

# Sacred Space

**A Guide to Carving Out 'Me' Time  
(Even With Toddlers)**

*Practical strategies for the mom who has nothing that's truly hers*



# The Truth About Sacred Space

## Why You Need It

Sacred space isn't selfish—it's survival. You can't reconnect to yourself if you have zero space that's yours. Every single thing in your life revolves around your kids—you need ONE thing that's just for you.

## What Happens Without It

Without sacred space, resentment builds. You feel invisible to yourself. The emptiness gets deeper. You lose touch with who you are beyond "mom."

## The Mindset Shift

Sacred space isn't a luxury—it's essential for reconnection. Having something that's YOURS doesn't make you a bad mom. Both things can be true: You love your kids AND you need space from them.

***Setting Expectations: This guide won't give you more hours in the day, but it will show you how to protect the ones you have—and claim physical space that's truly yours.***

# Creating TIME for Yourself



## Strategy 1: The Naptime Non-Negotiable

I know, I know—naptime is when you're "supposed" to do the dishes, fold the laundry, and catch up on everything that's piling up. But here's the thing: that stuff will still be there tomorrow. You won't get this moment back.

Pick ONE thing during naptime that's just for you. Not chores. Not catch-up work. Something that fills your cup. Maybe it's reading a chapter of that book that's been sitting on your nightstand for six months. Maybe it's working on that craft project you keep thinking about. Maybe it's literally just sitting in silence with a cup of coffee that's actually hot.

Protect it fiercely. This is YOUR time, and you deserve it.

What to do when naps are inconsistent: Look, toddler naps are unpredictable at best. Some days you get two hours, some days you get twenty minutes. Have a backup activity you can do in 15-minute chunks so you're not left scrambling. Keep it simple and accessible.

Examples: Reading, crafting, sitting in silence, journaling, sketching, listening to a podcast that's not about parenting



# Creating TIME for Yourself



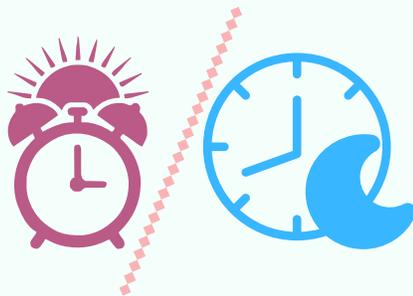
## Strategy 2: The 5am or 10pm Quiet Hour

This one isn't for everyone, and that's okay. But if you can carve out time either before the kids wake up or after they go to bed, it can be magic. There's something about the quiet of the house when everyone else is asleep—it's like the world pauses just for you.

The key is choosing based on whether you're a morning person or a night owl. Don't force yourself to wake up at 5am if you're exhausted and hate mornings. It'll just make you miserable. Same goes for staying up late if you're already running on fumes.

Making it sustainable: Please don't do this every single day if you're exhausted. I'm serious. Pick 3 days a week that work for you, and let yourself sleep the other days. This isn't about martyrdom—it's about creating sustainable pockets of time for yourself.

What to actually DO in this time: Whatever makes you feel like YOU. Not just scrolling through your phone (though no judgment if that happens sometimes). But really—what would reconnect you to yourself? Maybe it's writing, painting, working on a passion project, or just drinking your coffee in peace while watching the sunrise.



# Creating TIME for Yourself



## Strategy 3: The Childcare Trade

This one feels scary at first, but hear me out. Find another mom who's also drowning and feeling touched-out, and trade childcare with her. You watch her kids for 2 hours one week, she watches yours the next. You both get regular, predictable kid-free time without paying for childcare.

How to find someone: Think about the moms in your orbit—mom groups, neighbors, friends from daycare or preschool pickup. You're probably not the only one who desperately needs a break. Start the conversation. You might be surprised how many moms jump at this idea.

*Script to get started: "Hey, I'm looking to trade childcare so we both get regular kid-free time. Would you be interested in swapping every [day] for 2 hours? I watch your kids one week, you watch mine the next?"*

Make it consistent: Same day, same time every week. Consistency is key because it gives you something to look forward to and plan around. Mark it on your calendar like it's a doctor's appointment—non-negotiable.

What to do with your 2 hours: Protect it like gold. This is YOUR time. Don't use it to run errands or clean the house. Use it to reconnect with yourself. Leave the house if you can—even if you just sit in a coffee shop and stare out the window.



# Creating TIME for Yourself



## Strategy 4: Asking Your Partner for Help

Okay, this one can feel really hard, especially if you're used to doing everything yourself or if asking for help makes you feel guilty. But you need to do it anyway.

Here's the thing: your partner isn't a mind reader. They probably don't realize how close to empty you're running. You need to be specific and clear about what you need. Not hints. Not "it would be nice if..." Actual, direct communication.

*Try saying this: "I know you love me and want the best for me. Right now, I need to get some time to myself every week. I looked at our schedules, and I think [X hours] on [X day] would work best. Does that work for you?"*

Make it recurring: Not a one-time thing, but a regular commitment. Every Tuesday evening. Every Saturday morning. Whatever works. But it needs to be consistent and protected, just like any other important appointment.

What to do if they resist: Try: "This time is important for me to be able to better enjoy my life with you and the kids. I can't think of any better investment for our family right now. Is there a better time that works for you?" Put the ball in their court to problem-solve WITH you, not against you.

During this time: Leave the house if you possibly can. Even if you just sit in a coffee shop or drive to a park and read in your car. Being physically out of the house helps you mentally disconnect from "mom mode."



# Protecting PHYSICAL Space



## Strategy 5: The Locked Drawer/Closet Method

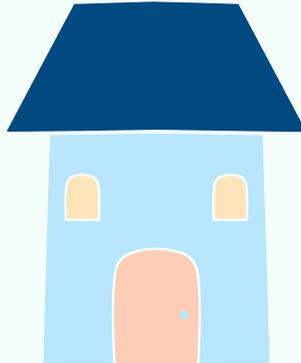
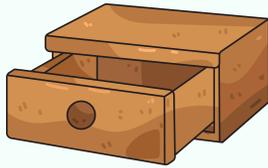
Designate ONE space that's sacred and completely kid-proof.

What to keep there: Your hobby supplies, books, journal, anything that matters to you and would devastate you if kids broke/lost it.

This is YOUR space: Kids are not allowed to touch/open/go through it.

Letting go of guilt: You're allowed to have things that aren't for sharing.

Examples: A locked drawer in your dresser, a high closet shelf, a box with a combination lock



# Protecting PHYSICAL Space



## Strategy 6: The "Mom's Corner" Approach

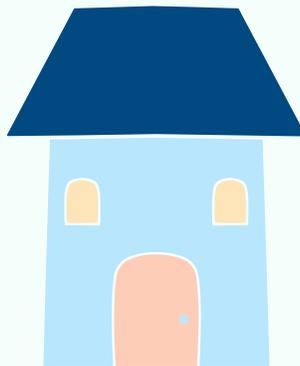
If you don't have a whole room, claim a CORNER.

Examples: A chair in the bedroom, a desk in the living room, a spot at the kitchen table with your things nearby.

Make it visually yours: Your mug, your candle, your book, your blanket.

Teaching kids to respect it: "This is mommy's spot. You have your toys, I have my spot."

Age-appropriate expectations: Toddlers won't fully respect it, but you can still claim it.



# Protecting PHYSICAL Space



## Strategy 7: Boundaries Around Your Things

Let's talk about something that might feel uncomfortable: you're allowed to have things that kids can't touch. Read that again. You're allowed to have special things that are off-limits to little hands.

I know we're taught to share everything with our kids, to be selfless, to put them first always. But having boundaries around your belongings isn't selfish—it's necessary. Your things matter. Your hobbies matter. You matter.

**How to protect hobby supplies:** Keep them out of reach, in locked spaces, or in a room they can't access during "your time." If you're a crafter, keep your supplies in a high cabinet. If you paint, keep your brushes and paints locked away. Don't leave them out where they can be grabbed and ruined.

**What to do when kids break or lose your things:** First, it's okay to feel upset. Your feelings are valid. That thing mattered to you, and it's gone now. Let yourself be sad or angry about it. Then, set clearer boundaries moving forward. Learn from what happened and protect your things better next time.

**Teaching respect:** Try saying, "Some things are mommy's special things. Just like you have special toys that are just yours, I have special things too." You're modeling that everyone's belongings deserve respect.

**Real talk:** With toddlers, physical barriers work better than verbal boundaries. They're not trying to be disrespectful—they just don't have impulse control yet. So locks, high shelves, and closed doors are your friends here.



# Protecting PHYSICAL Space



## Strategy 8: The Portable Sacred Anchor

### Version 1: The Object Anchor

Choose ONE special item that signals "this is MY space right now"

Examples: A specific candle, a beautiful object, a photo in a frame, a special mug, a textured blanket

How it works: Wherever you place this item becomes YOUR space in that moment

Perfect for: Moms without dedicated rooms or corners, or moms who move around the house



### Version 2: The Identity Anchor (What You Wear)

Choose something you WEAR that helps you connect to the woman enjoying this me-time

Examples: A cozy cardigan, soft robe, favorite bracelet, special socks, a scarf, a blanket you wrap around yourself

How it works: When you put this on, you're reconnecting with the part of you that gets to rest/create/enjoy



# Protecting PHYSICAL Space



*When I put on this cardigan and light my candle, I'm settling into MY time—the woman who reads, not just the mom who does bedtime stories"*

## Why Both Work:

- Creates a ritual that signals: "I'm reconnecting with ME now"
- Trains your brain: "This feeling/scent/texture means this is MY time"
- Completely portable (works anywhere in your home)
- Sensory anchors help you shift out of "mom mode" and into "me mode"

# When You Feel Guilty



## Permission Statements (Read These When Guilt Creeps In):

- "Taking time for myself makes me a better mom."
- "I'm allowed to have things and time that are just mine."
- "My kids don't need access to every part of me, every moment of the day."
- "Wanting space doesn't mean I don't love them."
- "I can't pour from an empty cup—and right now, I'm bone dry."

## Reframes:

*OLD THOUGHT: "I'm being selfish by taking time away from my kids."*

*NEW THOUGHT: "I'm modeling for my kids that women deserve space and time for themselves."*

*OLD THOUGHT: "Good moms don't need a break from their kids."*

*NEW THOUGHT: "Good moms recognize when they're running on empty and do something about it."*

*OLD THOUGHT: "I should be grateful—other moms have it harder."*

*NEW THOUGHT: "Both things can be true: I'm grateful AND I need more for myself."*

*You're not broken for needing sacred space.  
You're human. And you can love your kids deeply  
while also needing time and space that's  
completely yours.*

# Your Sacred Space Action Plan

## Step 1: Choose Your Time

Which strategy will you use to carve out time for yourself?

- Naptime Non-Negotiable
- 5am or 10pm Quiet Hour
- Childcare Trade with Another Mom
- Partner Takes Kids (regular weekly commitment)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### When will this happen?

Day(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Duration: \_\_\_\_\_

## Step 2: Claim Your Physical Space

Which strategy will you use to protect physical space?

- Locked Drawer/Closet
- Mom's Corner
- Boundaries Around My Things
- Portable Object Anchor
- Identity Anchor (something I wear)

What is your sacred object or space?

\_\_\_\_\_

# Your Sacred Space Action Plan

## Step 3: Decide What You'll Do

What will you do in your sacred time/space? (List 3 things you've been wanting to do)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Step 4: Your First Step This Week

What is ONE small action you'll take this week to claim your sacred space?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Weekly Sacred Space Tracker

Week of: \_\_\_\_\_

Track your progress. Put a checkmark for each day you protect your sacred space.

DAY	I protected my sacred time today	I did something just for ME	How I felt afterward
Sunday			
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			

Reflection: What did I notice this week about protecting sacred space?

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# Final Reminder

*You deserve to take up space in your own life.*

You're not broken for needing this.  
You're not selfish for wanting this.  
You're not a bad mom for claiming this.

You're a woman who got lost in motherhood—and you're finding your way back.

*Sacred space is where that journey begins.*

*You're not broken—you're just disconnected.  
And reconnection starts with claiming space that's yours.*

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With you on this journey,  
Dr Tessa Visser

Follow for more:

 @tessalifecoach

<https://gracefullyempoweringmamas.com>

## Next Steps - Going Deeper

You've taken the first step in reclaiming space for yourself. Now what?

Sacred space is just the beginning. The deeper work is remembering who you are and integrating all the parts of yourself.

If you're ready to go deeper:

Explore "Remember Her: A Guide to Rediscovering What You Love (Even When It Feels Impossible)"

This guide helps you:

- Remember who you were before motherhood
- Rediscover what you used to love
- Work through the grief of what doesn't fit anymore
- Find scaled-back ways to reconnect with your passions
- Take your first steps toward feeling whole again

*[Link to Remember Her product]*