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ABOVE //
Heather Vance Devers
in her home with her
daughter, Betty, and
son, Jude.

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breaking point

VE BEEN WORKING ON THIS EDITOR'S NOTE FOR WEEKS.

It's only 400 words, but I want it to be perfect because the feature in this issue hits so close to home.

Almost two years ago, with a 4-month-old baby boy who hadn't slept through the night since birth, a "spirited" 4-year-old girl, and a husband who was traveling constantly for work, I was done. Burned out. Absolutely pushed to the brink of my sanity. I remember a particularly dark moment when my daughter was throwing her umpteenth tantrum of the day after I had *finally* gotten the baby down for a nap, and she woke him up. I lost it. I sobbed so hard that my daughter got scared. That was when I knew I needed help. I needed to put myself back in the equation.

That night I desperately Googled therapists who specialized in post partum depression and emailed the closest one. I called my general practitioner, and we came up with a plan: therapy to help lower my anxiety and manage my depression, and Zoloft to level out my moods. Within weeks I was feeling less isolated; I was losing the urge to run away and never come back. I found a gym with great child care so I could carve out some time for self-care. Did my kids hate it at first? You know it. But my therapist helped me realize that I had to fill *my* well before I could fill my kids', so I kept at it. And you know what? I started to gain a little of myself back. I started meditating when I felt overwhelmed. I started putting myself out there to make more mom friends. I started to realize that I am someone beyond "Mom," and that is OK.

Is mommy burnout something that you fix and never have to deal with again? Absolutely not. It's a black dog that sits on my doorstep, and if I'm not intentional about making time for myself, it starts scratching at the door.

Why do most of us struggle with burnout? I think it's a combination of the pressure of social media, the surplus of conflicting information on how to raise our kids, the strain of balancing 20 different activities to ensure our kids get into the best schools, and the expectation to do it all in a fashionable outfit with a smile on our face. We can't do it all.

I'm sharing my story with you in case you're struggling with burnout. If you're reading this while locked in the bathroom hiding from your kids, you're not alone. If you want to talk, I'm here. Email me—heather@dfwchild.com

Heather

Heather Vance Devers

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