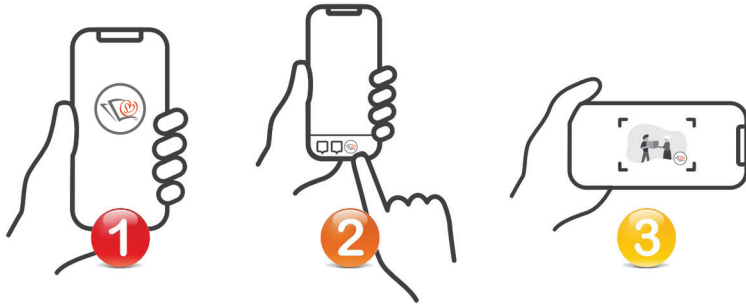




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REJUVENATED MUMS

MAKE HAPPY KIDS

The wisdom guide that
will transform you into a happier
mother and help you set an example
for your children

TESSIA BRIVAL



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Permission should be addressed in writing to tessia@tessiabrival.com

Editor: Harshita Sharma
harshita@hasmarkpublishing.com

Gabriel Flynn,
gabriel.flynn3@gmail.com

Book Cover: Cylia Rousset,
cylia@cyliarousset.com

Interior Book Design: Amit Dey,
amit@hasmarkpublishing.com

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ENDORSEMENTS



“Better is a great word. It implies a gradual and positive movement toward something greater. *Rejuvenated Mums Make Happy Kids* gives women the tools to be a better version of themselves.”

—**Bob Proctor,**

Best-selling Author of *You Were Born Rich*

“*Rejuvenated Mums Make Happy Kids* is a true breath of fresh air for new moms, soon-to-be moms, and existing moms. The value contained within these pages is unlike any other parenting book I have ever read. This book is a must read and I highly recommend it.”

—**Peggy McColl,**

New York Times Best Selling Author

“Tessia Brival has written an invaluable guide to parenting with love and intuition. *Rejuvenated Mums Make Happy Kids* encourages healthy boundaries for parents and their children in a practical and sensible way.”

—**Judy O’Beirn,**

President of Hasmark Publishing International

“I truly hope and wish that ALL parents read this book. Tessia gives amazing parenting and valuable life hacks in a way that makes sense. This book gives everyone a better understanding on the subject and I’m sure most parents will be able to relate to the situations described. As an early year’s educator, I can’t stop imagining how much of a better world we would be living in if parents tried to implement Tessia’s advice in their daily life – children would be given all the tools to rock as adults and individuals. I can’t recommend it enough!”

—Julie Planté,
COO Les Petits Bellots Ltd

“I love how Tessia uses her own journey of self-growth and self-awareness to lead as a phenomenal example of being a great mum. Through understanding, application, and passion, she shares her amazing discoveries and stories that will touch every mum’s heart. Tessia invites us to enjoy motherhood on full power. Knowing how to be the best mum by simply finding balance in life is priceless.

This book contains ideas and stories that will help you to manage difficult situations with children in a way that respects them as unique individuals and encourages them to find their own solutions to challenges, to make their own decisions, to take responsibility for their thoughts/feelings and actions, to feel more than good enough and feel worthy. And all this is by role modeling and living the life we love and desire. We are true heroes for our children, so leading a perfect example is the best way to BE.”

—Vladimira Kuna,
International Bestseller of *The Bible of the Mastermind*

“The book that brings out the super mum in us all!”

—Dr Mandeep Rai,
Author of International Bestseller *The Values Compass*

DEDICATION



To Antoine for giving me the most precious
gifts in the world.

To Maxime and Alexandre
who made me a mother. I love you!

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FOREWORD



Tessia and I met a decade ago at an American bank. There was something very special about her, I recall. Perhaps it's her distinct French accent. Early one morning, as I tried to settle into work after the exhausting morning commute of hopping from the DLR and onto the Jubilee Line into Canary Wharf, she came up from behind me and whispered, 'I have something to tell you.' 'What?' I replied. 'I'm pregnant!' she said. 'But you must not say anything yet.' With my eyes wide open, I whispered back, 'I promise I won't. Congratulations!' I was surprised and excited as I saw a calm, confident young lady leaning towards me. At that moment, I was certain she was ready for motherhood.

Baby's birth was really difficult, but Tessia was strong through it all. Barely two years on, and there was another bundle of joy. Whilst the sight of these babies was a real joy, I saw my beautiful friend lost in her quest to be an amazing mother. The harsh reality of sleepless nights was clearly visible on her face and entire body. Leggings, T-shirts, and jumpers were the height of her fashion after she became a mother and it clearly dawned on me one day that motherhood was not exactly what she had hoped for.

There shimmered a ray of light one day as she arranged for our dinner in the heart of the city with the kids taken care of. This rare occasion became far more frequent over time, and I realised I have a level of my friend back! As the weeks and months progressed, I saw a very confident mum emerge from the dark. She took control of motherhood, and the table was turned! I watched her blossom into the mother she hoped for and more, with her boys beautiful, healthy, and full of life!

I have a circle of amazing mothers around me, but I cannot think of anyone better to birth *Rejuvenated Mums Make Happy Kids*. It's been a real delight to be a part of this incredible journey with a dear friend! I highly endorse and recommend this book to all mothers and mothers-to-be!

Ms. Edith Evwierhurhoma

INTRODUCTION



It takes a village to raise a child', an African proverb says. When it comes to childcare, truer words have never been spoken. We prepare for being a mum through observation and the conscious actions of nannying, babysitting, and learning more about taking care of a baby. That way, when the baby arrives in the world, we think we'll have it all figured out from day one. Even though we see the role of being a mum described in film and real-life stories as a challenging journey, we think we are the exception. At least that was what I felt. I felt that I knew what being a mother would be like, but nothing could truly prepare me for being a mum other than actually assuming the role.

When the baby arrives, you already lack sleep. You're exhausted and hurting, and still, the baby is crying. Then you feel helpless. Nothing could have prepared you for this. Luckily, there's an easier way. Though we live in a very individualized society in many parts of the world, there are ways to find your 'village' and get the help you need to care for your child and yourself.

Having a baby enhances your life in so many forms, but it can also take away from who you are. Today, our quest is to strike a balance, with rejuvenated mothers and happy children.

This book is your guide to caring for yourself and beyond yourself. It will give you practical tips on self-care, releasing the guilt, being responsible, and actively defining meaningful goals in all areas of your life. We'll discuss how this approach can also lead to bringing new experiences for your child. By exposing your little one to other children and rejuvenating yourself simultaneously, both you and your child grow in various ways. We'll also talk about the importance of early socialization, and how to aid your child's as well as your own growth. We'll round out the book by discussing a variety of topics surrounding childcare in the modern day, how early age bilingual classes are beneficial, and how you can have a newfound sense of hope, moving forward. It all starts with you and your vision for your life as a mum, as a woman, and as a spiritual being.

PART ONE

Rejuvenating Your Mind, Body, and Spirit

1

Who Am I?



There are two great days in a person's life – the day we are born and the day we discover why.

– William Barclay

Before the pandemic, when life was seemingly ‘normal’, I never put much thought into who I was. I knew I was a mum (and a great one at that) and that my goal was to be the best mum ever. I grew up surrounded by family and children. Throughout my life, I knew that I was meant to be a mum. I was meant to have kids and raise a great family.

Growing up, I worked as an afterschool nanny, babysat, interned at a French nursery, and even went abroad to be an au pair in San Francisco. I felt beyond prepared to be a mum. I was confident, especially after years of seeing my aunt Lili, who raised me alongside my mum, taking care of babies at home. I knew how to take care of children of all ages – what to do and what not to do. However, when I became a mum myself, I

realised that was a disillusion that many mothers fall victim to in life. No matter how much prep work you do, you'll never be fully ready to take care of a child. None of my childcare experiences fully prepared me for being a mum.

I now have two lovely boys that will support me in my notion that I'm the best mum ever. However, their birth was not a walk in the park and the subsequent raising of them wasn't either. I had prepared so long for my first son's birth – reading pregnancy books, attending birth classes, doing online research, etc. – but nothing seemed to go as planned. I was in labour for 32 hours for my firstborn and 42 hours for my second child. This lengthy labour led me to have emergency C-section operations for the safety of me and my babies. The first procedure was already a sharp turn in the wrong direction from what I thought would happen. I was ready for my firstborn to lie on my chest right after birth. I knew how vital skin-to-skin contact was for a newborn and the mother, and I desperately wanted to bond with my child straight after his birth to give him affection and comfort.

Unfortunately, with the labour, the medication from the epidural, and the C-section, I was extremely exhausted. My body was shaking uncontrollably, so much so that the baby could not rest with me right away. My mind started to race as I thought, 'Why me?' I had prepared so long for this. It was my dream, and now I couldn't even hold my baby. I kept questioning why life would throw all of this at me from day one. I was so fatigued from the operation that I didn't have the energy to be a mum. I felt like I was already missing the first set of goals I had set in my mind for being an amazing mum.

After the birth, it didn't get easier. Throughout your life, you're told constantly that babies are heavy sleepers. This is the

reputation that precedes them and you are consciously aware of it. You think motherhood will be '*les doigts dans le nez*', as they say in French. This phrase translates to 'fingers in the nose'. In English, it's more commonly 'a piece of cake'. That's exactly what I thought motherhood would be: a piece of cake. You think, well, I can handle that! However, you fail to realise just how much the baby doesn't sleep until you're exhausted from labour, and the baby is still crying every time you put him down.

I have learned that we don't believe something until we discover it for ourselves. This is very true and a great lesson. The problem here was that my baby never went into a deep sleep. He would fall asleep on me but wake up again when I put him down. This happened all night long. I was crying sporadically for a month, trying hard to figure out the reason. Was it separation anxiety or was he just a light-sleeping baby? Was it due to the traumatic experience of his birth? Was he just looking for the breast? I don't have the answer, but whatever the reason was, it caused me a considerable lack of sleep. Instead of a super mummy, I felt like I was a zombie mummy, just trying to stay afloat in this new routine.

I'll spare you the details in regard to the other challenges I encountered along the way. It felt like a never-ending battle, from breastfeeding to pain and troubles with the baby's health. Only three days after my baby was born, we were back in the hospital for him to be fed by midwives because he was not putting on weight. He then had to undergo tongue-tie surgery to be able to latch properly onto the breast. Another challenge I faced was the terrible constipation pain I endured because the medics forgot to send me home with a laxative. These were the challenges I faced upon entering motherhood. I know that you've got your challenges too, and I know some have better

beginnings, while some have been through nightmares worse than mine with unhealthy babies.

Luckily, I never had postpartum depression. I wasn't depressed about being a mum. Instead, I was weary. The lack of sleep was becoming unbearable and I felt so alone. I couldn't wrap my mind around how people got through this.

Did you know that throughout history, sleep deprivation has been used as a form of torture to make people confess information? I wasn't surprised to read this, considering I would've given up any secret I had to be able to sleep. As Menachem Begin said, 'Anyone who has experienced this desire [for sleep] knows that not even hunger and thirst are comparable with it.' Lack of sleep is a significant problem that mothers face when they have their newborns. I dealt with this, and many other mothers I know did as well. I thought it was all just part of being a mother and that there was nothing you could do about it.

That was until I met my friend, Mathilde, a few years later. Upon meeting her, I learned that her job title was 'maternity nurse'. Naturally, I had no idea what that was. She explained to me that she would take care of the baby while the mother slept. The world seemed to STOP when I heard about this. I recounted my countless hours of no sleep with horror. The exhaustion I felt could've been avoided! I didn't have to feel dreadful every day! I felt like crying when I heard about this secret to motherhood. I had always assumed you were to care for your newborn until they were old enough to be trusted with a babysitter. Yet, there was a certified maternity nurse that would look after and protect your newborn while you got those much-needed hours of sleep. This is a job that is quite prevalent in London, yet I was not even aware it existed! I can't say the same for other places, so if this doesn't exist near

you, as my mum would suggest, think about creating it (as if it were that simple).

I realised the immense importance of maternity nurses and knew I had to do something to inform others about this fantastic service. That's what led me to include it in this book for all mothers deserving and hoping for some much-required sleep.

For so long, I formed my identity around being a mother. I was a mum, a great mum, a super mum. I limited my personality to this because I lacked awareness of how to be anything else at that time. I chose to focus all my energy on being a mum and providing an outstanding education to my children, and I was sure to succeed.

What I failed to realise was that I could have goals in more than one area of my life. A goal is defined as 'something that you hope to achieve'.¹ It is basically what you want in life, what you're striving for. When you set a goal, you switch from a passive state to being involved and active in your life. I decided to focus my effort on achieving one goal in one area of my life. However, the truth is that focusing your efforts on goals in different areas of your life can lead to a more joyful, fruitful, abundant, and fulfilling life. Goals are there to grow and stretch your mind. They give you a sense of accomplishment. The reason why I now have goals in my life is to push myself to be a little better than I am.

I think many mums struggle with the question, 'Who am I?' We're often so focussed on our sole jobs as mums that we forget who we really are. I'm here to tell you that you are more than just a mother. You deserve to have hobbies and goals outside

¹ Goal | Definition of Goal by Oxford Learners Dictionary ([oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com))

of your kids' lives. You've grown and changed through having kids but your core essence, your inner self, has stayed the same; you just have to connect back to yourself and find it again. This takes introspection and diving deep into who you are and what your values, goals, motivations, beliefs, purpose, and vision are in life. It's never too late to start exploring and finding them. Freedom is the goal of the soul. You better know who you are if you want to be free. If you don't have an idea or don't know your purpose yet, find out what you love to do in life now!

What do you love to do (apart from taking care of your children)? Think...

Often, I see mums who have kids that have now left for university or a job. Only at this time in their lives do they seem to awaken and start asking themselves, 'Wait a minute, what just happened here? My kids are grown-ups now. What about me? What am I going to do now that they've left?' It's like they were under the spell of the hectic life of being a mum. When their children move away from home, they suddenly wake up. The charm breaks, and these mums start to see their husband still satisfied with his work and overall life, their kids starting to explore who they are, while they are left feeling empty. It doesn't have to be this way for you. Years don't have to pass without you doing anything for yourself. Not even one year has to fly by before you look after yourself and unleash your power within. Remember, wasting your time is wasting your life.

You have a purpose in life. We all do, and it's bigger and more significant than just one goal. A purpose is the reason why you get up in the morning. Why were you born? What inspires you? What legacy do you want to leave behind? Before having

a baby, were you getting up in the morning only to have a baby in the future? If not, you will certainly agree that your purpose in life can't be reduced to only being a mom. Therefore, please continue to wake up every day for what drives you in life (including being a super mum). Your purpose will influence your goals and achieving your goals requires action, which you can do. Find or reconnect to your purpose in life without delay and please don't feel discouraged in any way by thinking that you are not yet where you want to be. God uses setbacks, delays, detours, and disappointments to move us into our purpose.

In *As a Man Thinketh*, James Allen indicates that 'until thought is linked with purpose there is no intelligent accomplishment.' This quote is compelling and essential to understand. If you go day by day without linking your thoughts to your purpose, you will never have goals set in place to achieve that purpose eventually. As Thomas Carlyle's well-known quote says, 'A man without a purpose is like a ship without a rudder.' You are floating in the ocean without a pull towards any one direction. Your behaviour is producing your results, thus, your current results in life tell you what you've been expecting up to now. Start from there, knowing where you are now and where you want to go and understand that you'll get there.

When you have a definite goal and move towards it, you express your unique gift of creation. It inspires you and increases your level of awareness. More awareness, in turn, brings you more enjoyment out of life. The awareness we gain through self-discovery will reveal our infinite potential and who we truly are. What do you want now that you've accomplished your goal as a mother? Get your imagination going and don't forget that 'the future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams' – Eleanor Roosevelt.

Where are you now? What have you created so far? Are you happy with it? Does anything need to change? Could it be better? Ask yourself all these questions along your journey to finding your purpose in life.

It's been said that there are nine aspects of your life that you can prioritize goal setting in. Those categories are financial life, career, education, relationships, environment, leisure, health, personal growth, and spiritual growth. They are called the areas of life balance. When you feel that everything is going well in your life, chances are that all your life areas are well balanced.

When your unique goal is to be an amazing mother (like it was mine), you only strengthen one part of the relationship aspect of life. Your life's relationship area also covers your love and friendship relationships, which you are neglecting. As you set goals in all sectors of your life, your vision of life becomes clear and you progressively realise that all areas in your life are interdependent. Make sure your goals are special to you and are worthwhile enough for you to be continually in love with them. (Yes, we can love people as well as our ideas or dreams.) This allows you to maintain the desire and motivation to achieve them. As Zig Ziglar said, 'A goal casually set and lightly taken is freely abandoned at the first obstacle.' Obstacles will be overcome as long as you hold on to your goal. Never change your goal; change the plan.

Your goals in all aspects of your life don't have to be set all at once. Try not to focus on more than three areas of your life at a time. It's better to stay focussed on a few parts of your life rather than trying to improve them all and being overwhelmed and absolutely not making any progress.

Why should you work on all areas of your life? As my dear friend Erika thoughtfully said, even though you know that

eating vegetables is very good for your health, you don't only eat veggies, right! We live in a biodiverse world. Variety is part of our nature. Look around you. That is why we have different areas in our life which we have to work holistically on. Everything goes together.

The essence of life is to grow and develop in all aspects of our life, and when we grow, we have something to give back. I learned that once we stop seeking, reaching, stretching, and risking, we actually stop growing.

Being a mother is, I hope, a joy for you, as it should be. However, if you haven't yet set goals in other parts of your life, it's not too late to do so. By setting goals for your relationships, education, spirituality, and other sections of your life, you'll bloom. You will flourish as a mother, as a woman, and as an individual.

When I decided that my whole life revolved around my children, I no longer took time out for myself, and I could see the effects. I started noticing that my nails were no longer neat, my hair was dry and full of forks, my wardrobe had not been renewed for months, and I couldn't lose the pounds gained during pregnancy. I no longer felt like the elegant woman I used to be. This is how many mothers feel because they've sacrificed a part of their life for their children. It doesn't have to be this way. You can be who you are, combined with the amazing mother that you've become. Identifying your wants and knowing what to go for in life might seem challenging at first, but it only takes a decision. Name it and claim it. What your heart desires is right there waiting for you.

Your purpose doesn't take away from your role as a mother. If anything, it strengthens it. It gives you the motivation and inspiration to be the 'best you'. You'll find that spending time

on your own purpose can make you rejuvenated and a more present mother. This is what I want you to discover and run with throughout your life. It took me a long time to know exactly what my purpose was (36 years to be exact), but since I found it, I've never looked back.

