

Stopping For A Breath In May

The month of May for our family has been booked solid for months. Now that we are in the midst of this wonderful month, there is literally ONE day on our calender for the whole month that remains empty. But I have to say, when busyness such as this used to stress me out just a few years ago, I have since learned to embrace it and enjoy these good times. I've been able to find a healthy balance between planning ahead and making myself crazy worrying about every little detail; a compromise between taking one day at a time and also being organized enough to think ahead (but not too much to be stressed).

This coming weekend is just an example of the busyness of every weekend in May: Friday night we are going to Fort Wayne to see a minor league baseball game, Saturday we are double-booked with an event for our youth group (which we will unfortunately have to skip) and my daughter's 6th birthday party. We are expecting family from Illinois and almost 10 kids to attend; my kids are so excited! The kids (mine, not all the party guests!) will spend the night at Grandma's hotel, and Hubby and I have been tempted to go to the drive-in, which is SO much more relaxing without kids. The problem is, the drive-ins are about an hour away from our house, and since they show double-features that don't begin until sundown, we can't expect to get home until after 2am Saturday night – not sure if that's doable in the middle of this busy weekend on top of me being already extremely tired. I haven't gotten a good night's sleep in about a week since our 3-year-old has been coming into our room in the middle of the night and also waking up early in the morning. But the drive-in sounds like too much fun to pass up, so we'll see.

We have to rest up for Sunday, another big day. We will begin by going to early church, then brunch with family, and then our oldest daughter has a playdate, our almost-6-year-old has

a birthday party to attend, and I have a get-together for my mom's group. I'm looking forward to it, but somewhere in all of this I have to find time to prepare an appetizer, write thank-you notes, and get and wrap a birthday present for my daughter's friend. Plus I have to figure out how to do the play date and get my daughter to the birthday party when I am going to take the car to a neighboring town all day, leaving my husband with errands, all the kids and no car. Sounds stressful, but amazingly, I am relaxed and ready for FUN!! I just wish I wasn't so tired...

Fool Me Once, Strike One

My kids have been totally crazy lately. End of school year I guess? Great, let's take a look at the irony in that... end of school year makes kids act crazy, which makes me dread the end of the school year when I will have 4 crazy, bored, unstimulated kids 24/7. Nice irony, that. But anyway, today it's been one thing after another. So much so, that I've decided to use my spare minute to blog it instead of doing one of the other many and more productive things that I had planned for today.

I guess it began when my son pooped and smeared it all over the bathtub. He somehow managed this while his sister was watching him so I could run to the kitchen for a minute to stir lunch which was on the stove. I had to turn down the stove and delay lunch while I cleaned up the mess. Don't worry, I washed my hands (many times), but lunch was late, giving my daughter less time than usual to eat it before school. I took extra time today to make their favorite mac n' cheese, but no one ate anything. So that also cancels my make-your-own pizza sandwiches I was planning for dinner. Like I'm

going to allow the extra mess and time it will take for the kids to make their pizza sandwiches when they wouldn't even eat lunch. Besides, I have my end-of-the-year MOPs meeting to get to, and I'm not taking 4 hungry kids into MOPs childcare if they don't have time or refuse to eat. Let's take bets on whether or not I will actually make it into the shower before my meeting... I could go now, but then I'd have the company of my 3-year-old, who's been wanting to take showers with me lately. It's nice to have a buddy, but my showers used to be my downtime, especially needed on a day like today... By the way, did anyone see the [nice article about MOPs](#) in the latest American Profile magazine? I enjoyed the few paragraphs I've had time to read...

Back to today – I finally got my 3-year-old to eat her lunch (had to drop what I was doing to chugga-chugga-choo-choo into her mouth), so she was rewarded with Cheetos. Next thing I know, she and her brother had stomped the entire bag into the floor.



While I was cleaning that up, they were playing in the bathroom sink and flooded the floor. In the words of Michael Scott from my favorite tv show The Office – “Fool me once, strike one. Fool me twice, strike three.” So rather than leave them unattended, even for just long enough to clean up yet another mess, I put the little guy down for his nap before I cleaned up the latest mess. Thought that little Office quote would make me smile, so at least I was right there ☐

And if you think that my 3 and 1-year-old kids were actually helping with the cleanup, you must not have kids because they only succeeded in spreading the Cheeto crumbs around further. But at least they thought they were helping, and they had fun while doing so. Plus, note my gorgeous Mother's Day bouquet in the background of the one pic – It's from the kids (yeah right). I ♥ Hubby!

I'm just extra stressed since I'm trying to keep the house nice since we're having a birthday party this weekend. Don't ask me why I'm trying to keep a nice house while waiting for 22 five-and-six-year-olds to run wild around my house celebrating my daughter's birthday... that doesn't make much sense, does it? Maybe I *have* finally lost it...

Kids' Birthday Parties

Had my daughter's 2nd birthday party over the weekend, and it was a blast. Family and friends came from far and wide, and my daughter recognized the "Happy Birthday" song I've been singing to her the past couple of weeks when everyone sang it to her. On a side note, I have a hint for parents everywhere, including myself the next time I throw a kids' birthday party: have something ready to give the kids to occupy them before the party, otherwise excitement and anticipation will get the best of them, ruining moods of kids *and* parents. My 3 kids were so anxious before the birthday party last weekend that they were running around, fighting, and even tantruming. I would advise giving the birthday child his or her present early (if they can all play with it without fighting!) or setting aside some kind of toy for all of your kids. Better yet, line up someone who can take the kids out of the house all together and let them arrive a mere 15 minutes before the

rest of the guests – now that would have been bliss. It's just impossible to get last minute party preps finished with 3 (or any number, for that matter) wild children running amok. And forget about keeping the house clean while waiting for the guests to arrive. Here we are on Saturday, trying to keep the kids sane and serve lunch all while getting things ready for the party. Then we had to clean up the mess the kids made during lunch really quick before the guests began arriving, after making sure that they actually ate something in their excitement. The formula added up to one hectic pre-party morning and early afternoon, with the tantrum-thrower losing her voice before the party began.

But overall, it was lots of fun; especially getting to see family who aren't often able to make the journey to Ohio from Illinois. I know the birthday girl appreciated it and had lots of fun too, and I want to thank everyone who was a part of her special day. Thanks for the gifts and thanks most of all for being there to wish Disney a happy 2nd birthday. Special thanks goes to justj and his family for the very special gifts they bestowed upon our family; as well as Carol and Megan who also were thoughtful about giving each of the girls a present. This helped alleviate much fighting later in the day while we were suffering birthday party comedown. Another special thanks to the family who travelled hundreds of miles to be there for Disney on her special day. Family and friends are the BEST!

BELOW: Disney eating her birthday cupcake

