

seasons of motherhood {SUMMER RESET}



Let's get back to the goodness of
Summer with our little ones and
discover how to really enjoy it
together.

By: Blair Sucher



INTRODUCTION

I was thinking last week that I had officially hit the point in the Summer where I could feel my patience wearing thin and the novelty of Summer wearing off. It happens every year. I pump myself up. I'm ready for adventures with my boys, and then the days feel long, I feel tired, and they constantly want to be entertained.

So here I am with these questions, asking myself (and you) to evaluate where we are in the state of Summer. And giving myself the chance to take a breath and press the reset button.

The truth is that when I look back on my childhood Summers, they are not full of all-day activities. There are weeks I remember going to art camp or cheer camp, weeks spent at the beach, and family vacations here and there. But I mostly remember running around our neighborhood with our friends—playing baseball in a field down the street, striking up a game of capture the flag, exploring the woods behind our house, or catching fireflies at dusk.

Looking back, there were days when we snuggled up and watched movies (I am pretty sure I had *The Sandlot* memorized by age 8) in the afternoon or cartoons in the morning. There were also days when my mom had sitters come so that she could get things done. Sometimes it feels like our generation has forgotten that we, too, had televisions as children. Our parents also had things to do and needed help entertaining us.



Yes, it was different because we couldn't take our screens with us. But, I believe screens don't have to be a threat to your child's perfect Summer, and neither does having a sitter every once in a while.

My little guys are still a bit too young to run around on their own with their buddies, but I think there is something that can be taken from the carefree days of Summer we experienced as children.

Almost every single day, my sweet Jones asks me, "Mom, what are we doing fun today?" I don't know whether this is a precedent I have set, where he thinks each day should be full of new adventures. I always want him to believe that every new day can be a grand adventure. But I want him to pivot into thinking that adventures can't be found in the ordinary of our backyard or tucked into a story we read together on the couch.

Also, if I am being honest, I have some of my own pivoting to do. I need to stop feeling the need to fill up the silence, set up activities, pull out all the stops, and exhaust myself, so their Summer seems magical enough. I am not sure where the pressure for us, as moms, to perform came into play, but it is something I struggle with constantly.

The truth is that there are moments of Summer that we all love and mean so much more when they just happen. When you turn the sprinkler on to water the grass, it suddenly becomes a backyard waterpark. Mornings when it feels just cool enough to walk and get coffee and donuts. Afternoons when you accidentally get caught in the rain, you embrace the puddles, the mess, and the drenched clothes. We don't need perfectly choreographed days to reach the goal of a perfect Summer... we need moments that trip us up with their spontaneous beauty.

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How to use this Workbook



So, it's July, the midpoint of Summer, and the perfect time to reclaim that happiness and wonder I set out to find with my family at the end of the school year.

Come with me. Let's find a way to relax into days where the only rules we follow are ones that fit our specific family. Let's dig into what we want for the rest of this Summer... both for our children and ourselves (no, it is not selfish to want to enjoy the Summer too).

In this little guide, I have come up with five words that light the little spark of Summer in my soul. With each word, we walk through how we can connect with each feeling as moms and help open up those emotions in our children.

I have included some fun, easy, no-think activities to pull out when you are having one of those days we often have as moms! Not one section in this Summer reset is meant to be something to check off of your list. Instead, look at it as a way to hone in on what you want to get out of this Summer as a family and use it as a starting point to spark your Summer.

XOXO, BLAIR

WONDER

/'wʌndər/ • noun

a feeling of great surprise and admiration caused by seeing or experiencing something that is strange and new.

WONDER

awe
astonishment
surprise
curiosity

Do you remember the wonder of childhood Summers? What was it that made you awe-struck? Was it watching the tide roll in on a family beach trip? Was it staying up late to see the stars twinkle and the fireflies chase each other? Was it camping, swimming, fishing on the edge of a lake, or making homemade ice cream? Or were Summers never full of wonder for you? Maybe you are ready to change that for your babies.

Whatever your reason is for being here... wonder is the perfect place for us to start when it comes to finding the sweetness of summertime. The words above reflect what wonder means. Awe, astonishment, surprise, and curiosity. Think about how powerful those words can be in the context of Summer for both you and your little people.

Now let's figure out how we can capture it like bugs in a jar...



WONDER & YOU

Wonder. It can feel like a concept too far away for us as grown-ups to grasp. Lost, like when we stopped believing in Santa Clause. I don't know why we feel like we don't have the right to be shocked by the beauty of this world, but wherever this feeling came from, it isn't from our God who wants to set our hearts on fire.

Experiencing beautiful things in the Summer does not just stop when you become a mother. It opens us up to a world of new possibilities. In Psalm 65:8, David exclaims, "The whole earth is filled with awe at your wonders; where morning dawns, where evening fades, you call forth songs of joy." I am sure we can look back at summers in our past and find wonder painted all over them...

Somewhere along the way, Summers became another task to overcome. We began to hyperventilate at the thought of keeping little hands busy and our sanity intact.

But take a deep breath and a quick step back and look at what this task entails... watching our children grow. Having long, slow days to observe who they are, who they were, and who they are becoming.

That in itself should be awe-inspiring.

So finish this Summer with your eyes wide open and watching for the wonder God wants you to see... in the extraordinary and the ordinary.

3 WAYS TO SPARK WONDER THIS SUMMER:



Put those babies down early. Have someone sit while they sleep, and take a twilight walk by yourself—Marvel at the sun setting. Listen to the cicadas in the tree. Let yourself be amazed by the familiar.



Watch your children. Think about the wonder of watching them grow... then document it. Keep a journal by your bed and write one thing about them that surprised you that day.



Read a non-fiction book about something new. A memoir about an incredible human being, a historical book about a specific event or time period, or one about another woman's perspective of motherhood. Look for God's handiwork in the story and the unique ways He changes our hearts and the world's history.

WONDER & YOUR LITLLES

I laugh to myself as I write this because my children often lead me to wonder, not the other way around. But I also see the world of distractions that face our children in ways that never affected us. It is our job, as parents, to clear the noise and offer them the wonder of childhood, especially in the magical space of Summer.

So how can we spark wonder in our children? When we are talking about wonder, we are talking about things that cause us to drop our jaws and stare. Unlike adults, who have become numb to the incredible world around us, our little ones are often experiencing things for the first time, and the most minor things can amaze them.

At the beginning of the Summer, we planted a few seeds across the street from our house in a community garden, and just this past week, vast shoots of sunflowers have popped through and are towering over our heads. When we looked out the window and saw this, Jones's jaw dropped to the floor. Given the slightest opportunity... little hearts can be thoroughly amazed. All you have to do is give them a chance.



3 THINGS TO SPARK WONDER IN YOUR LITTLE ONES



1 Grab a blanket and lay it out in the backyard as the sun goes down. Lay on your backs and look up at the sky as it fades and the stars appear. Search for shooting stars, airplanes flying, and lightning bugs.

2 Plant something and watch it grow. Seeing something transform and pop up from the earth unleashes curiosity in children.

3 Ask them what piques their interest, and find something near you to cultivate that interest. Science museums, zoos, nature walks, art camps... help them fall in love with something that sparks curiosity and wonder.

JOY

/joi/• noun

a feeling of great happiness or pleasure.

JOY

*bliss
delight
glee
satisfaction*



Joy is what happens to us when we allow ourselves to realize how good things really are.

-Marianne Williamson

In some ways, Joy seems synonymous with Summer.

Bright colors, sunshine, laughter, and lazy mornings.

Then towards the middle of the summer... the monotony of the long days can start to steal that joy we felt in the beginning. We have visited all of the splash pads, the pools, and the parks. We find ourselves holed up in the AC to hide from the heat.

Just like a delicious popsicle, our joy begins to melt.

So how do we Marie Kondo the rest of our summer and spark joy? Let's find out.



The joy of Summer leaves me before it leaves my children. Selfishly, I miss the routine of the school year. Plus, the heat and I aren't exactly besties unless there is a body of water around. But this year, I don't want my joy to leave. I know Summers with little people are fleeting, and I don't want to look back with regret.

JOY

is
not
a
happenstance.

JOY

is
a
Choice.

Reading the quote on the previous page by Marianne Williamson made me think. Many times, we believe that joy is something that happens to us, but, in reality, we can choose joy in any circumstance.

So when my babysitter cancels at the last minute or the forecast is calling for rain... joy starts with me and my attitude towards the day. I have to realize that finding delight is as easy as looking around my living room.

HELPING OUR CHILDREN FIND THEIR ROSE COLORED GLASSES

Showing our little ones that they can choose joy will help them in the long run. When you see that your child is struggling with a situation this Summer (or anytime, really), help them reframe it or walk away from it and choose joy. Easier said than done, right?! Let's explore how we can assist them in determining happiness. When you see frustration start to bubble up, follow these simple steps.

1) ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR FRUSTRATION

Let them know you hear how they are feeling and that you also feel frustrated sometimes when things aren't going your way. Talk with your kids about how there will always be things in our lives that are frustrating and out of our control. (Ex: Today is a really, really hot day)

2) TALK ABOUT HOW JOY IS A CHOICE

Explain to your children that even though some things are out of our control, certain things, like how we react, are always in our control. And we have every ability to choose to be joyful in all circumstances. So, "Today might be a scorching day outside, but we can still find a way to fill it with joy."

3) MAKE A JOY LIST / CHANGE THEIR PERSPECTIVE

Come up with a list of things (together) that can change their outlook or provide joy in this circumstance if we use the example before (a scorching day). You could devise a list of things you can do on a hot day: (have an indoor dance party, eat popsicles on the porch, fill up water balloons, or read books together).

Using these three simple steps over and over again will teach them an easy way to change their perspective and can be applied to so many "sticky situations." Choosing joy will be a game changer in your house!



FREEDOM

/fri:.dəm/• noun

the condition or right of being able or allowed to do what you want to, without being controlled or limited:

FREEDOM

*flexibility
opportunity
independence
play*

The definition on the page before can feel a bit, well... intense. So let me clarify what I am talking about when using the word "freedom" as it pertains to Summer and our families. During the school year, we are bound to our schedules... particularly school schedules. Our children are asked to sit at desks, follow specific rules, wear certain clothes and act accordingly in their daily lives. And this is a beautiful thing. Our kids need boundaries. They need to see that life is not a free for all.

But the Summer allows us to loosen the reigns a little bit. For them and ourselves!

Certainly not regarding respect and the rules already established in our homes. Instead, consider giving your children the autonomy to make confident choices this Summer. Help them foster some independence and let their personalities shine...

Let's talk about how!



As a mom, it can feel like Summer steals your freedom a little bit. During the school year, you are given ample time to do what you need to. Suddenly, those hours feel like they have been stolen from you.

But let's reframe here because that attitude will not help you get through the Summer with a smile on your face.

So let's talk about the freedom that Summer CAN offer you: It allows you to let go of the reigns you hold onto so tightly from September through May.

I know many type A hearts are about to explode at the thought. But what if we look at Summer as a break for ourselves... just like it is supposed to be for our children. Bedtimes, wake-up times, meal times... we have the FREEDOM to change these as we see fit.

When we look at it this way... all the sudden, our Summer feels a lot less stressful:

- Dinner can be a picnic in the backyard.
- Baths can be in a hose and some soap outside.
- Bedtime can be pushed back to grab ice cream in pajamas

WHY CHOOSING FREEDOM IN FRONT OF YOUR CHILDREN IS IMPORTANT:

- ☀ Sometimes children cling to routines and schedules. When they see that you can change up habits and still be in a safe & sure environment, it makes them more comfortable with flexibility.
- ☀ It helps your family bond with each other in a unique manner when you do everyday things in unexpected ways.
- ☀ It fosters communication in your family about boundaries and opens up discussions about which rules are necessary and which have a little bend in them.



How many times do you offer your children the freedom of having choices? If you are anything like me, it is not very often.

Freedom does not have to be an all-out war on the boundaries you set in your home. But offering choices and allowing them the opportunity to pick helps them practice skills like decision making. Learning to make decisions at a young age will help them discover how to trust themselves and boost their confidence.

Summer is the perfect time to put this into practice. Remember that it should be subtle, and don't drive yourself crazy over it!

3 SMALL FREEDOMS TO GRANT YOUR LITTLE ONES:

- ☀️ Make at-home days fun by letting them choose what they wear. Who is going to see them anyway? :)
- ☀️ Pick 30 minutes of the day in which they can pick what the two of you play together. Don't try and control the situation; honestly, give them the freedom.
- ☀️ Give your children a set number of treats for the day... 1 or 2, nothing crazy... but they choose when they can have them. If they eat them all in the morning.... that's their choice, but there will be none later in the day.

BOREDOM

/'bôrdəm/• noun

the state of feeling unhappy
because you have nothing to do

BOREDOM

*monotony
flatness
dullness
indifference*



You need to let the little things that would ordinarily bore you suddenly thrill you.

-Andy Warhol

Wait! Why is such a negative word in our Summer Reset?!

Summer may be full of interesting, exciting things, but it is also full of many downtimes. Which often leads to boredom staring us right in the face.

And it is time for us to stop seeing boredom as a negative thing that our children and ourselves encounter.

Boredom can ignite creativity, kindle curiosity, and teach kids how to entertain themselves. But when we hear our children say "bored," we panic, looking for what we can do to fill their time. We see these fantastic "insta moms" coming up with activity after activity before we even finish our morning coffee.

STOP!

Before you go down that rabbit hole... take a breath and then take the advice I am about to give you:

It is time to let your kids be bored.



This is where I will ask you to practice what you preach and take a look at your habits of avoiding boredom. When things start to feel monotonous... and if we are honest, this happens a lot in motherhood... what do you turn to?

Want to know a random time that boredom hits me? When my kids ask me to play. Don't get me wrong, I love spending time with them... but if I have to play paw patrol one more time, I may pull my hair out. So what do I do when I feel bored sitting on the floor playing... I reach for my phone and pull up whatever app can erase the boredom I am experiencing.

When I do this, the sensation of boredom is quickly replaced with mind-numbing entertainment, and they can immediately feel me disengage. Which honestly is not great for either of us. If I ask them to embrace some boredom this Summer, I should attempt to do the same thing.

So my challenge to you for the rest of the Summer is to embrace the boredom. Don't try to fix it or replace it. Sit with it and see where it leads you when you are with your children when you don't disengage. Playing paw patrol may lead you to discover something new about your baby. Or maybe seeing you be creative in play will help your little one do the same.

BOREDOM & YOUR LITLLES

I'll be super honest with you all here... letting my children be bored is something I struggle with daily. In the past, boredom led to whiney, clingy children, which I would do anything to avoid. But it has become apparent in our household that I am the primary source of entertainment, and it has become overwhelming. So I write this section as much for myself as I do for you!

These days, our kids are entertained more easily than ever before. It can be easy to throw a tablet in front of them and move on (guilty). But what would happen if we just let boredom happen to our children? If we allow the whining to pass and don't give in to the cries to do something extravagant.

What if, instead, we give a simple prompt to our kids without any other crazy instructions and see where they take it. Simple prompts help us offer something easy while forcing our kids to face boredom head-on. This might take us engaging for the first few minutes while they get their juices flowing, but it could lead to some beautiful moments of self-efficacy for our children and clear our hearts of the compulsion to entertain.

I made a little back pocket list of boredom busters to keep on hand for you on the next page. Write them down on note cards, throw them in a bucket and call it your boredom bucket. These are quick ideas that are open-ended to encourage creativity. It is 100% possible they will tell you they don't want to do it.

So seize the opportunity to explain the rules beforehand:

"Here is your boredom bucket. I know being bored is no fun, so this will help us figure out what we want to do next! When you feel bored, we can get it out and pick something to help us get creative. You can pick three note cards and pick the one you like best. If you don't like any of them, then it is up to you to come up with what you want to do, with no help from me. If you choose a boredom buster from the bucket, I will help you get started! Mommy will be right here if you need me, BUT I know how smart you are, and this is about YOU getting creative and using your brain!"



BOREDOM BUSTERS

Car/Animal Wash

Pull out some toy cars or animals... fill a bucket with dish soap and water, give each a sponge and let them go to town. A little dollar store shaving cream is also a great addition.

Dance Party

Turn on the music, turn off the lights, and let them have a dance party. Make a playlist with their favorites for easy access.

Build Something

Get out the legos, wooden blocks & magnetiles... and tell them to build something... anything they want. A zoo? A superhero lair? A princess castle?

Craft Corner

We all have a craft drawer, box, or corner... get it all out but this time, give them a theme: "Under the Ocean," "Transportation," "Circus," "Outer Space."

Science Lab

A true favorite in my house; get some cups, Tupperware, water, spoons, a little vinegar, a little baking soda, and some sprinkles; let them mix, pour, and shake... the driveway or somewhere easy to clean is best with this one

Scavenger Hunt

Let them help you develop a list of things they can spot (outside or inside). Then have them go on a scavenger hunt and put an X by each item they find! Make a list once and keep it to use again!

Make A Fort

Pick a room that won't bother you when it is a wreck, and gather all the pillows and blankets you can. Help them build a fort... but don't do it all yourself. Then let them come up with how they want to use it! (Pirate ship is a fave of ours)

Play Restaurant

Set up their play food, give them a notepad "to take orders," let them use the kitchen table as their restaurant, and set up their stuffed animals or dolls as customers. Be their first customer and let it go from there.

REST

/rest/• noun

a period of time in which you relax,
do not do anything active, or sleep

REST

relax
break
quiet
pause

Maybe rest isn't the first thing you think of when you think of Summer and kids. Or perhaps you are unsure how quiet fits in with squealing in the sprinkler, cheers in the baseball stadium, or squabbles between siblings.

But finding our slice of quiet in the Summer could be our missing puzzle piece. That pause, that breath, and that recharge you need to do all the things required of you.

Not only is rest essential for you, but it is also crucial for our children. During the school year, they are asked to go and go. School, sports, homework, dance... the list is endless. Summer is a time for them to take a break as well. A time to read for fun, to lay on the couch, to do cannonballs in the pool.

How sweet if we could be the ones who teach them how to rest this Summer? What if we could show them that it is okay not to hustle 365 days of the year?



REST & YOU

How do you refill your soul when you have to be all the things to all people? Do you read? Cook? Exercise? Maybe you take a long bath or a walk by yourself?

These are the things I am talking about when I use the word "rest" in this section. It is not so much the physical act of sitting still... it is what you do to replenish your soul.

We know what our kids need to rest... this one loves to read, this one loves to build quietly, this one loves to take a nap with his lovie. We know what our spouses need... a long shower, to watch the news in quiet, a peloton ride.

But do you know what you need?

Here is your permission (as if you needed it) to find out!

In a perfect world, each day would end with a good playlist, a glass of wine, and me cooking quietly in the kitchen. But this is not the reality I live in as a mom, so I have to figure out how to do the things that fill me up in more minor ways.

This looks like waiting to cook the adult's dinner after the kids are asleep so I can do so in peace. Or running myself a bath every Sunday night and asking dad to handle bedtime. Or getting a babysitter once a week, for 2 hours, so I can grab a coffee in silence and read the book I am trying to finish. It may seem complicated, but it is not impossible to find your rest as a mom... you have to do a little digging.

TO FIND YOUR PEACE, ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:

- ☀️ What three activities feed your soul the most?
 - think of things that don't take a considerable amount of time
 - for me, those things are reading/spending time with God, cooking, and sipping something quietly (whether it be coffee, tea, water, or wine... depending on the time of day :)

- ☀️ What time of day do you feel the most drained?
 - use this to help you figure out when you need a small break.
 - for me, this is evening and nighttime.

- ☀️ How can you make it happen?
 - you have found out what gives you rest and when you need it, so now you have to figure out how. Find a reliable sitter, ask Dad for help, use nap time or bedtime to your advantage, or give up an immaculate home for the sake of sanity

REST & YOUR LITTLES

I have a difficult time asking my kids to be still and quiet in the Summer. It feels like it goes against every fiber in their little bodies. In school, they are asked to be at attention at all times, so when there is a break, I have the urge to let them release their loudness.

While I think this is important, I can also help them connect to what quiet and rest can do for them. It can help them calm their minds, collect their thoughts, and recharge their little bodies.

Our youngest still takes a long afternoon nap, so I do not worry about his rest as much. Complete rest is almost impossible with our five-year-old, who does not nap and is on the go from the moment he wakes up until his head hits the pillow.

I have to come up with other ways to get him to take some time to rest. Here are some ways we practice quiet in our house, maybe they will help you too ➔

QUIET IDEAS FOR YOUR LOUD HOUSE:

- ☀️ Have a designated reading time. It doesn't have to be long, but a little quiet reading can go a long way. Cuddle up and read a book together or read separately if possible. Set an example by sitting and reading with them.
- ☀️ Put on quiet music and have them pick an activity like legos, light bright, or coloring. This is great for our littlest because it keeps their hands moving but gives them a physical break.
- ☀️ Make a quiet corner. Fill a basket with some sensory toys (our favorites are "I spy" bottles, liquid motion bubblers, and wiki sticks). Put it near a comfortable place to sit with a blanket. Offer this a place to visit anytime they need some quiet.



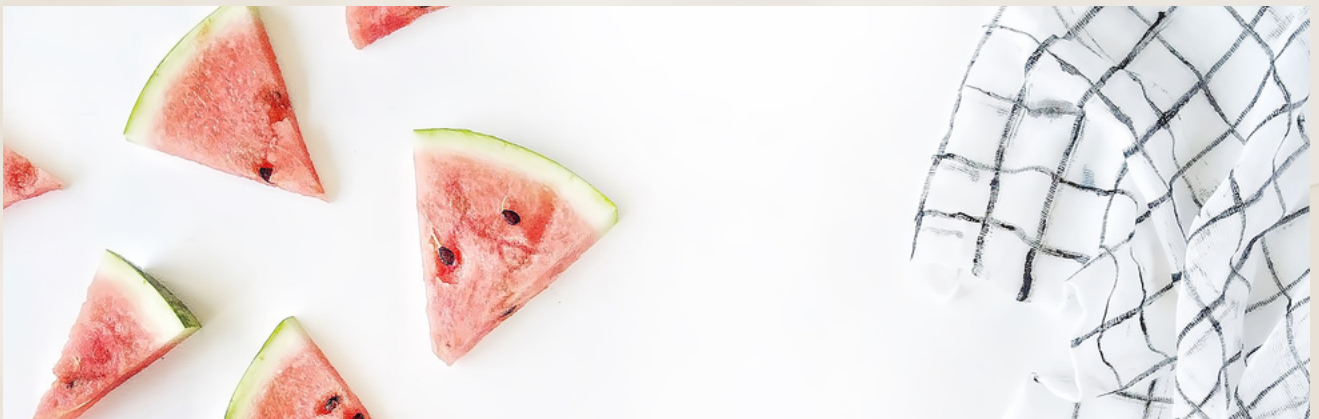
LET THESE BE THE DAYS:

OF
SWEATY HEADS
POPSICLE FINGERS
&
MUDDY TOES

OF
WATCHING STORMS
COLLECTING ROCKS
&
READING STORIES

OF
LAUGHING
WONDERING
LEARNING
&
ENJOYING

BEFORE THE DAYS GET SHORTER, THE
MORNINGS START EARLIER, AND THE MAGIC OF
SUMMER LEAVES US



WHAT I HOPE FOR YOU...

I hope this little flip book brings you something you need... whether it be a little spark to get you through the coming days, an openness to adventure with your children, or permission to rest.

You are doing kingdom work in your homes every day, and those little eyes watching you can see the love you pour out for them through meals, structure, and play. Don't sell yourself, short mama...

OTHER RESOURCES:



Looking for other ways to nourish your soul in motherhood? I have an entire page dedicated to my favorite resources, including books, prayer resources, and blogs that I love.

[resources](#)

Do you sometimes feel like you're barely holding everything together? That's what mothers do every day! But we don't have to do it alone.

Full is a compilation of prayers and quick devotionals specifically for moms, written by another mom. This book connects how prayers feed our souls the way food feeds our bodies. There are sections focusing on different aspects of motherhood, including rest, suffering, purpose, and loving little hearts. Whether you're a new mom or a seasoned pro, Full will encourage and equip you to pray boldly for your children and yourself. Don't miss out on this powerful resource—order your copy today!

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