New Baby: Practical Tips for Parents

Ever wonder how to manage your time with a new baby so you can actually get more done and still have a moment for yourself. It might sound impossible, but it's not, I promise. This week we're replaying an episode where we dive into the common time management challenges new parents face and share practical, easy-to-apply tips to help you make the most of your time. Ready to reclaim your time and find balance? Let's get started.

Welcome to *Parenthood Prep*, the only show that helps sleep-deprived parents and overwhelmed parents-to-be successfully navigate those all-important early years with their baby, toddler, and child. If you are ready to provide the best care for your newborn, manage those toddler tantrums, and grow with your child, you're in the right place. Now here's your host, baby and parenting expert, Devon Clement.

Hello, and welcome back to the *Parenthood Prep Podcast*, the podcast that prepares you for parenthood.

Whether you're planning to become a parent, expecting a baby, or already there, we have everything you need. Today I am in my apartment, and it's become a bit of a cat hotel. I do volunteer work with some rescue organizations, and we have a few cats that are sort of in the process of moving to foster homes or being fixed and returned to their colonies, and they're all sort of staying in various rooms and spaces in my house. So that's interesting. I'm a little bit of a cat hotelier for the weekend. Today we're going to be talking about how to get things done when you have a baby.

Time management is so important, and it becomes so, so difficult when you have a little person who just does not want to wait for anything. They do not have patience. You cannot punt their needs to tomorrow the way you can with business calls or emails or whatever. You just have to do what they need when they need it, at least in those early days. So I always think that this is something that is so hard to understand before you have a baby. Like, yes, you think, oh, well, yeah, I'm going to be spending time doing things for my baby, feeding them, changing their diaper, but really they're going to be sleeping most of the time or just hanging out.

Ep #24: Mastering Time Management With a New Baby: Practical Tips for Parents

And a lot of the time that's not true. They just need things constantly. And there's also a lot more stuff that you have to take care of. They have clothes and food and things that you need to clean and deal with. Something that always makes me laugh, I'll be talking to a potential sleep training client and I'm like, okay, what would be different about your life? What would be improved if your baby was sleeping well, napping well, doing this stuff?

And I have to tell you, like half the time they say, "I would be able to do the laundry. I just want some peace so I can cook and clean." And I'm like, wow, those are lofty goals. I mean, it's great. I love people feeling like they're staying on top of their to-do list and feeling productive, but it's also kind of a bummer that your life is so difficult that doing the laundry would be a treat for you or it's so challenging that you cannot even get the most basic chores done. And I want to help you guys, I want to help you make that easier to find the time not only to do the things that you need to do like the laundry and the dishes, but also the things that you want to do like spend time with your partner or go back to your hobbies or read a book or scroll on your phone.

What the hell? That's what I do half the time anyway. You know, watch a TV show uninterrupted. So there's a couple of simple tips I'm going to give you that I want you to really retain and hold on to because they sound so simple but they actually can just make such a tremendous difference for you. The first one is based on a piece of advice that sort of famous love and relationship advice columnist and podcaster Dan Savage gives. Now I have very mixed feelings about a lot of the advice he gives.

Some of it's good, some of it's not so good. But this thing in particular I think is really, really valuable and does not just apply to sex and relationships. And the way that he phrases this advice is fuck first. We're not going to keep saying that even though I'm from New Jersey and I love an F word. We're going to say first things first, meaning do not wait. Just go ahead and do it.

If it's a date night and you're going out to dinner and you're going to be eating a lot of food and you're going to be drinking wine and you're really looking forward to getting romantic at the end of the night but then it actually reaches the end of the night and you're tired and you're a little drunk and you're overly full from

Ep #24: Mastering Time Management With a New Baby: Practical Tips for Parents

dinner, you're not going to do it. So fuck first. Do it before you go out. If it's your, you know, wedding day, do it in between the ceremony and the reception. Just do it when you want to do it instead of putting it off to a future point where it's going to be sort of ideal circumstances. Now we know that nothing in life ever has ideal circumstances, right?

So I'm going to expand this advice a little bit and we're going to change it to do it first. And what that means is whatever you want to do, do it first. Whether it's taking a shower, making a meal, or doing the laundry. When you have that moment of freedom, whether it's because your baby is playing by themselves peacefully, or because you've gotten them down for a nap, or because someone else is there, do it first. Just do the thing that you want to do. And what that means is that before you get that lovely, rare window of free time, you need to decide what the thing is that you want to do.

So you're like, okay, at the next nap, the first thing I'm going to do is hop in the shower, or I'm really tired, I'm going to try to take a nap, or I'm really hungry, I want to eat something. Because as we all know, when you finally get that free moment, you're going to spend it going and then you're going to start looking at your phone or you're going to get distracted or you're going to start doing the dishes when the dishes are not the thing that you've chosen for yourself to do. So do it first. What is the thing that you want to do? Just do it. Maybe it is fucking.

Maybe you and your partner want to get romantic after you put the baby to bed. By all means, go for it, you guys. We're going to have a future episode all about that, probably several. Do it first. Do it first. Okay?

I know that advice sounds really simple, but it is going to change your life. Now, you have this list a mile long. Your breaks from the baby are pretty minimal, and you do not know how you're ever going to get it done. Well, guess what? You can do it when the baby is awake. You can do it when the baby is fussy or hanging out or playing or whatever.

You know, if you have a newborn and they're not wanting to be put down, needing to be held, put them in a baby carrier, do the laundry, go for a walk, do

Ep #24: Mastering Time Management With a New Baby: Practical Tips for Parents

the things that you want to do while the baby is awake. There's no law that says you are not allowed to do anything because you have to be fully focused on your baby. And in fact, I think this is something culturally that we've really started doing so much more and I hate it so much, is that we think the baby deserves all of our focus and all of our attention when they are awake. Like we want to sit with them, we want to play with them, we want to engage with them. We do not want to be looking at our phones. They really need attention.

I have met stay-at-home parents who hire a nanny just so that someone can be, you know, with the baby all day, whether it's the parent or the nanny, you know, switching off, and that is not doing babies any good. First of all, they need way less stimulation and then we are constantly giving them. They want to be way more chilled out. They do not need us shaking toys in their face, especially in the first like two months. Do not be shaking toys in their face. Do not be showing them videos and playing kids music super loud when it's annoying and you hate it.

Listen to stuff that you want to listen to. Let them watch you. Let them observe you living your life. Let them observe their older siblings or the other people that are around. They do not need constant focused attention. Now, does that mean you should never talk to your baby or never make eye contact or just throw them in their crib all day like they did in the 1930s?

Of course not. But getting them used to being a part of the family structure, waiting when there needs to be patience, watching when you're doing something that they cannot be involved with, you are allowed to do all of those things. I see parents all the time sitting with their baby, playing on the floor, not even really doing anything because the baby's just laying there like doing tummy time or whatever. And then as soon as the baby goes to sleep, you clean up the toys, you start the laundry, you start the dishes, and then you use this whole nap time running around like a crazy person, and you never get to just sit and relax, do something for yourself, eat, shower, any of those things. So really take advantage of the time that your baby is awake.

And when they get a little older, honestly, not that much older, I mean, even four months, six months, but especially like nine months, 10 months a year, toddlers,

Ep #24: Mastering Time Management With a New Baby: Practical Tips for Parents

get them involved. Like, let's put the toys away together. I am not going to let you make a huge mess while you're awake, then I put you down and I run around cleaning up your mess. That is teaching them the absolute wrong lessons. We want them to be responsible for their own messes. And yes, of course, at first a toddler or a little baby is not going to be very helpful, but the more we introduce them to it, the more we involve them, the more helpful they're going to become.

So it's really worth putting the time in with them to start building those skills and get them to that place. I promise you it is totally doable and it is worth it. Same thing with your own chores, doing laundry, making food, loading the dishwasher. Let them be involved, let them be part of it, let them watch you and play and have fun, but also really see what goes into taking care of a family, taking care of a house in the course of a day. Same thing if you have a nanny, like tell the nanny any extra stuff she's doing or they're doing while the kids are awake. Then this way, nap time becomes a blissful break for you where you can rest or you can do something that feels fulfilling to you or something that would be challenging for you to do when you have the baby at your feet.

And that can really be your time. So do not be afraid to use the time when your baby is awake to do some of the things that you want to take care of. Another time you really want to employ the do it first strategy is when you're going to sleep at night. Especially if you have a tough sleeper or bedtime takes a long time. I mean, these are all topics that we're going to cover on the podcast, but if that's something that you're dealing with, you finally get the kids down, you're like still in your clothes from the day, then you're so exhausted you end up sitting on the couch, you know, scrolling or watching mindless television for an hour and then you have to eat dinner and you have to take a shower and you have to get in your pajamas and you have to do all those things. Do those things beforehand.

Do them before bedtime. Figure out how to make it work so that you and the kids are getting ready for bed at the same time. Be in your pajamas when you're putting them to sleep. If you have a baby that's not eating at the table with you and you want to eat dinner after the baby goes to bed, start thinking about it before bedtime. If you're going to make food, if you're going to order food, get

Ep #24: Mastering Time Management With a New Baby: Practical Tips for Parents

that ready to go so that as soon as the baby is down, you can eat and you can get ready and get in bed or just do things that feel good to you in your pajamas. Do not waste time that you could be spending doing something better.

So those are my tips. I told you they were really simple, but they are so important and they will absolutely be life-changing. Do things while your baby or your kids are awake. And do it first, figure out what your priority is, what you want to get done, and do it as soon as you have the opportunity.

Alright, listen up, folks. We love to joke around but it's time to get real. And that real talk, it's all about giving your babies the roasting they deserve. Yep, you heard it right. We're calling for an epic Baby Roast.

We want you to drop a voice note on our website and call out your little ones for their adorable crimes. Did your baby spit up on your brand-new dress the second you put it on? Maybe they decided to scream through your sister's wedding vows? We want to hear all the juicy details.

Head over to HappyFamilyAfter.com, or hit the link in the show notes. Every page on the site has a button on the side for you to record straight from your phone. Your story might just make it onto an episode of the *Parenthood Prep* podcast. We can't wait to hear.

If you enjoyed today's show and don't want to worry about missing an episode, you can follow the show wherever you listen to your podcasts. If you haven't already, I would really appreciate it if you could share the podcast with others who you think would benefit. Leave a rating and review to let me know what you think. It doesn't have to be a five-star rating, although I sure hope you love the show. I want your honest feedback, so I can create an awesome podcast that provides tons of value.

Visit HappyFamilyAfter.com/podcastlaunch for step-by-step instructions on how to follow, rate, and review.

Thanks for listening to this week's episode of *Parenthood Prep*. If you want to learn more about the services Devon offers, as well as access her free monthly newborn care webinars, head on over to www.HappyFamilyAfter.com.