

Homeschooling Can Be Tough Sometimes

In a span of 24 hours this week, I heard from two homeschooling moms threatening to send their kids to school. First, was a text with “I can’t do this!” Next, was a conversation with a mom who wants to send her child back to school and catch a break. Both moms were feeling frustrated, tired, and uncertain. Both were feeling that school would be easier, better; yet knowing deeply that isn’t true. Both were feeling what we all feel sometimes.

But it’s not homeschooling causing these feelings: it’s parenthood.

Homeschooling may amplify the emotions—both good and not-so-good—of parenthood. After all, we’re with our kids most of the time and experience intensely the ups and downs of parenting. But homeschooling is not the cause of these feelings of frustration and doubt. Parenthood is.

My friend Sam, a homeschooling mom of eight and talented writer at My Barefoot Farm, wrote this beautiful post today about the realities of mothering with all your heart. She says:

“Perhaps like me you are frustrated and weepy and ready to quit. Perhaps you too are exhausted. Mama tired. Go ahead and cry and validate your sorrow, frustration and pain. You ARE exhausted. This life is not easy. This life, however, is worth it. Hang on.”

Parenthood, homeschooling—choosing a family-centered, child-focused, authentic lifestyle—is not easy. In fact, sometimes it’s really, really hard. But it is so worth it. The emotions you feel, the intensity of your days and the fierceness of your love, prove that it is worth it. You are living it all, fully and deeply. You are doing it.

Sometimes homeschooling feels like full-court press parenting. Because sometimes it is. And sometimes, as in the case of the two moms this week, the fullness of our days can make changes to our rhythms tricky. A new job, a new home, a new baby, a partner out of town, visiting relatives, the stomach bug, rain—any and all of that can hit us just the wrong way and make it all seem impossible.

But then, as Sam says in her post, the sun comes out again.

You’ll get through this tough patch. It will pass. The rain will stop. Things will settle.

Give yourself some grace. This job you’re doing—parenting young people, helping them to

learn, keeping their curiosity and creativity alive and beaming—is a really big deal. And it's ok to feel done sometimes. It's ok to cry, or pout, or eat a carton of ice cream. Yep.

But then, tell yourself that you'll get through this tricky time. It won't seem so hard tomorrow, or next week, or next month. Text a friend, ask for help, seek comfort and reassurance and strength.

Because your work of parenting littles and helping them to grow into inquisitive, inventive, compassionate individuals is so, so very important.

You are doing it. As hard as it is, you're doing it. Give yourself some grace. And hang on.