

If Adults Behaved Like Toddlers

We're adults.

We get up early (rarely), exercise (sometimes), and go to work (begrudgingly).

We're in charge.

Or maybe we just think we are. And in truth, there are many ways we could learn from the toddlers entrusted to our care.

Here's a little peek at how life could be if toddlers ruled the world – as if they aren't don't already. And in this alternate universe, our days could stand to look a lot more like theirs.

6 a.m.

Good morning! You spring out of bed - jabbering, running around in circles, and ready to face the day. Who needs an alarm when you get plenty of sleep and are excited about everything in store for you on this beautiful day?

Toddler tip: Mornings aren't so bad if you get plenty of sleep! Try it.

6:30 a.m.

It doesn't take long for you to get ready when you are channeling your inner toddler - grab the nearest clothes and don't even let it cross your mind that others don't think a ballerina skirt matches that old t-shirt. You look great!

Toddler tip: Who cares what your friends or coworkers think? Don't spend all your precious time worrying about what to wear. Instead, choose something you love and move on. (Bonus points for having your clothes ready the night before.)

7 a.m.

No day can truly begin without breakfast. You're in a hurry? Too bad.

Sit down and take your time. See how many times you can throw your cup of milk on the ground. It's magic - someone will pick it up for you. And we all know that if the milk does spill, it's most certainly worth crying over.

Toddler tip: Don't miss breakfast. And take a few minutes to sit down while you're doing it. (It's just one important way to take care of yourself - and it could make you a better parent.)

8 a.m.

It's play time. Wait. Every moment is play time when you are a toddler. Why bother with anything if it's not fun? And almost everything can be fun - cleaning, exercising, and all those other chores on your list.



now what? Keep Going.

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Run circles around the house. Sort spoons from the dishwasher. Sing a song as you fold laundry. (And by folding laundry, we mean throw the laundry that's already been folded.)

Toddler tip: Make all those to-do list items a little more fun. If toddlers can do it, so can you.

11 a.m.

Uh-oh. It's the mid-morning temper tantrum. Something didn't go your way and you are not pleased. Luckily, you have been given vocal chords to scream, tear ducts to cry, and feet to stomp. Why have them if you can't use them?

Toddler tip: Meltdowns aren't fun for parents and no one wants to see a temper tantrum from an adult. But, we could probably all do a little better at understanding and expressing our emotions. And no one is better at expressing emotions than kids. (Although we could still help them learn to control and channel those emotions.)

12 p.m.

Stop the presses. It's lunch. Leave everything right where it is (including all those toys in the playroom) and insist on a satisfying lunch at the table.

Toddler tip: That work will still be at your desk when you get back from lunch. Get up, walk somewhere, and grab a healthy lunch. Your body and mind will thank you.

1 p.m.

Yawn - nap time. While you don't always like it, it's a necessity to get some rest or quiet time throughout the day.

Toddler tip: Your body needs rest. It may not be a nap - although no judgement if you can fit it in. But try to give yourself some rest time throughout your day. It will do wonders for your attitude and brain power.

3 p.m.

"Clean up, clean up, everybody everywhere." Cleaning up can be a game and can be part of a song. Actually, it's really not that bad after all.

Toddler tip: Kids are taught from a young age that it's important to clean up after themselves. Adults could stand to re-learn that lesson, too. Take time each day to straighten your desk, your coffee table or your kitchen counter. It's amazing how this habit can make you feel a bit more in control of your day.

5:30 p.m.

It's time to help set the table and sit down to eat with your family. Isn't your family great? Why wouldn't you want to spend all kinds of time with them? Dinnertime is one of the best times of the day.

Toddler tip: It may not be easy to get everyone seated around a table, but it's worth it. It's good for kids and adults to eat together, have a conversation, and open the lines of communication.

7 p.m.

Get started on that stack of books you are dying to read. There never seems to be enough time, but it's worth it to get started and dig in. And then beg for a few more books, too.

Toddler tip: We know that it's important to read to our kids. But it can be great for us, too. Instead of zoning out in front of your favorite show every evening, pick up a book from the library and let your brain wind down without screen time.

now what? Keep Going.

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7:30 p.m.

It's bedtime. What a fun and productive day we had! We may not always want to stop playing or having fun, but it doesn't take long to fall asleep when we have been so busy.

Toddler tip: Burning the midnight oil? Studies show that going to sleep and waking up at the same time every day actually makes you healthier. And if you aren't getting enough sleep at all, your body and mind could revolt. No one wants that.

now what? | **KEEP GOING.**

As adults, it's easy to think you have it all together. But our toddlers could actually teach us a lot - if we let them.

So the next time you feel overwhelmed, frustrated, or angry, try asking yourself, "What would my toddler do?"

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Originally posted on the Now What? Blog on 2/20/17. The Now What? Blog served for nearly 7 years to

1. Normalize parents seeking support and help as a manner of child abuse prevention
2. Engage community in how they can work to prevent child abuse
3. Work to build resiliency in families through promotion of the 5 protective factors

Maybe you coach a baseball team or you help care for the neighbor kids from time to time. You are investing in the safety and security of the children in our community. Because it truly does take a village to raise our children, we want to offer the tools needed to bring awareness and education to preventing child abuse.

now what? Keep Going.