



Happy Healthy Mother

A GUIDE TO IMPROVE
FOOD CHOICES,
MOVEMENT, MINDFULNESS
AND SLEEP IN
MOTHERHOOD

www.intomotherhood.co.uk

I often hear Mothers say

Finding time and space to focus on your health is a challenge. Mothers are juggling the daily demands of work, home, relationships and responsibilities whilst navigating the uncharted transformation of who they fundamentally are, when becoming a Mother.

Becoming a Mother is a transformative time and often mothers may find themselves between the old and the new. Honouring who you are as a Mother and remembering who you were, is a balance.

Focusing on your health and making self care a priority, may give Mothers a way to bring in the balance. Focusing on your health is not just a thing to do, but becomes a way of being... a way of Mothering.

My approach is to make getting happy and healthy in Motherhood accessible, manageable and a way to realising your potential, worth and value as a Mother.

When I started on my own health journey, I began to live my days with more awareness. Recognising that I'm a work in progress and knowing when a little TLC is needed the most.

I also know that this is felt by other mums too, this is what they have had to say;

'Feeling healthy makes me feel good about myself and my work. I feel healthy when I exercise, eat healthily, take me time and feel organised at home (housework, House duties and quality time with kids)'

'I want to feel super healthy and fit. This impacts all other areas of my life too. I understand what I invest (in) now impacts later years too.'

'Role model to my children and mentally impact on my confidence in all areas of my life.'

'Confidence in me, allows me some 'me' time which is important, gives me some sense of identity.'

'When feeling good, I'd be able to better focus on what I'm doing at work and with my child.'

One Small Step

At the end of each section, you will find *One Small Step*. The One Small Step is designed to support you to take the next 'right for you', manageable and marginal step to improving your health and wellbeing. There are 2 suggestions made for you and I encourage you to make your own one small step too! As this way, it is more likely to stick and fit in with your daily life.

My hope and invitation

is for you to explore some of the tools here, and that there may be something to place in your day to move you closer to your ideal vision of health. Whatever that might be!

Read through these, experiment with what works and leave behind what doesn't. There's no right or wrong and it has to work for you and in your way.

My hope is that you honour yourself more and remember what brings you joy.

I hope you find something useful here.

Important Notice

The information and advice provided in this guide is general in nature and should not be used as, or substituted for, professional medical advice.

This guide has been written for Mothers who are beyond 12 months postpartum. By engaging with this guide, the reader acknowledges that they have sought professional medical advice and that they are fit and healthy to participate.

We do not accept responsibility for determining whether our products/services are appropriate for you and your health.

FOOD

The Magic Plate and Food Choices

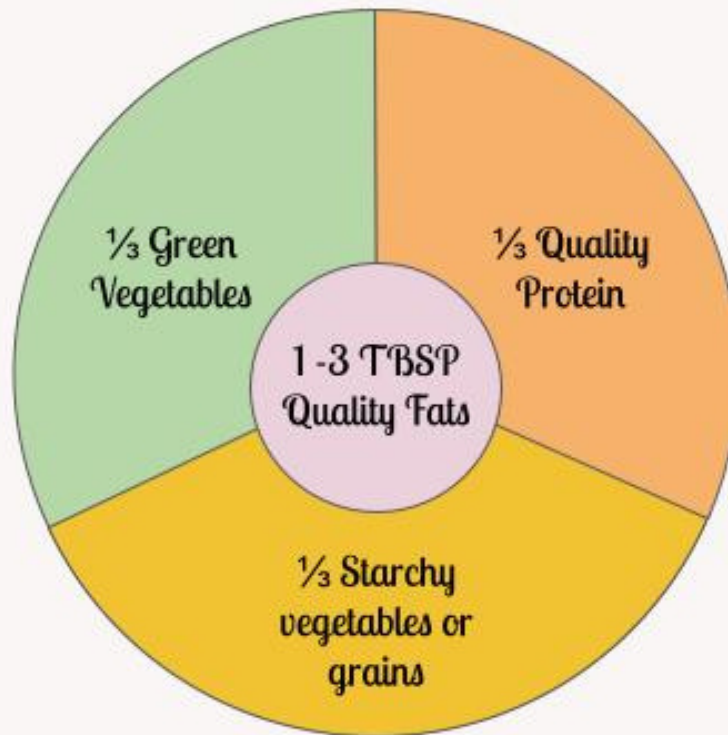


Glorious food!

The food choices we make, how we eat, who we are when we eat and the experience of eating, all contribute to the way we sustain our energy levels throughout the day as well as keep us healthy and strong against disease.

Building a nourishing meal using the magic plate, will set you up for the energy needed throughout the day and starve off the 3pm munchies.

The magic plate is a formula, providing you with the nutrients, energy and flavour. It takes a bit of planning and it will offer some noticeable benefits to your day. The aim is to use this as a guide to build your meals.



Green Vegetables

- Spinach
- Kale
- Collard greens
- Cabbage
- Broccoli
- Bok Choy
- Swiss Chard
- Romaine Lettuce
- Brussel Sprouts

Quality Protein

- Beef
- Poultry
- Eggs
- Dairy (cheese/yoghurt)
- Fish (seafood)
- Tempeh
- Almonds
- Beans (black beans, kidney beans, haricot beans, cannellini, edamame)
- Chia seeds
- Chickpeas
- Lentils
- Tofu

Starchy vegetable or grain

- Potato
- Sweet potato
- Quinoa
- Lentils
- Butternut squash
- Porridge
- Beans
- Wholegrains (including options for bread & pasta)
- Lentil pasta
- Brown rice
- Bulgar Wheat
- Buckwheat

Quality Fats

- Olives
- Avocadoes
- Nuts (walnuts, almonds, macadamia, brazil, pecan, hazelnuts, pine)
- Seeds (sunflower, pumpkin, chia, hemp, flax)
- Oils (Extra virgin olive oil, hemp, avocado, walnut, flax)
- Fish (Salmon, cod, prawns)

One Small Step

One Small Step A - Introduce one more green vegetable to your plate.

One Small Step B - Choose one meal in your day to alter to the magic plate.

Secrets for your success

- Choose organic where possible
- Measure your animal source protein portion using the size of your palm as a guide
- Experiment with different tastes, colours and textures. It's not supposed to be dull. This is an adventure!
- Getting the protein right for you is a winning strategy, as protein is needed for growth, repair and maintenance of the body*. It is an energy source that will curb hunger and help you feel satisfied after a meal. Experiment with different animal and/or plant sources of protein. Which ones did you notice gave you more energy? How long did it sustain you for?
- Remember to take your time with you to eat to the level of satisfaction (about 80%) and try not to go beyond, which will end up having the opposite effect.

MOVEMENT

My Movement Menu



You may recall a time when you were literally running off your feet. When time was completely yours offering a freedom of choice and movement.

With the onset of Motherhood, time is consumed with the care of a little one. Or the slower pace and less time left for self, can be a shock for some Mothers who are used to being fast in the lane.

Moving your body in a way that brings you joy and connection is beneficial for your health and wellbeing. Getting more movement in your day can be an excellent way to boost confidence, energise you, bring back control over your physical and emotional body and support you to remember who you are beyond the Mothering role.

Here is a series of reflection questions that will assist you to create your own Movement Menu., so that you get to live with more energy and vitality!

My Movement Menu

What type of movement feels right to you?

A movement menu is a list of inspiring movement options for different fitness, energy levels and time constraints. When you have an inspiring menu of options for movement ready and in view (such as on your refrigerator), you are far more likely to get moving.

So, what type of movement does your body want to do today? Let the inspiration come from your body, not your head. The movement should be pleasurable and remember – ALL movement counts! Even if it's just 5 minutes.

What movement would you like to add to this list? Think outside the box.

What movement did you love to do as a kid?

What movement would be fun to do with others?

What is something you've never tried that you've always wanted to try?

This is an invitation to play and have a pleasurable experience in your body while contributing to your health and aliveness! HAVE FUN!

One Small Step

One Small Step A - Take a 5 minute break today for a bout of movement. Notice the effects you experience?

or

One Small Step B - Jump right in and sign up for a new activity today. What was your experience like?

MIND

STOP technique to create space



Between stimulus and response, there is space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.

- Dr Victor E Frankl

The connection we have with our children, babies and partners, can lead us to literally feel every high and low, every emotion with them. This can set off a number of responses within us that we know may not serve ourselves or our relationships to the highest good.

When we allow space and time to enter before a response, we allow the response to come from a place of slowness and healing, which is a beautiful gift to offer ourselves and our children.

As a Mother, creating this space to pause, breathe, observe, and then to respond, places you back into an empowered position. An empowered position, where your health is considered, you have freedom to respond with loving kindness, compassion and perspective.

STOP

A mindfulness technique

This technique helps to short circuit the stress response, especially when in the moment and you need to access space to create an empowered response.

It accesses the power of the BREATH. Something that we take for granted, is widely accessible, is a powerful healing tool to ground us, stabilise and take things one step at a time.

The STOP technique

S = Stop what you are doing if it is safe to do so

T = Take a breathe. INHALE 1, 2, 3,4, HOLD 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 EXHALE 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Repeat as many time as needed.

O = Observe what is happening within and around you. What feelings and sensations are you experiencing and what clues are these giving you?

P = proceed mindfully. Take action with intention. 'When I feel... I need...'

This is an accessible technique that requires practice. When in the moment of discomfort or overwhelm, activating this technique will allow you to create space between the situation and your response. Slowing everything down.

One Small Step

One small step A - Role play the STOP technique in a neutral situation. What sensations did you notice in your mind and body?

or

One small step B - Practise the STOP technique in a moment when it is needed the most. What did you find easy or difficult? Remember the key word here is *practice*. It may not have worked at first, that's ok. You tried something different and this is hugely significant! You are have permission to learn, fail and adapt. This is vital to your growth as a Mother and as a person. You are doing an incredible job!

SLEEP



It is known that sleep is essential for our survival. During sleep, our bodies and brains repair themselves ready for the next day and support our overall mental and physical health.

Gaining the recommended 8 hour quality sleep that Mother's need to sustain themselves and their families for the day ahead, is at best a challenge and often unrealistic.

Getting to a place where you feel rested and energised, might be about changing the way Mother's think about sleep, letting go of the perfection and grip of what sleep should be, and practising one or two sleep hygiene factors to increase the likelihood of better sleep.

Sleep is an individual path. Letting go of the ideal, welcoming in your own ideal is a better path to a successful night's sleep.

Sleep

Here are some principles that may increase the likelihood of getting quality rest.

Soften and accept

'Sleep like a baby' often means that there are periods of sleep shortly followed by periods of wakefulness and rarely, at least in the early days, will babies sleep for a longer period of time. Just like babies need to learn to eat, to walk, to play, to talk, babies also need to learn to sleep! Grouping their periods of sleep together to build one big block of sleep, requires time, practice and compassion by their caregivers. This means that children are following an instinctual map of being awake and being asleep, and not a guideline or rule prescribed by a society. As a Mother, looking through this lens of understanding, accepting and learning, allows a Mother to soften and gain perspective when overwhelmed by lack of sleep.

Seeking support

Sleep deprivation plays a huge role in the overall health and happiness of parents. Seeking support might feel like climbing a mountain, however there are things within your control to bring more ease to your day.

Making small adjustments throughout your day; to do something to support yourself in the day may lessen the impact of little sleep. Of course, if you can sleep when the baby sleeps then do that. However it may simply look like speaking to a friend, rescheduling an appointment or caring for yourself by taking a few things off your to-do-list. Ask yourself;

What support do you need, right at the moment to make this feel easier?

What are the things that are within my control that I can do, to support me today?

Ways for better sleep

There are tools that can be put in place to improve the likelihood of better sleep. These are not ways to solve sleep issues. They may serve as a way to respect your sleeping space, patterns and support you to explore how to gain a better night's sleep.

Better Sleep Tactics

- Practice regular sleep rhythms—go to bed and wake up at the same time each day
- No TV in the bedroom (try to keep all technology in a different room including phones)
- Create an aesthetic environment in your bedroom that encourages sleep ie. serene, restful colors and no clutter
- Create total darkness and quiet where possible
- Avoid caffeine or reduce it after noon.
- Avoid alcohol or medications that interfere with sleep.
- Get regular exposure to daylight for at least 20 minutes daily. The light from the sun enters your eyes and triggers your brain to release specific chemicals and hormones like melatonin that are vital to healthy sleep, mood, and ageing.
- Eat no later than two hours before bed—eating a heavy meal prior to bed will most likely impact your sleep, as your body enters digestion mode instead of sleep mode.
- Write your worries down and make a plan if necessary for you to focus on the next day. It will free up your mind and energy to move into deep and restful sleep.
- Take a relaxing salt or aromatherapy bath.
- Take relaxing minerals such as magnesium and calcium.
- Listen to relaxing music, white noise or ocean sounds to help you sleep.

One Small Step

One Small Step A - Think about your current sleep. What has worked in the past that has supported you when impacted by little sleep?

One Small Step B - Choose 2 sleep hygiene factors from the list you could use straight away. Note what worked and what didn't work.

Into Motherhood



A bit about Into Motherhood

Into Motherhood is a space to delve into conversations around the experience of Motherhood.

The Motherhood experience is complex and transformative. It moves and changes. All the emotions, the moments, the phases move and it is my mission to help Mothers feel supported and empowered as they navigate this.

Into Motherhood Values

Empowerment & Community

Mothers are not broken. We raise awareness of their own unique gifts, lessons and resources as a source of empowerment and work to or support and raise awareness of matrescence and empower change within the environments where Mothers live.

Vulnerability & accountability

We embrace imperfection as the way we do everything. We believe in the space where learning happens, so that we can experience more ease and joy. We acknowledge our impact and take steps to make considered changes, with acceptance and responsibility.

Respect

We understand the richness of our unique experiences and contexts. We listen and connect to all we meet with unconditional positive regard, kindness and compassion.

About Louise

I support Mothers on their way to health and wellness as they experience the transformations in Motherhood. I help Mothers overcome overwhelm and navigate uncertainty so that they feel empowered and move with ease towards acceptance and self love, whilst caring for themselves and others.

If you would like to explore these topics further or learn more about Into Motherhood, please get in touch for a complimentary discovery call.

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