



## Overwhelmed?

by **Alissa Kiker**



*"Let's put these figures on our timelines. Uh oh, it is almost time for supper. Can we quickly get these figures on our timelines?"*

*"Mom, do you know where my scissors are?"*

*"No, I do not know where your scissors are. They should be in your box."*

*"Well, they aren't."*

*"Why not?"*

*"I don't know."*

*"How many times have I told you to put things back where they belong? If you would, you would always know where they are. Hurry up and find your scissors and put those figures on your timeline."*

*"I can't find my scissors! Can't you help me?"*

*"Child, I do not have time to look for scissors. I have to feed the dog, peel the potatoes for supper, and get this laundry folded."*

*"Then I guess I won't put the figures on my timeline."*

*"Young lady! You will find those scissors and you will put those figures on your timeline, and then you will clean up your mess. I have other things to do! Now what did I come in here for? Great—I forgot to put the jeans in the dryer."*

Sound familiar? Each of us at some point will feel overwhelmed. If you can recognize the warning signs and stop the crash from happening in the first place, that would be best. It is difficult to recover from a crash.

Warning signs of the crash—also known as burnout—might include these: feeling pulled in too many directions, forgetting things, your brain feels scattered or muddled, not being able to focus on anything in particular, sticking your head into a book or a game of Mahjong instead of dealing with something, getting snappy with people, difficulty getting to sleep, having a temper tantrum because the scissors are not where they belong (again), and dashing around like Superwoman trying to do everything yourself.

FREEZE. Just stop.

Think about these things: *"Be still and know that I am God"* ([Psalm 46:10a](#)).

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without

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## Organizational Tips

- ▶ A place for everything and everything in its place.
  - ▶ Establish the habit of taking a minute to return things to their places when you are finished using them and before you go on to the next thing.
  - ▶ Guide the children in developing that habit as well.
  - ▶ That one habit will prevent big messes from happening to begin with and will help prevent that feeling of being overwhelmed.
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me ye can do nothing" ([John 15:5](#)).

"For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" ([Matthew 11:30](#)).

Listen to the words of our Lord. He is saying: "Hey, what are you doing? You totally took off running in the other direction with your branch. Get back here. Give me that. Now, be still. I've got this. I am your God. Trust me, and I will take care of it."

Don't you feel better already? I bet you can breathe again. Looking back, how much of that stuff you were going nuts over was really important? I mean life-altering important? I know much of it was annoying and you didn't want to mess up your pretty schedule, but is it really going to affect the world or prevent your child from becoming what he/she was created to be if the (fill in the blank) doesn't get done today? Friends, if we become box checkers, not only are we going to get overwhelmed and burned out, but we are also going to mess up relationships, miss out on opportunities, and miss out on blessings.

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## God's Rule of Relationships

1. First is your relationship with the Lord. Apart from Him you can do nothing.
2. Second is your relationship with yourself. To be in the Lord's will you must be your true created self.
3. Third is your relationship with others. When you have the first two in place, you will be equipped to have healthy relationships with others.
4. Fourth is your relationship with the created world. That means anything other than the Lord, yourself, and others. Notice this one is last. Be careful not to put it before any of the others.

In the above scenario, the timeline, the scissors, supper, the dog, and the laundry took priority over Mom's relationship with her daughter. The child picked up on that and is now exerting her will to regain her position of priority with her mother. The Lord puts relationships first and we should follow His example. Do things together. Live your lives together. Don't just drag the kids along or get to them when all your "stuff" is done. This life is theirs too, and the Lord put you all together to experience it together. To truly experience something means to be involved in it. Allow the children to be actively involved.

Sometimes God has a different plan for the day than we do, and we need to learn how to recognize it. It is very difficult to notice those little signs when there is so much to

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do—I know. The above verses show us how to notice them. Be still, stay connected, and do not let yourself get weighed down with a lot of stuff that is just not going to matter in the long run. Take one thing at a time. Round up the scissors together, put the timeline aside, and let the children help you with supper, feeding the dog, and folding the laundry.

Homeschoolers, there is a great deal of learning going on there: relationships, good habits, organizational skills, culinary skills, and life skills. Who knows? Maybe you will have an awesome conversation while you do these things together. There is likely a blessing in there somewhere.

After allowing the children to participate in the things that must be done, do something with the children that *they* want to do. Forget the dishes. The dishes will still be there tomorrow. So they pile up a bit more. So what? When the opportunity arises, recruit a couple of kids to help, put on some music, flick soap bubbles at each other, have a great time as you get the job done.

In the long run, you will have kids who will come alongside you and pitch in no matter what the Lord puts in your life. With that kind of family dynamic, how can you become overwhelmed? You will also have strong, healthy relationships with your children, and they will know that they can come to you about anything that happens in their lives. They will learn how to have strong, healthy relationships; how to run a household; and how to stay connected to the Lord when they are grown.

We are not merely survivors; we are conquerors. If the Lord is for you, who can be against you? Don't take off running in the other direction with your branch. You must stay connected to the vine. You *cannot* do it by yourself, and the best part is ... God doesn't want you to. He's got it. Let Him have it. Much lighter burden, yes? Oh, our God is *good*!

### **Biographical Information**

Alissa Kiker, home educator for sixteen years, lives in North Carolina with her two children. She was the Director of a Parents Morning Out program; taught Sunday School and co-op classes; and was an editor on the homeschool group yearbook for four years. Currently she does home care for the elderly and writes articles and short stories. Please visit her blog at [www.icedteanporchswings.com](http://www.icedteanporchswings.com).

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