Mums, be kinder to yourselves!

**Intro**

Welcome to Sense by Meg Faure, the podcast that's brought to you by Parent Sense, the app that takes guesswork out of parenting. If you're a new parent, then you are in good company. Your host, Meg Faure, is a well-known OT infant specialist and the author of eight parenting books. Each week, we are going to spend time with new moms and dads just like you to chat about the week's wins, the challenges, and the questions of the moment. Subscribe to the podcast, download the Parent Sense App, and catch Meg here every week to make the most of that first year of your little one's life. And now meet your host.

**Meg**: Hi, and welcome back Mums and dads. It's always good to have you join us here on Sense by Meg Faure. I'm Meg Faure your host, and it is my delight always to be able to share some wisdom about your baby's journey. And one of the big highlights that I have over the last year is being able to connect with us one specific mom and actually track her journey with her little one over the course of the year. Now, this is a huge commitment, let me tell you. So, I've been looking for another mom to start tracking a journey of their little baby, and it's a huge commitment to every single week show up and actually share, you know, sometimes they're really gritty journey about sleep deprivation, about feeding problems, about developmental questions, but that's exactly what Cass has done. Cass has been with us for pretty much coming up for a year. We first chatted with her and if you haven't heard that very first interview and podcast, you must go and listen. It was the week that Max was born and had a fairly traumatic week after he was born, in which he was quite ill in the ICU. And we've tracked Max all the way through his first year, and he is an absolutely thriving bonnie, gorgeous baby boy. So, Cass, it is with absolute delight that I welcome you back for what is coming up close to one year of podcast together.

**Cass**: I know. It is absolutely crazy to think that Max is going to be one in a few weeks. I can't really believe it.

**Meg**: Cass, what is it? Is it 2-weeks’ time that he’s going to be one?

**Cass**: So, he's 49-weeks. So, he’s 3-weeks.

**Meg**: Three weeks. Yeah.

**Cass**: Yeah.

**Meg**: So, it was about at 52-weeks, well, actually it was at 40-weeks’ gestation that you and I went for a walk together. And I can remember thinking to myself, gosh, you know, Cass, she’s such a competent woman and she's got very high benchmarks and standards for herself. I just hope she isn't setting the bar too high for this little one. But Cass to have joined you on your journey has just been absolutely incredible because it really has been an incredible year, first year of Max's life. Some tears along the way, but predominantly, you know, some really, really amazing stories with this little boy.

**Cass**: But actually, it's an amazing point that you make because I think one of the biggest learning curves and favors that I've done myself over the last year is being a bit kinder to myself and not putting that pressure on myself. If you are somebody that likes to have a level of control in life, you have to relinquish all control.

**Meg**: You do.

**Cass**: Because you can't… this person that comes into your life their own individual human and Max is a very strong-willed individual human.

**Meg:** He is.

**Cass**: He's his mother's daughter.

**Meg**: A daughter's son.

**Cass**: Yeah.

**Meg**: Yes.

**Cass**: I'm my mother's daughter for sure.

**Meg**: Yes.

**Cass**: And I've had to kind of what I've learned to actually love that about him rather than feel frustrated almost with myself that I can't fit him into a mold that I thought, that sort of preconceived idea that I had in my head, and weaning is a classic example. And I actually listened to the weaning episode not too long ago where we first started talking about it. And in it, I talk about how excited I am about weaning.

**Meg**: Yes.

**Cass**: And I was listening to it and I thought, ah, your poor naive lady because the image I portray in that podcast of what I thought weaning was going to be is not what weaning was or is.

**Meg**: That's incredible.

**Cass**: But you get so excited about introducing flavors and you cook this food and, I love cooking anyway and I love cooking for my husband, and he goes, mm, that is delicious. I love that experience.

**Meg**: Yeah.

**Cass**: The baby doesn't care.

**Meg**: Yeah.

**Cass**: It's not good polite, if the baby doesn't like it. And Max is going through a bit of a phase now where he'll eat, but then it’s almost like he gets bored or he doesn't really, you know, he's had enough, and he just starts going [buzzing] to your food.

**Meg**: Which is not what you want to adjust.

**Cass**: Oh no. Not at all. So, if there are any new moms or not so new, the understanding that it's not, it was nothing to do with me. All I had to do or could do was show up, give him everything I had to give. And when I say that, I mean within my capability and not worry if I felt I wasn't giving enough, for as long as I was giving what I had; trying to give beyond that as well, and that mom guilt that we've spoken about a lot. It's been a real journey for me as well as all the development that Max has been going through.

**Meg**: Yeah. And it is, you know. And I mean, it's a lovely term that we call matrescence**,** which is like adolescence, which is the movement of a child through to an adult. And we give them 9-years to do it, and they progress through it, and we make a lot of allowances. And I mean, I've got a teenager in my home, so when they're moody, you make allowances and you understand that this is the hormones and like it's a slow progression to adulthood.

**Cass**: Mm-hmm.

**Meg**: And here you've got a period of pretty much kind of 21-months or a year and 9-months in which you've actually have a complete transformation of a human being and it's not the baby that's the transformation, it's us as woman. And it's a massive thing. I mean, a couple of things in your conversation sparked for me. The one is you, I think we've mentioned it once before in one of the episodes, but it might have even more relevance for you now, is this concept of good enough parenting. And it's such an important concept; it was developed by a my guy called Donald Winnicott**.** He was just so important in mother infant psychology really, and in relationships and bonding. And he talks about the fact that, if you're a perfect mother, not that such a thing exists, and try to be a perfect mother, you actually in fact do your baby a disservice because it's in the fractures and the repairs that growth happens. And that's what happens in a good relationship; in a good relationship, we fail our babies. We get it some of the time and we get it right and we do it beautifully and wonderfully, and then we really fail sometimes and we don't get it right by our standards, but also by our baby standards. And in those moments, it’s those moments of not getting it right and then repairing it and moving on that actually that bonding happens and that human personality develops. So, it's important I think for moms to know that actually failure, if you want to term it that or not hitting the benchmarks that you think of as perfect parenting is actually better parenting.

**Cass**: Definitely. But also, I think coming to terms with that is something that when I've been trying to be perfect mom and do it all, you know, hit all the benchmarks and that sort of thing, my general head space has been so much blacker in a way because the pressure and that takes a real in anything, not just parenting, that takes such a huge toll on you as a person mentally to try and be perfect, whereas actually when you do kind of relinquish some of that control and say, okay, being good enough is actually all I need to do. I'm much brighter and happier, and therefore the energy and what I'm giving Max is so much better.

**Meg**: Yeah.

**Cass**: And he laughs so much more when I'm going, do you know what? I might get this wrong rather than, oh, I've got to get it right.

**Meg**: Yeah. And it goes all the way through his life. I mean, it'll be a lesson that you'll learn as he goes through adolescences that's actually failing and telling him that you've failed and apologizing is actually part of that journey as well. But for moms who are listening to this and good enough parenting might be a new term for you, do go back and listen to one of our podcasts with Lindy Lawrenson. She'sa psychologist, a psychotherapist. She's actually originally an OT, then became a psychologist and then a psychotherapist. And she has done us an incredible course that's available in the app, which is on The Good Enough mother. And she takes you through that journey of what it is to be a good enough mother and why it's important to be just good enough and not to be perfect and what that looks like. So, I mean, it's an important part of our journey and something that you might have in pregnancy have understood on a superficial level, but after a year after being a mom, you really do, you've internalized what it is to fail and to be okay with that.

**Cass**: I think there's also, it's almost progressed for me as well outside because there's being a good enough mom, but there's also being just a good enough woman. And the pressures on all the other things outside of being a mom, whether it be your career, the way you look, your social life, what you're doing, what you're getting up to and trying to add into the mix, mom as well, that it puts a pressure on those things as well. You know, obviously we know there's a huge change that your body goes through physically as well that you have to come to terms with and learn to love a different body in the way your clothes fit differently and things like that or there's, you know, having to do your job that you once had all the time in the world to do when you wanted or cooking or whatever it might be.

**Meg**: Yeah.

**Cass**: So, there's a huge adjustment, but it's been really fun and I love being able to listen back to the podcast and Oh, I remember, I remember that girl, silly woman.

**Meg**: No, it's actually wonderful. A lot of people write into me and say how much they're loving the journey as well. So, it's helped other mums as well identify. And so, what have been some of the joys this week? Tell us, we often have spoken about the good, the bad and the ugly. Is this some good this week?

**Cass**: Do you know what? There's actually loads of good this week.

**Meg**: Oh. Good.

**Cass**: He's a delight at the moment. They go through these phases and he is a delight at the moment and even when it has been possibly the bad, it's kind of been comical.

**Meg**: Yes.

**Cass**: So, yeah, I mean obviously he's walking, so we put his first pair of shoes.

**Meg**: Oh.

**Cass**: But that been hysterical because he obviously has to now learn to walk almost again because he's sort of thinking what are these.

**Meg**: Yes.

**Cass**: So that is very funny.

**Meg**: I saw that you went for one, ones that have got a little bit of a sole. Could you not find the soft leather ones?

**Cass**: No. So, I mean, honestly, I could sit in now about customers office but that's not what this podcast is about. No. It's actually a real nightmare. And it's one of those things where I ended up getting them and I couldn't get anything else before we go on holiday next week. And I thought I just need something to be able to put on his feet when we're away. But yeah, unfortunately, and I really did push in the store and I said, “Look, this won't…” But yeah, that was the best.

**Commercial Break**

This episode is brought to us by Parents Sense, the all in one baby and parenting app that helped you make the most of your baby's first year. Don't you wish someone would just tell you everything you need to know about caring for your baby; when to feed them, how to wean them and why they won't sleep? Parent Sense App is like having a baby expert on your phone guiding you to parent with confidence, get a flexible routine, daily tips and advice personalized for you and your little one. Download Parent Sense App now from your app store and take the guesswork out of parenting.

**Meg**: I'm going to tell you, and I've just quickly popped onto Amazon because I happen to know that you're in the UK, but a lot of my mums are in South Africa, that if you pop onto the Amazon, there's a shoe called Shoo-shoos.

**Cass**: Okay.

**Meg**: S-H-O-O-S-H-O-O-S, Shooshoos. And those are the ones that I am absolutely mad about. They're 23 pounds and free delivery for prime members. So, that's what I would recommend. So, get him a pair of those. The reason I say that is that, I mean, there's ones with soles are absolutely perfect and he'll be able to use them as well, but these ones, he won't notice them as shoes. And so, he doesn't actually learn to re-walk because it's actually… they're almost like leather booties.

**Cass**: Okay.

**Meg**: You know, they’re really awesome. So, those are the shoes that I would go and have a look at. Interestingly, the guy who actually developed that, I mean, I get no kickback from them or anything, don't have a relationship with them at all, but the guy who invented them was a guy who lived two houses up the road for me when I was running my company, Baby Sense. And so, when he was going through all of his nightmare with his business and kind of growing it, I was doing the same on my side. So yeah. But they're absolutely gorgeous and you can get little ones that look like Adidas takkie,they're just too cheap, but they're actually shoes.

**Cass**: Well, because these ones actually they're pre-walkers because the ones that were for kids that walked were… they were shoes and I thought these are too much. I can't put… so anyway, they are what they are. He has protection for the bottom of his feet when we're walking because he now is just walking everywhere. But he's almost stopped crawl unless he needs to get somewhere really fast.

**Meg**: Yes.

**Cass**: And even then, he'll start trying to run, fall over himself, head first and then get up and crawl. So, I mean yesterday, he had his first; Alex appeared up the stairs going Oh my gosh. And there was just blood because Max had fallen and cracked his lip on something and obviously lips bleed a lot.

**Meg**: Yes.

**Cass**: And unless you just put bubble wrap on every single surface of your whole house,

**Meg**: It's going to happen.

**Cass**: You can't avoid these things.

**Meg**: Yes, that certainly is going to happen.

**Cass**: So, he's looking a little bit like a bruised peach at the moment. It does seem to be bothering him. So, it’s not bothering me.

**Meg**: No, he's adventuring. Well that's good. Good.

**Cass**: Exactly.

**Meg**: So, that was the delight of the first delight of the week was the new shoes.

**Cass**: Yeah.

**Meg**: And the fact that he's walking everywhere

**Cass**: Yes, exactly. I think you may have seen a video of his word.

**Meg**: Yes.

**Cass**: I think I sent you…

**Meg**: Oh, that would… and you know what? You know what I said when you sent me the video of his first word? I wanted to say, I told you so, because in our last session together, which was 2-weeks ago, I said to you, Cass, he is going to talk in the 2-two weeks. And sure, enough out comes with the word hello. And it was so cute.

**Cass**: I know. I know now that he did. I mean it's not all the time, but it seems to be often when you don't tell him to say hello, that one happened by accident. And I was like, oh my gosh, I can't believe I just caught that on film. But then now, he will just sort of do it when he is waving randomly, but not every time and it's really frustrating. I don't even bother trying to get him to say it to perform because he's **[inaudible 15:32]** and dreary. So, that's been really fun. And this morning, because every morning we wave goodbye to daddy and this morning we were looking out the window waving goodbye and the neighbor's dog ran out of the house and Max just suddenly went dog like really loudly.

**Meg**: Oh, on my word.

**Cass**: I don't think there was a g on the end here, it's more like dah. But it was definitely as soon as he saw the dog. So, he's definitely starting to …

**Meg**: He’s using it together.

**Cass**: …using his word.

**Meg**: And you know, language is incredible because first of all, and I've told you this many time before, that about 8-months ahead of spoken language comes understanding, comes receptive language. And so, he's already been banking down like months of understanding of words and now he starts to say them. When they initially start talking, it is just kind of one word here, one word there certainly not sentences. And then what will happen is that around about 18-months old, he'll have what we call a language explosion. And when the language explosion hits, and in some little ones do a little earlier and knowing Maxi might took a little bit earlier, but when it hits, it's like the words tumble out of their mouth in full sentences and it's just the most delightful time and they say things wrong and it's just so cute. But language is really for me, an absolutely fascinating thing. It's so incredibly important to human beings and to intelligence and to the way in which we connect with people. So, it's awesome that he started his journey already before he’s one.

**Cass**: Yeah. We can't wait for the funny phrases. We were at the zoo the other day and there we we're looking at the bear and the bear was quite high up and it looked like the bear was trying to get down and this little bear was standing there. She says okay, so why don't you just jump? My sister jumps down all the time, like talking to me back. Alex was like, I can't wait to know what Max is going to come out with.

**Meg**: No, he's going to be very funny.

**Cass**: So yeah, that's going to be…

**Meg**: That's good.

**Cass**: But yeah, so that's been the good.

**Meg**: The good.

**Cass**: I am sure but Max knows the concept of being naughty, but like in a funny way, not in a bad way. He has been so cheeky or naughty, I don’t know what it is. But that glint in his eye…

**Meg**: To see your response.

**Cass**: … where you know what you are doing.

**Meg**: Yeah.

**Cass**: And the worst was one evening. So, obviously last time we were talking, we kind of talked a little bit around dropping a nap in between the 12 and 14-month mark.

**Meg**: Correct.

**Cass**: And on the app, his awake window has shifted this week as well. So, it’s now rather than two and a half to three, it's three to three and a half. So, we're kind of juggling that a little bit and trying to make the routine work. And then he also, almost to the day after our podcast, he started waking in the middle of the night for a period of time. And so, by the time he finally went down, he was then sleeping till about 7:30 in the morning which then when you are suddenly extending awake windows, really throwing the whole routine.

**Meg**: No, this is classic start. He’s going to drop that sleep about 12-months; we won't wait till 14.

**Cass**: But then what he was also doing is there were two nights where he didn't actually, we put him down at the normal time, about quarter to seven, one evening he went till 8:30. The next evening he went till eight o'clock. But the evening he went till 8:30, he wasn't crying and he was messing around in his cart, pulling things that he could, anything he could try and get his hands-on things we'd never even noticed were there. Yanking them, staring into the camera, these wide eyes. And then, so eventually I had to go up because he nearly pulled the camera off its stand. So, I had to go up and start rearranging where the camera is and taping it and things like that. Laughing at me the whole way through hysterics. Just, this is the funniest thing I've ever done, knowing exactly. Then I went, I left downstairs, he threw his toy out the cart. As soon as I walked in the room to give it to him, burst out laughing. I mean I do not believe, but he was not being naughty. Well, it’s so hard.

**Meg**: It’s causing a thing.

**Cass**: It’s very funny. It's was funny.

**Meg**: I know, I know. That's the problem. And that's all he wants. He wants you to laugh or you to come back into the room. So, it's very difficult. It's very difficult. Well first of all, he's definitely showing all the signs of needing to drop from two sleeps to one sleep and that's exactly… I mean what you articulated there is exactly what happens because they have this either very late bedtime because they're fitted in the two sleeps during the day and so bedtime gets pushed out from seven till 8:30 or they have their two hours in the middle of the night, which then pushes their wake up time a whole lot later, exactly as you said or if they don't do that, then they wake up really early and you clearly haven't had that because you'll be moaning about it and that's when you start to wake up at four in the morning and then like that's daytime.

**Cass**: It’s not cool.

**Meg**: Yeah. So, they do one of those three things. But look, you're heading for it, you are 3-weeks away so he probably is a little bit too young, but I would say Cass on the days that he pushes out to 7:00 AM. So, if he does a 7:00 AM wake up, I would maybe experiment with combining his 2-day sleeps. So, instead of putting down 10:30, move that out till 11:30. So give him like it's, I know it's a long stretch because that'll be four and a half hours, so, which is a little long for him, but he'll then go down and sleep from 11:30 till 1:30 and then you just bring bedtime forward that night to six. So, you can do it like that if he has like really late and if he wakes up later than seven o'clock, you can do it. If he's waking up at between five and six, you're not going to be able to do that. He is going to need his two sleeps until he is a year old, but you're going to have to start gauging it because that's what you're heading for, it's exactly what we see. I always talk about those being the signs.

**Cass**: Well, we’ve got all of that plus of course we're going on holiday where there's a 2-hour time difference and we're traveling all day. So off we are leaving our house at 8:00 AM and we're going to land at 5:30 local time, so 3:30 our time. And I've got to try and work out when I'm going to get a sleep-in, in that time when he's got the excitement of airports and airplanes and changing airplanes.

**Meg**: What time is your first flight of the morning?

**Cass**: 9:30 in the morning.

**Meg**: Okay. So, that I would then let him sleep on that flight. I know it's a really short flight potentially, but.

**Cass**: Half an hour.

**Meg**: Half an hour flight. Yeah. It's going to be difficult. Does he sleep in the pram?

**Cass**: He does. So, my plan was to try and get him to sleep in between the flight.

**Meg**: When you get to Heathrow?

**Cass**: Yeah.

**Meg**: That's not a bad plan. That's actually, in fact that's a good plan because your flight two Heathrow is a little short. You need him to have one full sleep cycle. Yeah. So then keep him awake on the flight. Good plan. Put him down on the pram when you get there. Rock him until he goes to sleep. And then you've got obviously a delay of time in between the two flights.

**Cass**: Yeah. If everything's on time, we've probably got…he can then fit in an hour's sleep if everything's on time. The other thing I was thinking is I could put him in the carrier and try and get him sleep in the carrier so I can walk onto the plane with him, sleep in the carrier so that he can stay asleep.

**Meg**: And he does sleep in the carriers?

**Cass**: He has in the past; we haven't done it for a while.

**Meg**: And you're going to be in a new place where he's going to be in a…

**Cass**: I was going to try and get him to do one of the sleeps in the carrier tomorrow.

**Meg**: It's very good plan. It's exactly what I was going to suggest. Try and do one test drive. Exactly.

**Cass**: I was going to try and do that.

**Meg**: Try and see if that can work. Yeah. So, it is complicated. Yeah, I mean the one thing is to watch the awake times when you arrived on the first 2-days. And that's why, you know, whenever people ask me questions about changing time zones, I always say to them, this is the beauty of watching awake times rather than the clock, because it'll work it out for you and it'll shift you in.

**Cass**: Yeah. And I wondered, I mean, I've heard some people say, oh, you know, we kept them on UK time the whole time we were there and they just went to bed at nine o'clock with us, but then I also sort of felt, well that means we don't get our evening.

**Meg**: Are you able to have a nanny there when you're there or…?

**Cass**: No, I've got grandparents there when we're there.

**Meg**: Yeah, that's nice. That's nice. Yeah. So, look, I mean, are you staying in a house on a resort?

**Cass**: A villa. Yeah.

**Meg**: Oh, that's perfect. Okay. That's perfect. So, you do get to have an evening. Yeah, no, no. I would shift his time zones. I wouldn't try and keep him in a…

**Cass**: It's two weeks as well. So, I sort of think that's quite a long time.

**Meg**: To keep him in the same time zone. Yeah. Yeah.

**Cass**:So, that’s going to be…

**Meg**: It’s very exciting. Well, you’re going to have…

**Cass**: … exciting.

**Meg**: … a wonderful time on holiday with him. Is he having his birthday there?

**Cass**: No, we're back 2-days before his birthday.

**Meg**: Okay. Alright. So, we'll get to see him around about that time. That's great.

**Cass**: Yeah.

**Meg**: Well, Cass, it's been wonderful to chat and I think the next time we chat, we'll be around his birthday and we'll do birthday celebration chat, but it has been wonderful connecting with you again and hearing what he's up to.

**Cass**: Thanks. Yeah, I know it’s very exciting. He is really developing such personality now, so it's great fun.

**Meg**: That's too precious. It really is. Yeah.

**Cass**: Alright.

**Meg**: Well Cass, thanks for the chat and enjoy your trip.

**Cass**: Thank you so much, Meg. Thank you. Bye.

**Outro**

Thanks to everyone who joined us. We will see you the same time next week. Until then, download Parent Sense app and take the guesswork out of parenting.