

INTRODUCTION



Welcome to MomsTown! If you are a stay-at-home mom who craves an exciting and passionate life, then you're in the right place. You're in the company of moms who have made the decision to pursue their passions and who believe that staying home to raise children is a priority and a gift. At MomsTown we believe stay-at-home moms have an amazing opportunity to create a life for themselves that will help them achieve their dreams.

Being a stay-at-home mom (SAHM) can mean a variety of things. At MomsTown we have developed a program that helps moms who work from home, moms who want to develop businesses out of their homes, and moms who simply want to develop a life that encompasses their passions and dreams, in addition to their traditional roles. At MomsTown, we devote ourselves to our family life *and* we pursue dreams for ourselves. This book is about fulfilling your goals of attaining and developing a passion, a confidence, and a positive inner and outside image as a stay-at-home mom. We will work to recover those secret (or not-so-secret) aspirations that you might have put on the back burner

while raising your darling little cherubs. We know you're busy, we know you love your children, but we also know you want to live your life to the fullest. At MomsTown, we show you how to do just that.

MomsTown Philosophy

Being a stay-at-home mom should add to your identity and not take it over. As a mom you've poured your heart and soul into your children; you've made birthday cakes that look like turtles, painted dinosaurs on your child's walls; you've balanced the family budget and despite all your accounting efforts still can't believe how fast the money goes. You've scrubbed grass stains out of your kid's soccer uniform and even managed to calm the raging seas when the first hormonal tantrum of adolescence came screaming from your daughter's mouth. You've got to hand it to yourself: You're a darn good mom.

But lurking somewhere in your heart is a little notion that, hey, this can't be everything. Well, guess what? It isn't. It is an uncomfortable reality that sometimes, while you are staying home and taking care of your brood, one very important thing can get lost: YOU.

"I had a master's degree in communications and was working for a top PR firm in my area when I got pregnant," says Jill, a mother of two. "I had this idealized vision of a carefree existence, free of career responsibility. Well, it turns out, I *like* career responsibility. Finding the perfect fabric softener just wasn't cutting it, but I didn't want to miss watching my kids grow up either." No surprise there. If you have ever been to a playgroup with other stay-at-home moms, you'll be familiar with the litany of complaints: "I'm exhausted . . . My husband doesn't get it—he thinks I'm spoiled and all I do is play all day with the kids . . . I feel unfulfilled . . . I feel antsy . . . I wish I could find a way to make money from home and create an identity for myself again."

Take it from us: It doesn't have to be this way. Staying at home doesn't mean you have to put your own life and personal aspirations on hold while you raise your children. Your growth and your children's growth are not mutually exclusive. If you've already lost some of your spunk to the doldrums of grocery shopping, dropping 'em off and picking 'em up, and scrubbing yet another juice stain out of the carpet, all you need is some help breaking the spin cycle. We have good news: You've picked up the right book. Using the MomsTown program, you are going to figure out what those lost desires are. We're going to help you drag them out of the closet, dust them off, and add them to your daily life as a mother. We're not advocating giving up your Supermom self, only that you remember that the best Supermoms are the ones who are fulfilled—and that means putting yourself first. We guarantee you'll be happier for it. Some of our MomsTown members have businesses from home and are successfully fulfilling their dreams, earning a paycheck, and raising their children. Others are full-time moms who devote themselves to their families but have also figured out how to find their own passions and pursue them. We've done it, countless moms are doing it, and so can you.

We believe getting it all means having a life that is exactly what you want. Having a family and staying home doesn't mean you can't have it all. Some of you have already figured out ways to work out of the home and want to improve your organization and quality of life, while others want to figure out what your passions are and how to take the first step. Regardless of how far along you are, we promise to take you further! We invite you to join the revolution of hip, intelligent, and savvy moms who still know how to read a good bedtime story. We at MomsTown believe you can have your low-carb cake and eat it, too. You can be a spectacular, amazing mother to your children, goddess of the home, and wife to your husband—and you can be the superwoman you always wanted to be. The MomsTown program teaches that you

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don't have to sacrifice one for the other. Actually, fulfilling your desires to own your own business, play the flute, or create art only makes you more of a fabulous mother. And we can all agree, when Momma ain't happy, ain't nobody happy.

MomsTown Quiz

Below is a short quiz to see if this book is for you. Are you MomsTown material?

1. Do you feel there is something more you'd like to do in your life other than changing diapers and sorting laundry, but you can't quite put your finger on what it is?
2. Do you feel guilty about wanting more, even though you seem to "have it all"?
3. Do you feel guilty for daydreaming about the thrill of the deal and how you can create it again while home with your kids?
4. Do you miss earning a paycheck?
5. Do you ever feel you've lost your edge?
6. Do you sometimes wonder if your IQ has dropped with each child you've had?
7. Do you have your own budding business from home but can't quite figure out how to bring it to the next level of success *and* keep up your household duties?
8. If you could get yourself to a cocktail party, do you fear you wouldn't have anything of substance to talk about?

9. Do your breasts feel as if they are filled with pancake batter?
10. Do you fear you'll never get into a bikini again?
11. Do you feel like the last intellectual adventure you went on was trying to calculate your due date?
12. Do you want more excitement in life than a new *SpongeBob SquarePants* episode?
13. Are you feeling antsy or restless and do you find yourself wondering what more you could be doing with your life?
14. Do you feel invisible, as if the only people who see you are your kids or husband—and then only when they need something?
15. Do you feel more like a servant than a goddess?
16. Do you feel your “hippest” years are behind you?

If you answered yes to more than three of the above questions, you may be suffering from the stay-at-home itch! In this book we will provide you with the basic tools and knowledge to achieve what you want in life, get motivated, find inspiration, and just plain get it all. MomsTown will give you a blueprint for how to get everything you're dreaming of and more. So gear up: You're about to get a life!

Getting It All Will Make You a “Gal”

We're all “Gals” at MomsTown—that is, we're working on Getting A Life. We have discovered getting it all can do wonders not only for ourselves but also for our families. Throughout our program we use the acronym GAL, for Get a Life, to describe the transformation that

happens when a mom has her own life, pursues her own passions in addition to raising her children. Gals have it all. It's that simple. A Gal becomes her own person—outside the identity of being a stay-at-home mom (SAHM). Getting a Life means finding your passion, your dreams, making it through your daily routine with more energy and confidence. In the process, you become an official MomsTown Gal.

Getting everything you want out of life and becoming a Gal can entail changes in your routine and outlook on countless levels. At MomsTown we've created a solid, accessible program to help you get what you want in life. In our experience, talking with countless moms, we have found that deciding to change your life in an abstract sense isn't enough. A step-by-step plan is the only way for a busy mom to make changes in her life. We have found that moms who attempt to make massive changes without a program or support group can get frustrated and eventually discouraged. The greatest advantage to the MomsTown program is that it shows you how to take a detailed, practical approach to your life in a strategic way that adds up to overall change and positive lifestyle results. The program focuses on getting it all, which in MomsTown terms means feeling confident, having a great attitude about yourself, and feeling good about your image, body, health, and spirituality. We have developed a program women across the country have experienced with phenomenal success. Here are just a few benefits women have found after doing the MomsTown program:

- ♦ A new attitude, self-image, and confidence
- ♦ More energy and a great sense of achievement at the end of the day
- ♦ A healthier, fitter lifestyle and a body to match
- ♦ A more confident parenting style
- ♦ The sense of being a better role model for their children

- ♦ A healthier and more fun sex life
- ♦ A more passionate daily routine and the energy to devote to it

OUR STORY

Heather

I am a wife, mother, daughter, sister, friend, and business partner. I have three sons and am a stay-at-home mom (or SAHM, as we say at MomsTown). Before children I had a thriving career in broadcast journalism and worked for CBS, NBC, and ABC affiliates in the western states. I loved my career and enjoyed the sense of purpose it gave me, but I had always wanted to have children and stay home to care for them.

I had my first child during my first year of marriage and left my job to stay at home with him. Being home every day with my first baby was an incredible experience. I felt very lucky to be able to stay home and I was in complete baby mode—so much so I had two more babies within the next three years. In fact, I spent five years either pregnant or nursing.

However, when I was pregnant with my third, I started to get “the itch.” I felt like I had mommyhood mastered, but what about my womanhood?

I started seeking out other moms for social interaction, in an attempt to find my place and understand how other moms dealt with these restless feelings.

I wrestled with the identity that I, and most of society, had always associated with the label of “stay-at-home-mom.” My stereotypical image of SAHMs had always been that they were matronly, kind, and devoted to their children. Images of SAHMs filled the media. When I watched TV I saw moms who did a dance when they cleaned their toilet

bowl or flashed bright smiles because their carpets were exceptionally clean. Their identities seemed to reside in keeping house.

That image of a woman devoted to cleaning her house and taking care of her children—that and that alone—did not resonate within me. I did want my home to be clean and my children to be well cared for. But I also knew I wanted an identity that was my own, outside of being a SAHM.

My personal experience as a mother led me to MomsTown. I began to search everywhere for the SAHM identity that I could identify with. I went online and looked at mom sites and SAHM sites. I had difficulty finding one that honored an identity outside of taking care of your children.

I finally resolved to create my own site where moms who want to be more than just a SAHM could go. The women I wanted to focus on were moms who want to be hip, savvy, independent, and outgoing about their personal goals and passions, along with being great homemakers and mothers. I created the MomsTown Web site and the motto “Where Hip Moms Click.” The response to my Web site reaffirmed what I believed about most mothers: Moms do want to identify themselves as hip, savvy, sexy, and fun, and not women who get excited over clean toilets. Many of us just aren’t sure how to get the image out there.

Since then, I have had a phenomenal response from women who want to do more and have their own identity. When I teamed up with Mary, we developed a program that walks moms through the step-by-step approach we learned ourselves, to getting a life and an identity all their own. MomsTown has evolved into a popular Web site and Internet talk radio show. In my partnership with Mary, MomsTown also has expanded nationwide, with a network of local town sites coming online. We are growing at an exciting pace.

The commitment to my own life is the best commitment I have ever made. I have a great marriage and three exuberant boys, and lead an exciting life as a wife, mother, and entrepreneur.

I have found my dream of having children, a husband, and a career from home has been instrumental in not only my family's happiness and health but also my own. I am a better mom when I'm myself.

My hope is that all women who visit MomsTown, through this book or the Web site format, leave with an idea for following their passions. It's my belief that motherhood makes us better. It teaches us unconditional love, patience, and humility. And within each of us is inherent strength and determination. All mothers want exceptional lives for their children. We should teach by example and lead exceptional lives ourselves. But to manage this, we must support and encourage each other. That is what MomsTown does.

Mary

I am a wife, the mother of two girls, and a passionate entrepreneur. I have many interests and believe my life truly began when I had my children. I began my career on Wall Street. After nine successful years I moved to California and opened a real estate company. I met my husband and had my children, and decided I didn't want to conform to many of the societal pressures and stereotypes that SAHMs face. I believed I could have it all: staying home with my kids and earning a paycheck, as well as continuing to grow and develop the many interests I had.

After having my first child, I wanted to stay at home and did not want to work in a corporate environment any longer, but I did want the financial perks of a successful career. There was a prevalent belief among the people I worked with that was condescending toward SAHMs and

anyone outside of the corporate structure. In my world as a stay-at-home mom, I missed the entrepreneurial aspects of business. I decided to take the risk and try my hand at business from the home as I took care of my children. I also wanted to instill hope in women and prove that they, too, can create the life they want and break through the social barriers placed in front of women who stay home. This surprised many of my former colleagues, especially women who had children themselves, who were afraid to venture outside of the corporate world and risk their salaries and their credibility as career-oriented businesswomen. There was no precedent for SAHMs, or women who left the corporate safety net, to blossom as independent entrepreneurs.

It bothered me that you weren't supposed to be a successful businesswoman on your own. I disagreed with many of my friends who had remained at jobs they disliked because they believed it wasn't an option to stay with their kids and still have business potential. They didn't see an identity outside of the corporate world, but I did. I developed a passion to succeed and to prove to my Wall Street friends that I could make a living staying home with my children, away from the office and out from behind the desk.

My past success on Wall Street and subsequent success owning my own real estate company empowered me and made me feel anything was possible. I decided I wanted to get into motivational speaking and went to a seminar with my now mentor and business coach, Mark LeBlanc, and I got involved in radio and began the *Entrepreneur Magazine Home-based Business Show*, which focused on having your own business from home. Many of my listeners were SAHMs from around the world who wanted to start their own businesses but had no direction as to how to do it. The show focused on operating a business from home utilizing technology and online resources. It became a great success and began to gather a following. When I met Heather we decided to combine our

efforts and launched the MomsTown Internet radio program. Since then, we have developed a network of women across the country who want their own goals, identity, and success, outside of being mothers. I am an advocate for women who want to be their best selves. I believe in the inherent creative power women possess. When Heather and I first met, we agreed instantly that if women have the power to create a life in forty weeks even while sleeping, imagine what they can create with their lives while they are awake! That is our core message. Women are creative, powerful, resourceful, and wise, and they can create a life in which they get it all. At MomsTown, we are excited to show them how!

Ten Weeks of Teachings—a Lifetime of MomsTown

This program is divided into ten weeks. Each week, we will introduce you to a new level of the program and will carry over the teachings of the previous week. In ten weeks, we believe you can establish a firm foundation on which to build your new life. In ten weeks, we will present our practical steps toward overcoming issues moms face as they juggle kids, family, work, and their inner and outer images. We will walk you through the basic steps that evolved as we did the program ourselves. We are living examples: If we could do it—so can you! Our MomsTown program teaches women how to uncover their identities and passions. We welcome you to a new way of discovering your passions and your dreams.

WEEK 1: THE GAL STARTER TOOLS



There are a few basic tools you will need as you follow your path toward the GAL lifestyle. Like so many moms who have participated in our program, workshops, and seminars, you will come to rely on these tools—they form the foundation of this program.

TOOL # 1: The GAL Commitment

Your commitment to your new life is fundamentally necessary. Sign the commitment on page 15 and allow yourself to make a firm, non-negotiable pact with yourself. You deserve to devote energy to yourself, and this GAL Commitment reinforces your pledge to do so.

TOOL # 2: Make Your Bed!

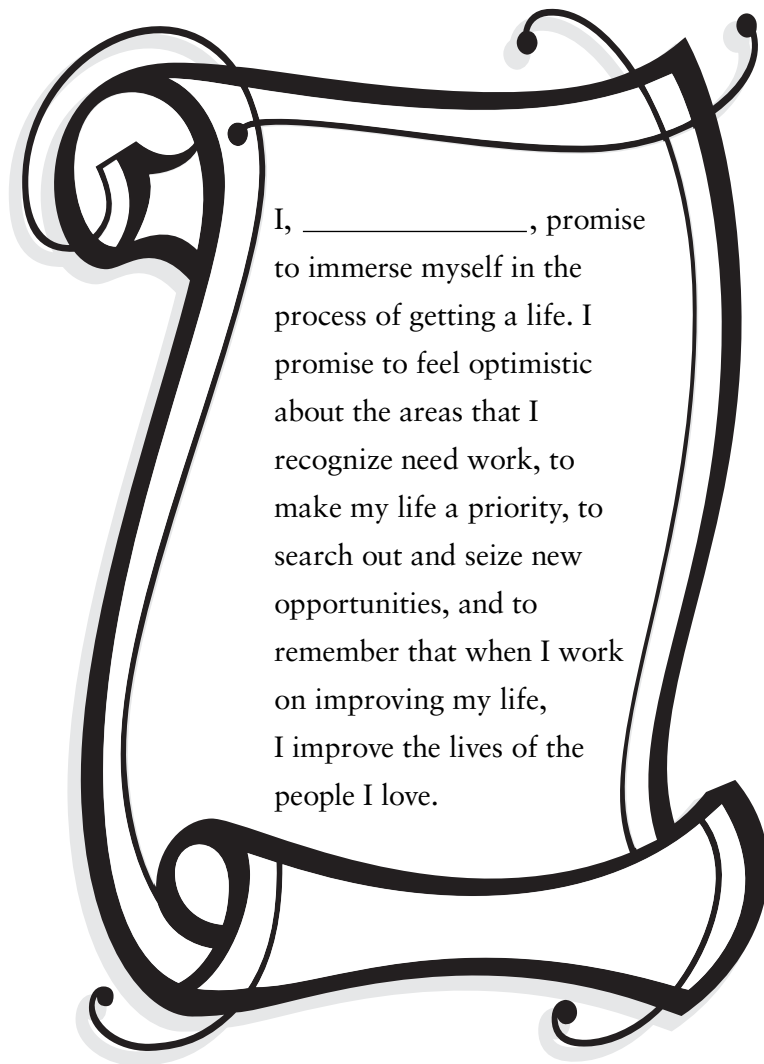
This may seem very simple because it is. *Make your bed every day.* It's that easy. Beginning a day with the bed made is like beginning a book with the introduction and the first chapter under your belt. By

making your bed first thing in the morning, you get your day off to the right start.

Every morning during Week 1, we ask you to make your bed immediately after rising. Make this the very first thing you do. You will continue this practice throughout the rest of the program and beyond.

Below is our step-by-step guide on how we make our beds at MomsTown. Even if you think you know how to make your bed, follow our basic instructions, because it's not just a list of directions—it is a MomsTown ritual.

- 1 Take all the covers, the cover sheet, and the pillows (and your kids' toys) off the bed.
- 2 Straighten out the bottom sheet and make it smooth, with no wrinkles or lumps. Draw it tight on both sides, tucking it under if need be.
- 3 Take the cover sheet and flip it up in the air, allowing it to come down evenly over the bed and smoothing any parts that do not. Allow for a foot and a half (depending on your mattress size) past the foot of the bed and tuck it under, making sure that at least five inches are under the mattress.
- 4 Make hospital bed corners on the sides.
- 5 Make sure the cover sheet is drawn tight and smooth.
- 6 Take the spread and smooth it over the whole bed, making sure it is even on either side and at the foot of the bed.



I, _____, promise
to immerse myself in the
process of getting a life. I
promise to feel optimistic
about the areas that I
recognize need work, to
make my life a priority, to
search out and seize new
opportunities, and to
remember that when I work
on improving my life,
I improve the lives of the
people I love.



- 7 Take the pillows and place them at the head of the bed and fluff them gently.
- 8 Step back and take an admiring view of the bed itself.

Good work! You will find a sense of accomplishment greets you at the beginning of your day. Not only will you feel more organized, you will also have a sense of clarity every time you go in and out of your bedroom, and especially when you go to bed at night. For SAHMs who spend a good deal of time in their home, it is very important to keep the place organized. The state of your house reflects your state of mind. Making your bed first thing begins the cycle of the day on a positive note.

One of our MomsTown members, Luciana, who has been making her bed every day for the past six months, says, “It just makes my morning feel so much more organized. I love coming into my bedroom and seeing my bed made nicely. I invested in some nice pillows in my favorite colors, and the bedroom became my favorite room in the whole house. I used to avoid going in my bedroom because the bed was not made. Now forgetting to make it is not an option. I love sitting on it to read when the kids are taking a nap.”

Your Bed Is More Than a Bed

Remember, when you make your bed, it is not just about being prim and proper. Your bed is where you rest, regroup, dream, make love, and make babies; that is why making your bed is important. It’s a task that requires little thought. As you make your bed, allow yourself to think about your upcoming day. During this time, prep yourself for your day, allow yourself to dream, come up with creative ways for getting through

your day and getting tasks done. This ritual can be meditative as you close out one day and begin another.

TOOL # 3: The Buddy System: Finding Your Ethel

When we began to develop this program, we found that we relied heavily on each other for moral support. If one of us doesn't stick to our workouts, schedules, or diary entries, the other knew and would remind us of our GAL Commitment. Just as Lucy in *I Love Lucy* had Ethel, that is what Heather is to Mary and Mary is to Heather—we are each other's Ethels!

Think for a moment if you have a friend who is a SAHM like you. Do you know someone who has the same lingering desire for a little—or a lot—more? This is someone who may be a great buddy and who would benefit by doing the program herself. By bringing a new MomsTown member into the program, you are helping a friend. Finding a buddy to commit to the program and check in with throughout each week is a huge help to you as well. Find an Ethel you can call your own and ask her if she will do the MomsTown program with you.

If someone comes to mind immediately and fits the profile of a SAHM who wants to get a life, don't be shy! Pick up the phone and call her. Do it today. Chances are, if she is the right Gal to be your Ethel, she will be thrilled to find there is a program specifically for SAHMs who want it all—who doesn't find that exciting? One of our MomsTown members, Jean, said of her buddy, "My buddy is another SAHM who is always there when I need to call and complain about my schedule, relate my newest potty training crisis, or just have a good laugh. I don't know what I would do without her. She is my support in the smallest and largest ways."

Some criteria to consider when choosing a buddy:

- ♦ Find a buddy who passes the 3 A.M. test. If you can call this friend at 3 A.M. in case of an emergency, that's a real Ethel for you. If you haven't gotten to that point with this friend, but trust her and think you may at some point—she is an option for a buddy.
- ♦ Find a buddy with whom you feel comfortable discussing your triumphs, successes, frustrations, and dilemmas. Make sure you feel that this friend is supportive of you.
- ♦ Find a buddy you can be honest and open with.
- ♦ Find a buddy who supports you rather than judges you.
- ♦ Find a buddy who works at the same speed as you do. You should have matching energy levels.
- ♦ Avoid a buddy who makes you feel you must act a certain way or be something you are not.
- ♦ Avoid a buddy who seems to always have a drama that takes over every discussion or meeting you have with her.

Along with your Ethel, remember—we are right here with you! At MomsTown, you have a whole network of moms available online.

If you don't have a buddy and you can't seem to find the right fit for your Ethel, that is no excuse not to begin the program. Go for it anyway! If you find a buddy along the way, incorporate her. When it comes

down to it, this is about you and your life. So with or without a buddy, let's get started!

TOOL # 4: The GAL Diary

We at MomsTown believe diaries aren't just for little girls. One of the most important tools in our program is a diary. You may remember that journal you had growing up; this is going to be very similar. Go out and buy yourself a diary. Use your imagination as you choose one that speaks to you—one that you enjoy writing in. You are allowed to have any color you like. Here are some things to keep in mind while you shop for the perfect journal.

- 1 Chose a diary that reminds you of your taste as a little girl. You may even want to go to the kids' section (you know where it is!) and pick one that speaks to your inner Gal. It doesn't have to be sophisticated, elegant, or refined, unless you prefer that. You are allowed any design your heart desires. If your favorite color is pink, or you are drawn to the diary with the rainbow or purple sparkles—go for it!
- 2 Choose one with lined pages.
- 3 Locks are optional.
- 4 You don't have to tell anyone you are doing this, not even your husband!

As soon as you get this diary, cut out the GAL Commitment on page 15 with a pair of scissors, take some Elmer's glue, and paste it into the

first page of your diary. This pledge marks the beginning of your new identity, so it's important to refer to it regularly. By pasting it in your journal you will see the GAL Commitment every time you open its pages to make an entry.

In this diary, you are going to confide your deepest hopes, fears, expectations, dreams, daily dramas, and best of all, your big and small successes. This will be where you discover your passions! You will use this diary for particular exercises throughout the book. Your diary will be where you record your commitments, and your success in following through on them.

The GAL Diary Duty

As moms, we realize that writing seven days a week is a tall order. But at least three days a week, you must write an update in your GAL Diary about your work toward Getting A Life. Your entry should be around two pages long each time. We suggest you write on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, but you can choose the days that work best with your schedule. These three days serve as tent posts for the rest of the week, holding a structure for other days to rest on. Because you will be required to write only three days a week, make sure you stick to it. Write more if you can, but be faithful to those three days.

One of our MomsTown members, Ann, says of her diary: "Journaling helps me solve problems, see solutions more clearly, and take an objective look at some of the chatter in my head. It is a nice way to review my day. I find it very rewarding."

Pick a time of the day when this works for you. Perhaps it is in the morning or in the evening. Whatever you decide, stick to it. This is your time and you must honor it.

Along with regular entries, there will be "GAL-ercises" that ask you

to do an exercise in your diary. Writing in your diary provides a quiet, creative space for you to get to know your inner Gal.

TOOL # 5: The GAL Mantra

There will be times—you know about these moments—of great frustration and discouragement. It can be challenging to raise children, nurture a relationship with your husband, maintain a social life, and achieve your dramatic and ultimate goddess-like potential as a woman. We have faith you can do it, but for those times when you need some extra help, we offer you the GAL Mantra.

Mantras are phrases that are spoken—either verbally or internally—and help promote spiritual strength and peace. Our GAL Mantra is what we will call on when we hit the roof, when we think we have had enough and can't take anymore, or when we simply need to remember why we go to the trouble of getting a life.

During this program there will be trying times when you will need to access your inner core and strength. The GAL Mantra will help you with that.

In this first week of the program, we ask you to develop a mantra to say when you reach the boiling point. You may choose one of the mantras below or create your own. You can use these if they make you feel empowered and ready to Get a Life. Try them out and see which ones work for you. Some of these have become lifesavers for moms who have done our program.

I am worthy of complete happiness.

I have the potential to be everything I dream of being.

I am a confident, passionate, deserving woman.

I am inherently creative and powerful.

If you are creating your own, here are a few guidelines.

- ♦ It should be no longer than ten words.
- ♦ It should be easy to remember so you can recall it in times of stress or anxiety.
- ♦ When said aloud or mentally, it should invoke peace and a feeling of empowerment.
- ♦ You don't have to tell your husband, children, or even your buddy what your GAL Mantra is. It is yours and yours alone!
- ♦ As soon as you have decided on your GAL Mantra (or chosen one of ours above), write it on the second page of your diary, right after the GAL Commitment you have pasted on the first page.
- ♦ Take a moment to find a quiet spot, close your eyes, clear your mind, and repeat the GAL Mantra three times.

Julie found that her six-year-old had learned to push her buttons when she was trying to keep to her schedule. He would find diversions and figure out ways to get her attention, often by throwing a fit when Julie was on the way to run an errand, get to an aerobics class, or get him to school on time. At these moments she would say the GAL Mantra she had created for herself: "I am in charge of the schedule and am doing the best I can. I am giving it my all." After saying her mantra, she would take a deep breath and reassess in a cool, collected way.

Eventually her son began to see it was tougher to ruffle her feathers and started cooperating more.

TOOL # 6: The GAL Truths

In embracing the following truths, you make a paradigm shift that reveals your best self. The GAL Truths are universal. Accepting these truths will set you up for success. Once you understand and internalize these truths you can move forward, leaving behind your negative beliefs and self-imposed limitations.

You come first. When you're on an airplane and the flight attendant is going over the safety instructions, what are you told to do in case of an emergency? You place the oxygen mask on *your* face first, and *then* assist your child. Using that as a metaphor, as women we must take care of ourselves first so we are better equipped to care for our families. This doesn't mean others are last, it means you have to take care of yourself to give the best care to your children.

Money is important. We're taught that wanting more money is greedy and unattractive, and it *can* be if people and values are sacrificed in the effort. But the fact is, money buys freedom and privilege. If you never admit out loud that you want and deserve more money, you'll never have it. It's easier to handle the daily stresses of life when you're not worried about paying the bills. In this book we will address your money hang-ups and how to change your financial reality. No matter what your socio-economic class, you will benefit from the money chapter.

To get more time, get busy. The old saying goes, "If you want to get something done, give it to a busy person." Busy people have a way of finding time in their day. We know you're busy. You're a mom. We will show you how to thrive on fifteen-minute intervals a day.

To get more energy, get moving. A mom's day never begins or ends. You are on call twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Isn't it great to be in demand? It's a job you can't get fired from. However, moms often overextend themselves and run out of energy. We are going to give you energy-boosting ideas and techniques to make sure you have enough left over for yourself.

To be more creative, take a risk. Our instinct as mothers is to protect and care for our children, and at times this aversion to risk can spill over into other areas of our lives. We can be so protective that we don't take any chances. But when we're always staying in the comfort zone, we lose our edge. The most successful people in this world don't let the possibility of failure stop them. They take risks! The bigger the risk, the bigger the payoff. We will show you how to wean yourself off the safety net and really experience life, risks and all.

Moms are the pulse of the family, community, and economy. It is a powerful position. Moms are the glue that binds the family to the community. We hold control of the heartstrings and the purse strings. We work in the schools and with civic organizations. Moms also make 80 percent of all household purchasing decisions. We are a force to be reckoned with! Accept your influence with gratitude and reverence.

The buddy system works. Women need each other. Women who have girlfriends, sisters, moms, and other women in their lives have strength. They have a shoulder to cry on, and someone to commiserate with. But there's a catch: You only want women in your life who will support you and cheer you on. A real friend or advocate will hold you accountable. She will tell you when you're right and won't abandon you when you're wrong.

You can have it all; you just can't do it all. Even though we have the ability to do many things at once, we don't have the ability to do everything. Accepting help is not an admission of failure. It's being smart

enough to recognize your own limitations. It's true that someone else might not do things exactly the way you would, but at least those things are getting done. Delegation is the key, and you don't have to control everything all the time. Delegate to your husband and children.

Husbands don't get it—let it go. Husbands will never understand what it's like to be a mother—the instincts, the demands, the time, the energy, the worry, and the connection to your children. They have their own relationship with the children that you'll never understand. Let go of frustration over the fact that he doesn't see everything exactly your way. This doesn't mean that we let the men out of housework or parenting, but that we acknowledge they might handle things differently sometimes, and we admit to ourselves that we cannot control their behavior. Focus on other aspects of your relationship. It's not right to try to convert him into the role of mother (that's your position).

You can achieve greatness. You just have to work at it. Identify it, believe in yourself, and expect obstacles. Visualize yourself rising above the stress, the details of daily household upkeep, and the traps of a SAHM routine. Look at failure as an indicator of pending success. Look at success as an indicator of more good things to come.

These truths are staples to our philosophy at MomsTown. We will direct you back to them in the coming weeks. You can also return to them if you hit stressful parts of your day and need a reality check. Reading through the above periodically is a great way to remember who you are and what you stand for!

TOOL # 7: This Book

We have specifically designed this book in sections that are short and can be read quickly. Take this book with you in your purse or car and read a section as you wait for an appointment or during a brief

break in the day. We are your life coaches—keep us by your side or within close reach. The MomsTown advice, which has been helpful for so many women in our seminars and workshops and on our radio show, is here for you when you need it. Keep us as a resource when you feel frustrated and need a boost. That's why MomsTown was built!

WEEK 1 SUMMARY

Week 1 is about getting your basic tools in order. If you did find a buddy right away, call that buddy and check in. See that you both have covered the list that follows. If you haven't, go down the list and make sure you can check off all of the items from Week 1.

1. Start each day this week with the MomsTown ritual of Tool #2: making the bed.
2. Buy a diary and write at least three days this week—we recommend Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.
3. Sign the GAL Commitment, cut the page out, and paste it to the first page of your GAL Diary.
4. If you haven't found a buddy by the end of this first week, continue with the program on your own and keep looking for your Ethel.
5. Develop a GAL Mantra that works for you, and practice it every time you feel stress, anxiety, or depression.
6. After you read this chapter, read over the GAL Truths once more.
7. If you missed any of these, be forgiving! You can't do everything right the first time. Be patient but consistent in your work as you integrate this program into your daily life.