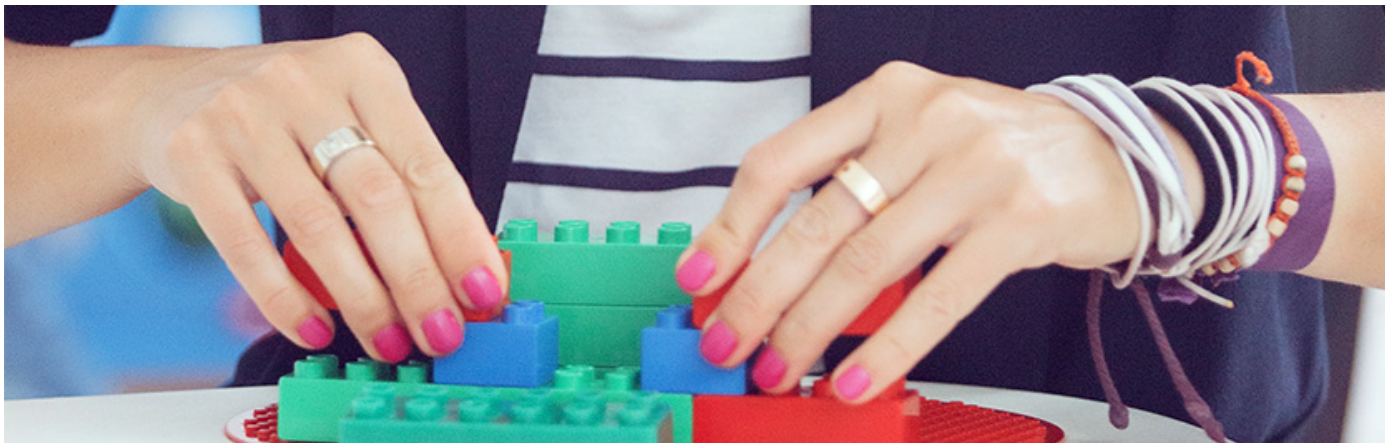


INSIGHTS

What to do when life feels overwhelming



A friendly reminder: it's perfectly OK if you're finding things tough right now.

Being a parent is awesome. It's also exhilarating, frustrating, hilarious, exhausting, sun-drenched, rain-soaked, love-soaked, and overwhelming.

All the emotions. The full spectrum of them!

If you're having a hard time at the moment, I'm sending you a very large coffee and an uninterrupted night of sleep (preferably not at the same time).

I also have some tips for getting through a tough time in general.

I hope they help!

Firstly, try to accept it

Your experience in life right now might be better than someone else's ... or it might be worse. But, however you want to spin it, a tough time is a tough time. Accept it.

There's no need to temper it with an "at least ..."

Say to yourself "Yep, this sucks".

It's amazing what happens when we drop the facade that "Everything's OK".

Secondly, try to practice some mindfulness

About a year ago, my son Hakavai was gifted a secondhand box of Lego from a friend of a friend. And, he frothed on it. Every morning, for like a solid month (a decade in toddler time), he was playing with his Lego. Initially, I found it annoying.

Have you ever stepped, barefoot, on tiny little Lego pieces at 6 am, before coffee? Have you ever tried to vacuum around little Lego pieces?

(Don't kid me, you minx. You sucked 'em straight up into the vacuum, just like I did, didn't you?!).

But the Lego fascination seemed to be a lasting one, so one morning I sat down with him and tried to build something. But I couldn't, cos none of the sets were complete. And also, he didn't really want me to play with "his" Lego pieces either.

Which suited me fine, cos the next day I drove down to the shops and purchased a shiny new box of Lego. The police station set, not anything cool like the Star Wars ones (that stuff is expensive!!).

parenting * ideas

And that night, the very minute Hakavai fell asleep, I busted out my new Lego. A glass of wine at the ready, I relaxed into a world of tiny, intricate construction.

There was something soothing about following someone else's instructions and building the pieces block by block. I got to zone out, unwind, and temporarily forget my responsibilities.

That night, I slept not like a baby (they wake up a lot), but like a tiny, plastic policeman – flat on my back, in the same position I dropped down in.

Being mindful doesn't have to involve crystals and chanting and yoga pants. It's really about relaxing into the present moment. And when life is feeling all a bit too much, a little present moment time can feel really good.

Thirdly, ask yourself “What would make today feel just a little bit better?”

And whatever the answer is: making apple crumble, talking to a friend, putting on a comforting TV show, reading your favourite book, playing Monopoly with the kids ... go and do it. Make it happen.

Note: you're not asking “What do I have to get done today?”. You're asking yourself “What would make my day feel just a little bit brighter?” (You'll be surprised how doing something hard makes you happy... like you've achieved something.)

This is something I started doing in my first year of being a Mum.

Those first few months were a blur and, with this tiny baby in my arms, my capacity for “doing things” was reduced. I had to drop my expectations for what I could realistically achieve in one day, especially in the first few months.

But on the days I prioritised doing something that made me feel good – even if it was just for 5 minutes – I felt clearer. More like myself again. Life felt like less of a blur.

So, this is your permission to drop the laundry, eat toast for dinner, and go and take a few minutes for yourself.

Heck, maybe you'll spend that time playing Lego!

I'll be with you, in spirit. At my own kitchen table, building a police station extension.

In closing

Lastly, my friend, please know that being human means experiencing a full spectrum of emotion.

It's OK if you feel tired, overwhelmed, sad or angry.

Be kind to yourself and take a moment to appreciate all that you are and all that you do.

With love,
Turia x



Turia Pitt

Turia Pitt is living proof that anything is possible. One of Australia's most admired and recognised people, Turia is a four-time bestselling author, two-time Ironman and a Mum of two boys. She spends her days teaching Mums to make time for themselves and learn how to run in her program [Run with Turia](#), exploring what we learn from hard times in her podcast Turia Pitt is Hard Work, and running around after her two boys.