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DADS MOMS MOMS



“In *Two-Minute Timeouts for New Moms*, Andrea Fortenberry takes what busy moms have precious little of—time—and delivers a powerful dose of much-needed encouragement. Just a couple of minutes a day become like loaves and fishes in God’s hands, producing deeper faith, abounding hope, and unfailing love. This is my go-to gift for the new moms in my life!”

—**Becky Boudoin**, author of *Enjoy Every Minute: And Other Ridiculous Things We Say to Moms*

“*Two-Minute Timeouts for New Moms* is the perfect companion for new mothers, offering brief devotions packed with wisdom, honesty, and gentle humor. Andrea brilliantly acknowledges the real struggles of early motherhood while providing genuine hope and encouragement, reminding readers they can draw on God’s strength even in their most challenging moments. This book serves as both spiritual grounding and a warm welcome into the sacred community of motherhood.”

—**Sherri Crandall**, mom of four, vice president of Global Ministries and Leadership Experience at The MomCO, and author

“I often say to others that God is closer than our next breath. In Andrea’s devotional, *Two-Minute Timeouts for New Moms*, moms like me are given a beautifully simple tool to catch our breath and set our gaze on God. This book will help every weary mom catch her breath and cultivate joy in her household.”

—**Jenny Erlingsson**, mom of four and author of creative nonfiction and romantic fiction

“If I had to go back to those early years of motherhood, I’d want *Two-Minute Timeouts for New Moms* by my side to help me navigate the roller coaster of new experiences and emotions. This book tenderly captures every thought, worry, sorrow, and joy of parenthood and refocuses it through God’s lens of faith, hope, and love.”

—**Casey Hilty**, author of *Her Children Arise: Passing a Legacy of Faith to the Next Generation*

“In this beautiful book, Andrea tenderly explores the challenging realities of motherhood, offering a perspective that is filled with grace and vulnerability. With the comforting voice of a trusted older sister, she reminds moms they are never alone. Her wisdom gently

directs moms toward the heart of God, who walks with them as they nurture the next generation.”

—**Jennifer Iverson**, director of leadership development, The MomCo

“Motherhood can often feel overwhelming and lonely, but this devotional is a gentle companion that offers hope, wisdom, and steady reminders to turn our hearts toward Jesus. Through personal stories, prayers, and prompts, Andrea helps us walk with Jesus in every season.”

—**Simi John**, speaker and author of *I Am Not: Break Free from Stereotypes and Become the Woman God Made You to Be*

“Andrea Fortenberry has written the kind of book every new mom needs—short, honest, and full of soul-deep encouragement. *Two-Minute Timeouts for New Moms* feels like a pep talk from a wise friend who gets it and reminds you that you’re doing better than you think.”

—**Stacey Morgan**, mom of four and author of *The Astronaut’s Wife: How Launching My Husband into Outer Space Changed the Way I Live on Earth*

“Mothering can be just plain unfun, and my friend, Andrea Fortenberry, has created an amazing lifeline of encouragement for weary and wonderful mothers with *Two-Minute Timeouts for New Moms*. Andrea fills each day’s text with bite-sized pieces of wisdom, vulnerability, and tools for spiritual self-care from her own experience as a mom, podcaster, leader, and woman of faith.”

—**Amberly Neese**, speaker, author, comedian, and founder of the Relatable Moms Tour

“*Two-Minute Timeouts for New Moms* provides a welcome reprieve for weary mothers everywhere. It’s the perfect gift for new moms!”

—**Katie J. Trent**, author of *Recipes for a Sweet Child: Creative, Bible-Based Activities to Help Your Family Thrive* and founder of Family Faith-Building Academy

# TWO-MINUTE TIMEOUTS FOR NEW MOMS

*100 Devotions for  
Weary and Wonderful Days*

*Andrea Fortenberry*



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For Lila and William,  
This book would not be possible without you. It is my highest honor to be your mom.  
I love you more than words can ever say.

For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy.

1 THESSALONIANS 2:19-20

## INTRODUCTION

**W**hether you became a mom through biology, adoption, or a blended family, you are welcome here!

Whether you are a first-time mom or have brought home your second, third, or fourth baby, each time you become a new mom all over again. Every birth story, baby, and season is unique. Even if you've been a mom for a while, you'll probably discover that you're often in unfamiliar territory and it all feels new.

The book is organized around the three main categories that I believe every mom needs for the journey of motherhood: faith, hope, and love.

It is my privilege to walk alongside you for the next one hundred days. This is my prayer for you:

May the LORD cause you to flourish, both you and your children. May you be blessed by the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

PSALM 115:14-15



## FAITH: OPTIONS VERSUS ANSWERS

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

**T**he internet can be every mom's lifesaver: What is the correct dosage for infant medication? When do they need their next wellness check? When should they start crawling? But it can also be every mom's downfall. It can make us jump to the worst possible conclusion over minor things—especially in the middle of the night. This, my friend, I have learned the hard way.

Crystal Stine said something very profound that has stuck with me: “Google gives us options, but God gives us answers.”<sup>1</sup>

Yes, the internet gives us options for our problems, but God can give us soul-level answers we can't find anywhere else.

- He gives us peace for our worry: Philippians 4:6-7
- He gives us the Holy Spirit to help us discern and make decisions: John 14:16-17
- He gives us grace and forgiveness for our mistakes: Isaiah 43:25
- He gives us wisdom when we ask Him: James 1:5
- He gives us confidence when we doubt: Joshua 1:9
- He gives us comfort when we are afraid: Psalm 34:4

The next time you find yourself worried about your baby and you decide to run to the internet, take a deep breath and say a prayer. The internet will give you options and can guide you to the practical help you need—but it is God who provides lasting spiritual answers to soothe your mama soul.

### **Now It's Your Turn**

*God, thank You for technology that can provide me with options and solutions. Thank You for providing enduring answers to my deepest questions, thoughts, and feelings. Please help me learn to turn to You first when I am afraid or in need of help. Thank You for knowing what I need before I even ask. Thank You for loving me and my child(ren) so deeply.*

- ▶ Where do I tend to run when I have a problem or worry?
- ▶ What answers do I need from God today?



## HOPE: KEEP GOING

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

JAMES 1:2-5

**W**hen I have a hard time being a mom, I'll put myself in "Mommy Time-Out." I escape to a mother's sanctuary—the bathroom—and lock the door.

One day I went to my time-out sobbing, because I didn't know what else to do. Three-year-old Lila had blatantly disobeyed me all morning. Her one-year-old brother had made messes in every room of the house. I was on the last week of breastfeeding him, which didn't help matters, because my hormones were all over the place. I was mentally tired, and my patience waned. I put him in the crib and fled to the bathroom.

Behind the locked door my tears would not stop. I cried out, *God, being a mom is so hard. I'm such a failure. How can I do this?*

A short while later Lila found my hiding place and knocked on the door.

"Mommy, I have a sticker for you," she announced.

"Okay, honey. I'll be out in a minute," I said, trying to shoo her away.

But she persisted and the conversation repeated a few more

times. Bothered, I eventually opened the door to the water closet and saw that she had placed the sticker on my bathroom mirror.

Of all the stickers she could have chosen, she unknowingly picked the one I needed the most in that moment. It read, “Keep Going!”

I broke into tears again. What an answer to prayer that sticker represented! It reminded me that I don’t have to know all the answers in this motherhood journey. I just need to keep going, one day at a time, one moment at a time. I scooped her up in my arms and held her tight, grateful for how God used her to answer my prayer.

When I find myself in that place again, wondering how to get through the day with the demands of raising children, I remember that sticker. I pause, take a deep breath, and keep going.

### **Now It’s Your Turn**

*God, thank You for hearing me and answering my prayers. Trials are difficult as I go through them, but I’m grateful for the lessons I learn from them. Thank You for maturing and growing me in my journey as a mom.*

- ▶ What wisdom do I need to ask God for today?
- ▶ How has God helped me in my motherhood journey so far?



## LOVE: HARVESTS OF BLESSINGS

Where there are no oxen, the manger is empty, but from the strength of an ox come abundant harvests.

PROVERBS 14:4

**B**efore I had children, I remember hearing a friend who already had kids say she was so frustrated by all their stuff—it was *everywhere*. She constantly felt like she was cleaning up messes: bottles, bibs, food, toys, and clothes. I sympathized with her but couldn't fully understand her frustration until I became a mother.

Then, I *totally* got it.

Most days, cleaning the house seems futile because in half a second, it will be dirty again. Bottles. Crumbs. Toys. Never-ending piles of laundry. The messes are constant!

I must admit, this does not change as your children grow. Even though my kids are now teenagers and old enough to pick up after themselves, I still find their things all over the house. Socks and shoes under the kitchen table, backpacks in the middle of the floor, and dirty clothes thrown around the house.

When I read this verse from Proverbs, it makes me stop in my tracks because of the reminder it gives to us as moms. Although it's hard to imagine now, there will come a day when the messes are gone and our children don't live with us anymore. Time doesn't stop. Babies grow up before our eyes.

Now when I look around at all the messes, I try to remember this verse. Piles of books, dishes, and laundry are beautiful evidence

of this season of life. If I had no children, my house would be clean, but empty. Empty of messes, yes, but also empty of smiles, laughter, bedtime snuggles, and special memories. I know I will miss these messes when my oxen have left the manger.

### **Now It's Your Turn**

*God, thank You for the messes that come with being a mom. Diapers, laundry, and bottles are beautiful signs of Your goodness, tiny displays that our home has a little one to love. When I get frustrated from the constant cleaning up, please remind me that the messes are temporary and that they are producing something good in me and my child(ren).*

- ▶ How does this verse from Proverbs encourage me to appreciate the messiness of life in this season?
- ▶ What is a favorite blessing I reap from being a mom?



## FAITH: LETTING GO OF MY PRIDE

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

JAMES 4:10

**W**hen Lila was a few weeks old she cried—a *lot*. One day, she cried for a few hours at a time, and the only thing I knew to do was feed and hold her.

It was about 5 p.m., and my husband wasn't due home from work and school until 10 p.m. I took her out for a drive in hopes that the crying would subside, but she wailed the entire time. I cried right along with her—I didn't know what to do to make her stop, and I prayed for help.

I thought of calling a friend to ask her to come and sit with the baby so I could have a break. But then I thought of how it would inconvenience her. She was a mom of teens and tweens and was likely busy. I didn't want to impose.

Wouldn't you know that she called me within the hour? I saw her name on the caller ID, but I couldn't bring myself to answer. I just couldn't muster the words to admit I needed help.

Later, I realized I had been prideful. I had asked for help and God provided it, but I rejected Him and His gift, thinking I could manage on my own. I let my ego get in the way of being real with my friend.

As women, we often have overflowing to-do lists and commitments and need help a lot more often than we ask for it. Society tells us we can do it all, but the truth is, we can't. *And that's okay*. God made us weak so we would need Him and each

other. When we let go of our pride and humbly ask for help, He will be faithful to provide it.

### **Now It's Your Turn**

*God, thank You for creating me to need help—from others and from You. I wasn't made to do motherhood alone but to be in community and do life with others. Please help me to be honest about my needs and weaknesses and not to be ashamed. Please help me let go of my pride and ask for help when I need it.*

- ▶ What in my life do I currently need help with?
- ▶ Who will I ask to help me?



## HOPE: NEVER ALONE

God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.

PSALM 46:5

**W**hen my children were newborns and I was up all night with them, I often wondered how many other mamas were also awake in the dead of night and then again in the wee hours of the morning. I imagined God looking down at our houses, watching as light bulbs turned on and moms fumbled out of bed to rock and feed our babes. It was a comfort to realize that I wasn't alone.

Those early days of motherhood were exhausting. Lack of sleep can make life really hard. Feeling like you're in survival mode is normal for this season.

In these moments of exhaustion and frustration, remember that God is with you. When no one else is watching, He hears and sees all you do. He always notices you. He sees every time you calm your baby's cries. He knows the number of times you've gotten up in the middle of the night. He knows the number of diapers you've changed and loads of laundry you've folded.

He is with you, *always*. He is there to help you when you need Him. His strength will help you make it through the sleepless nights and the hard days. This too shall pass.

Reminding ourselves that we are never alone can change our perspective. It removes the pressure we often put on ourselves to get it all right and figure this motherhood thing out on our own. Whether it's the break of day or our breaking point, God

is there for us. The next time we find ourselves about to fall, let's call on Him to catch us and help us. He is trustworthy and true.

### **Now It's Your Turn**

*God, thank You that I am never alone. You see everything I do; You are always mindful of me. Please help me to rely on You when I am exhausted, weak, and weary. May I be confident that You are my ever-present help, no matter the time of day.*

- ▶ What brings me to my breaking point?
- ▶ How does the reminder that God is with me on my motherhood journey encourage my heart?

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

**B**ehind every book is an amazing team of people who made it possible:

Jesus, thank You for allowing me to write this book. May You be glorified through these words. May moms find faith, hope, and love in this devotional. Thank You for allowing me to be Lila and William's mom. It is my joy to offer wisdom from my experience. Soli Deo Gloria.

Will, thank you for supporting me in all my endeavors. Thank you for loving me and for being an amazing husband and father to our children. You are the answer to so many of my prayers.

Lila and William, thank you for all you have taught me, and for your love and grace. Thank you for understanding when I snuck away almost every Saturday to write this book. I have loved revisiting our stories and memories. Thank you for allowing me to share them. It has been so beautiful to bear witness to your lives and watch you grow. My cup runneth over.

Mom, thank you for loving me and sacrificing for me in a million little ways. Thank you for being an example of a mother who walks by faith. I am forever grateful God chose you for me!

Dad, you were right: I understood so many more of your parenting decisions when I became a parent. Thank you for raising me and for your unwavering love and support.

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## NOTES

1. Andrea Fortenberry, host, *The Perfectionist's Guide to Mothering*, Episode 16, "Quieting the Shout of Should," December 16, 2020, 43 min., 27 sec., <https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/andreafortenberry/episodes/Episode-16-Quieting-the-Shout-of-Should-enr8k4/a-a25abvd>.
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# GIVE YOURSELF A TIMEOUT!

As a new mom, you might be asking yourself . . .

*Will I ever sleep again?*

*What if I don't know what I'm doing?*

*Do other moms feel as overwhelmed as I do?*

It's time to sneak in a quick break between diapers, mealtimes, and meltdowns to soak in wisdom and encouragement from a seasoned mom-friend. Andrea Fortenberry's tender storytelling and practical guidance give you an honest, relatable look at the joys and struggles of motherhood. Heartful and sometimes humorous, these devotions are packed with the reassurance you need in this new season of life—ultimately helping you lean into God for strength.



**ANDREA FORTENBERRY** is a writer, a sought-after speaker for women's events, and the leadership development manager for MomCo. Her podcast, *The Perfectionist's Guide to Mothering*, helps equip moms to show up for the life God has for them. Andrea, her husband, Will, and their two children live outside Phoenix, Arizona.

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