

HEALTH

# You're allowed to feel overwhelmed and you should talk about it.



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NOVEMBER 24, 2014



## A Mamamia Story



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By NICOLE MADIGAN

Last week I had one of those days.

Our house is for sale and the phone was ringing hot one morning while I was trying to get the kids organised for school and kindy, as well as care for my 9-month-old baby.

Without boring you with the details, things weren't going to plan on the house front, requiring multiple phone calls, mostly unpleasant.

Meanwhile, the [kids wanted breakfast](#) and the baby needed changing.

I needed everyone to be quiet so I could talk. And think.

I finally escaped the phone and promptly told off the kids for daring to complain of hunger as I tried to get the school, kindy and nanny bags packed.

Shoving everyone out the door, I sniffed. Bubba girl's nappy still needed changing which I hastily dealt with and we headed for the car.

*Just as an FYI, you should know that this is an advertorial for [Queensland Government](#).*

As I drove, I felt the guilt and stress combine, transforming into that familiar feeling of anxiety that creeps in whenever life seems particularly overwhelming.

And to top it off, after walking the tribe to the classroom to drop my eldest off, he casually reminded me it was swimming day.

Meanwhile, baby is starving.

I raced to drop off the swimming bag, get back home, feed my hungry bub, contemplate the [housework, bills and multiple work deadlines](#) due the following day... and I promptly burst into tears.

Then I did what I always do when I feel like I'm failing at life – I called my mum.

I cried. I ranted. I raved.

She listened, she reassured, she offered advice.

I was laughing by the time I hung up the phone, having moved on from my drama to some other benign gossip.

*Nothing beats a good cuppa.*

I made a cuppa and got on with the day, and suddenly things didn't seem so bad.

Until the next time life took over – and once again I called my mum, and I felt ok. Because it's amazing what simply talking can do when you're [feeling stressed or anxious](#).

Unfortunately though, many mums – myself included – feel they just don't have the right to feel anxious or overwhelmed, let alone to talk about it.

Our lives aren't extraordinary, we tell ourselves.

We have children and work and run households – sure it's busy and stressful, but it's the same for thousands of other men & women.

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Except that's the very reason we should speak up when we feel overwhelmed.

The pressures on families, and mothers in particular, can be intense.

And when we keep those feelings of anxiety to ourselves – even if they are only fleeting – they can manifest over time and become something bigger and more problematic.

Deep down, we all know that if we take proper care of ourselves, we cope better with the pressures of raising a family, and life becomes more enjoyable for everyone.

The key is reaching out before things get out of hand.

*A chat can make all the difference.*

One conversation can make all the difference.

Off-load about a disastrous day with your partner, parent or friend and you might be surprised at how prepared to listen they actually are.

Maybe you just need to talk about something other than your own daily routine – chat to the mums at the school gate, talk to colleagues or arrange a playdate with one of your children's friends... a five-minute gossip might just be the break you need.

If that seems daunting, jump on social media – you'd be surprised how many supportive virtual groups are out there and you can rest assured there are many women feeling exactly the same way you are.



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The Talking Families initiative aims to encourage parents to reach out when they're feeling vulnerable by reminding them that how they're feeling is completely normal and that it's okay to talk to people around them and to ask for help.

Take a look at the Talking Families video and most parents will instantly relate to the feeling of being about to crack.



The most important thing to remember though is simply to talk – to family, friends, colleagues, even strangers.

It's amazing how much a simple conversation can ease the burden of life, and turn mountains back into molehills.

*The website also offers some fantastic tips on how to approach conversation if it's not readily available to you (<http://www.talkingfamilies.qld.gov.au/>).*

*We all know that life is getting busier, and pressure on families is growing. Yet many of us are uncomfortable with asking for help when we need it, or just don't know where to turn. But you're never as alone as you might think.*

*It's OK to talk about how you feel, or to ask family and friends for the help you need. One conversation ... could make all the difference.*

*This is a Queensland Family and Child Commission initiative.*

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mum's are awesome, I lost my mum when my kids were still in primary and still miss her,

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Its a website. If you have internet you can use it 😊