Episode 64 - Maternal Guilt

**Meg:** Welcome back, mums and dads to a new episode of Sense by Meg Faure. I am your host, Meg Faure and am always as usual, absolutely delighted to have you join us. And as you know, [00:01:00] we sometimes have, mums who join us to ask me questions, and we sometimes have other professionals. People who I really respect in the industry who come alongside me with just real incredible nuggets of wisdom.

**Meg:** And today is just such a day with such a person. Nadine and I encountered each other a couple of months ago when I wanted to interview her and really ask her questions around her use of the Parent Sense app.

**Meg:** She had been identified as one of our super users. She uses the app frequently, and so I was having a super user chat with her to find out what I could do better. But as we started to talk, I just realized that Nadine had an absolute wealth of wisdom. She's an educational psychologist originally and practices as a psychologist.

**Meg:** But she's also now the mom of Dax, who's 10 months old. And through her journey of being a professional who dealt with moms over many years, and then of course, becoming a mom herself, she journeyed into a new space in her profession where she really is coming alongside moms and with just such incredible insights.

**Meg:** [00:02:00] And so I asked her as soon as we had finished our super user chat, whether or not she would join me on an Insta Live. And it was hugely popular. So for those of you who haven't seen that Insta Live, do go and pop onto the Meg Faure page, and you'll find it there. But I did not want to leave it there because we couldn't get into the meat of it.

**Meg:** And so I asked Nadine to join me today on this podcast. So Nadine, a really, really warm welcome to you today.

**Nadine:** Thanks, Meg. Thank you so much for having me. I'm really excited to be here.

**Meg:** Excellent. Nadine. I think before we get into the nitty gritties, could you just share with us a little bit about your professional background and how you came into working with mums?

**Nadine:** So, as you said, Meg, I'm an educational psychologist and I've always been really passionate about working with families and children specifically. It's always been something that I found so interesting and becoming a mom myself, as you said, there's been a really big shift and a positive one in terms of how I practice and how I see parents and families, and also the gift [00:03:00] and the difficulties of parenting as well.

**Meg:** Mm mm Absolutely. It kind of brings it all home to roost when you have your own child. You've got all this theory until you become a mom, and then that's suddenly really in practice.

**Nadine:** Absolutely.

**Meg:** So, I mean, I know that I experienced massive, overwhelming emotions when I became a mum to James, which was my first experience of becoming a mum.

**Meg:** And I felt the pressure. I had overwhelming emotions. I actually suffered a little from baby blues. People think baby blues are something that, you know, you don't feel great. But actually I had an absolutely horrific sense of dread every evening, and it lasted about seven days. And then it moved on. But it was like a real dark tunnel that enveloped me. I experienced those emotions along with the emotions of being absolutely elated and believing that my child was completely the most brilliant and beautiful in the whole world, you know? So I had the highs and the lows.

**Meg:** How do you think that moms can manage these overwhelming emotions that come along with becoming a new mom?

**Nadine:** I'm so glad that you speak about the overwhelming emotions, [00:04:00] Meg, because I think we get so excited. We are pregnant. There's so much enthusiasm. We're preparing, we're shopping and finding all of these adorable little outfits and having a baby shower, and that is such an exciting time. And often we don't speak as much about, I don't like to call them the negative emotions, but as you said, the overwhelming part of being a mom. So sometimes it's an expectations versus reality effect, I find. So being a mom is incredible. It's the best, most wonderful thing you'll ever do, but also the most difficult, scary, terrifying thing that you'll ever do.

**Nadine:** So in dealing with the overwhelm, I think it is important for us to speak about it, to give it airtime, to say that this does exist and this is completely normal. People are very worried about focusing on the negative. And if I say this or if I say that I'm struggling, or if I say that this is difficult or if I say that I don't what I'm doing, then I'm doing something wrong. But that is such a [00:05:00] natural and a normal part of being a mom.

**Nadine:** We've spoken before about: you give birth and you're getting to know this little person, but you're getting to know yourself as a mom and we don't know what that looks like. You can do as much preparation, read every book, but you only know when you are there.

**Nadine:** And what you described, that sense of complete elation. You know, here's this beautiful person who I'm falling in love with and this absolute dread and this fear of, am I doing enough? Is this okay? I remember leaving the hospital and it felt quite underwhelming because I thought, you know, surely I must write a test.

**Nadine:** Or is it okay? Can I leave with this person? I'm

**Meg:** How can they let me go?

**Nadine:** Yeah. Are you sure this is a good idea? I sort of was looking at the nurses and the doctor going, okay, all right, you trust me? And it was quite a scary experience because I don't think we've yet learned to trust ourselves. That overwhelm, and[00:06:00] not in a negative way, anticipating that overwhelm... and it's not a matter of if it happens, it's a matter of when it happens, what can I expect? And also what is this emotion? What can I do? What are supportive techniques or just understanding that I have for when it happens?

**Meg:** Absolutely. You mentioned two things there. The one is acknowledging the negative and that it does come. It's not all through rose tinted glasses. And then also acknowledging and anticipating that this part of the journey is going to happen. And you know, it's super interesting because I'm a mum of a teenage girl, and let me tell you that that is a journey.

**Meg:** I have two daughters and I now have my youngest at home. And there are days where I can see that there's absolute confusion around why she's feeling low today and why yesterday she felt so good. And where's the logic in this? She articulates that, you know, like, I know I shouldn't be feeling like this, but I do.

**Meg:** And of course we all know that that's because she's an adolescent and so she has got permission to be on a rollercoaster because the world knows that adolescence is a [00:07:00] rollercoaster. But what we haven't really acknowledged to the same degree is that matrescence, which is the evolution from a woman to a mother, is just as much of a rollercoaster, you know? So, we ha haven't given ourselves permission to actually recognize that yes, this is a roller coaster. And anticipate, as you said, that this is going to be tough some days. And I think that's really, really important. Acknowledging and the anticipation that this is a normal journey, even though it's a rollercoaster.

**Nadine:** Absolutely, and you're not doing anything wrong. The overwhelm, it comes with the territory. You're responsible for this little person, and you have all of these hopes and these dreams and these wishes. There's also so much information out there. I do believe that sometimes it's too much information and a lot of it just has to evolve as we go.

**Nadine:** You don't know the kind of mom you're going to be. I had a completely different picture of the sort of mom I would be, and my husband often makes jokes and says that he thought I'd be a lot more relaxed and a lot more calm. And I did too. [00:08:00] And it's not who I turned out to be, but it's managing that.

**Meg:** Yeah, it really is quite interesting that some people who you think would never be maternal type moms actually end up being the most maternal and then others who, who you think are going to just fall into motherhood become, like you say, super anxious.

**Meg:** I was also very anxious in the early days. I wanted to do it all right. And you mentioned something there that's really interesting and so true is that we get bombarded with so much advice and expectations. I think that's potentially what sets us up for failure in some ways if we've got all of these gold standards thrown at us.

**Meg:** And certainly if you're an A type, which I am, and I think you might be as well, you know, this advice then becomes, it's not just advice like that is the script, you know, so surely we must be moving on that script. And of course, babies don't move on a script. So how can we navigate all of this advice, and particularly the conflicting advice, and how do we actually hear our own voice and find our own path in motherhood?

**Nadine:** Such a good question and I think it's so important to [00:09:00] have a filter for all of the information that's coming at you. We have so much information out there, and social media can be a blessing and a curse at times because there is all this information and as you said, quite unrealistic standards and not everything on social media is true. You are seeing the best of everyone's lives. We post the photos that we want to post. We're not posting ourselves first thing in the morning after having woken up four times and having a terrible night. That's a conversation I have a lot with myself and my clients is what is the reality here?

**Nadine:** This is a lot of information. We need to have a filter for that information. We need to take what we can use, but also disregard what we can't. That also means we need to be quite attuned to ourselves and know what fits and what doesn't. I know we had a conversation about your mom village, and you know, it takes a village to raise a child, but we have to choose who goes in that village. We also [00:10:00] choose perhaps what doesn't belong in the village, what there isn't space for. And a lot of that, like you said, can be the script and these expectations. You know, I want to cook every meal. I'm going to use the best ingredients. I'm going to be fully present. I'm never going to get angry or upset. And it's not a reality because at the end of the day, Meg, we're human.

**Nadine:** And that's the beautiful parts of motherhood is that newer human. And that we have to be okay with it. It's not this level of perfection that often we see that has been quite cleverly manipulated and filtered to be posted on social media and realizing that this is not reality. And it might be something as a mom that you want to do, but I believe so strongly in this, you have to be so aware of your capacity as a person. And that means capacity as a mom, capacity as a wife, capacity as a professional, and your capacity isn't a hundred percent every single day. We don't wake up [00:11:00] and go, right, I'm at a hundred percent. We're not robotic and we're not cell phones. Sometimes you've had a terrible night. You wake up and you've got just the capacity to to make it through the day, and that means that you show up differently.

**Nadine:** Sometimes you've had a wonderful night's rest. I'm not sure what that is, but you have a wonderful night's rest and you feel like you can take on the world. Every day, you have to be aware of where you are at and what your capacity is like for that day.

**Meg:** Let's create a visual image of this. We've got two camps here. We've got the other and we've got the self. Okay. So let's put into the camp of the other, the external voices around us. So social media, woman in our village, mother-in-law's, mothers, you know, ghosts in the nursery, the things that have formed us on the outside of us.

**Meg:** And then you've got, the self, which is actually how many hours sleep did I have last night? What's my capacity? And I love the way you spoke about that. While you were talking, I was thinking, is there a way that we can practically match these two? So is there a way that I can [00:12:00] maybe take some mindful moments, so who am I today, or what are my values? How much sleep have I had? What are my priorities for my baby? Kind of frame me and then match it with what is out there and say, okay, so that's a voice on social media that really doesn't match with my value system, doesn't match with my capacity today. Or that's a standard that's been pushed out there that just isn't something that I want to adhere to or be party to. Is there a way that we can practically assist moms to help them to create this kind of match and look for the mismatch between themselves and what society's expecting and what's out there.

**Nadine:** I think that's a great visual. It's a great analogy to have. As you said, at the center of that is the self, and that is where it starts. So sometimes we wake up with a bit of a deficit of, I didn't get enough sleep, or this is how I'm feeling. And from the minute that you open your eyes, get out of bed and start the day, you have a feeling and you know what that feels like and you know where you're at.

**Nadine:** And that for me is where it starts, because depending on what that is, will tell [00:13:00] you how much support you need from the outside. So if you wake up and you've had a great night, let's start there. You've had a, I don't think we can say great when we moms. Let's say you've had an average night. You wake up and you're like, okay, I'm feeling okay today. Do I want to listen to these voices? Everyone is always going to have a lot to say, always. And do I want to listen to those or do I wanna trust myself? Because you know your baby.

**Nadine:** And I know you said in your podcast too, there's a lot of information, but this is your baby. There's not a textbook on children - there can't be because they're all so different. So you know, your baby and some of that well-intentioned advice applies and sometimes it doesn't.

**Nadine:** So starting with the self, with a good day going: All right, I'd like to try this, or, there's a new recipes - I can speak to my experience and that's what I'll do now- there's a really nice recipe. Today I've got a gap at this time. I want to go out and get some avocado and banana for example, because I wanted to try that recipe and very realistic [00:14:00] expectations. And that's what motherhood will teach you is that capacity. So saying, all right, I wanna try something new, or I wanted to make some jelly, or we wanted to do some messy play, and I'm feeling okay today so that's something I feel like I can take on.

**Nadine:** Do I need to ask someone for help? Not necessarily. Do I wanna share this? Okay. And the inverse. If you've had a terrible night and you wake up and you just really are exhausted, and we've all had those days and those days happen where you just have to muster up energy to be a mom and then inevitably also to do your job and to show up for those around you.

**Nadine:** How much support do you need? And this is something as moms that we do need help with, it is asking for help because somehow we feel like asking for help is a failing. So even asking my husband to make breakfast while I go shower, it's a mom thing. And we speak about the mom guilt and that's part of being a mom.

**Nadine:** You have this baby, and I mean we both love Winnicot. You [00:15:00] have this baby and he termed it primary maternal preoccupation. Your needs no longer matter. You are so preoccupied with this little person as you should be, to the exclusion of everything and anything else, and that's normal. That's part of the experience.

**Nadine:** But that makes it so difficult for us to ask for help because I think I have to do everything. I have to change the nappy. I have to play. I have to feed him. I have to be the center of his world. And the reality is, Meg, he's the center of my world. I am not the center of his.

**Meg:** Mm mm Absolutely. So you mentioned something there that was very interesting because part and parcel of these early emotions that we need to watch out for. One of them is of course, maternal guilt and it's such a common feeling amongst mums. Can you give us a little bit of insight on what maternal guilt is and why do you think it's just so common.

**Nadine:** So mom guilt is a phrase that we hear a lot and it becomes a reality when we become moms and it's not a pleasant reality. [00:16:00] But I think personally and professionally, I'm trying really hard to reframe what that looks like for us to make it something less awful, for lack of a better word.

**Nadine:** So like I said, we have that primal maternal preoccupation. All of our needs, all of our rhythms adapt to the child. So, the guilt is a natural and is a normal thing. There's a wonderful psychologist, her name is Susan David. She's actually South African, but she works at Harvard and she speaks about something called emotional agility. And I absolutely love this. It makes so much sense. Essentially it means that our emotions, our feelings, our information and use it to guide us, as opposed to trying to change or control it. So mom guilt, I wish we could get rid of it. I wish that we existed in the world a week ago. I'm doing a wonderful job. I'm doing the best I can. Gold star for me. But that's not the reality. So the guilt will be there because that's part of being a mom and we need [00:17:00] to experience the entire spectrum of emotions. I know everybody always just wants to be happy. I hear that daily, if not four, five times a day.

**Nadine:** And I say often that only being happy is the equivalent to only eating at one restaurant for the rest of your life. It's very limited and it sounds great initially, but you don't get to experience what it means to be a mom. And that guilt comes with it. How we reframe that guilt is again, not, you know, when I feel, if I feel guilty, it's a, when I feel guilty.

**Nadine:** So when I feel guilty, what is that voice saying to me? And for me, It's a reminder to show up. We are meant to be guilty. Otherwise we would have this little person and go off and do our own thing and completely forget that they exist. Which even as mom's hearing that we're thinking, no, I could never do that and that's part of being a mom. You could never just forget that this person exists. You can hop on a plane and go to Ibiza on holiday. It doesn't work like that [00:18:00] anymore. So guilt is that voice saying, All right, show up. I remember once I worked late, and it was the first time that I hadn't been able to bath, or put Dax to bed, and I was devastated.

**Nadine:** I was absolutely devastated. I started crying and my husband in all of his glory was like, I'm really sorry you're feeling like this. Please cry quietly so that you don't wake the baby.

**Meg:** Ha! I love It.

**Nadine:** In that moment, I was like, okay, I'm feeling terrible. This is the first time I didn't get to read him a story. I didn't get to bath. And then I thought, all right, so I'm just gonna sit and look at him for the next 10 minutes, which is what I did. And that was, I feel awful. This is the reminder for me to show up. Right? It's kind of a motivation for me to change the behavior. Can we get rid of it? No. There. It's part of our experience. It's part of this broad spectrum of emotions, so that's part of the deal. However, what we do need to not have any room for is the shaming. So there's [00:19:00] a big difference between guilt and shame, and I know that Brene Brown speaks about it beautifully. She's wonderful. And the guilt is, again, that motivator for change, I wanted to show up, you know, I missed my son's soccer match. I was late, or I said I would do this and I didn't. That's guilt. That's normal. The shame is that feeling of just being so unworthy, so moving from, yeah, I'm not good enough, so I missed my son's bath time. He was asleep when I got home.

**Nadine:** I'm guilty because I wanted to be there. It doesn't mean that I'm not a good mom. It doesn't mean I'm unworthy. It doesn't mean that I don't deserve this. And that's a voice that we really need to have no room for and really challenge.

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**Meg:** I absolutely love that. You know, and it brings together the good enough parenting that actually really, really outstanding parenting is just good enough. In fact, it includes quite a lot of failure and that failure is important and it's actually part of what we have to live with. And it doesn't mean that we must feel shame.

**Meg:** I love the fact that you speak about guilt, not in a negative context, because I've often written in blogs and articles that it's a wasted emotion. I use those words around guilt. It's a wasted [00:21:00] emotion.

**Meg:** You're reframing it and you're saying it's not a wasted emotion, it's a healthy emotion because it shows us what we are aspiring to. But moving further from that, when we don't hit those standards into shame is the problem. It's not the guilt, that's the problem, the shame, it's the problem. And I just absolutely love that, Nadine.

**Meg:** I think for many moms, that'll be the most useful thing to take away, that the maternal guilt's going to be there because it's it's almost like a lighthouse. It's a bit of a guiding light that says, this is where you're heading, and this is when you're not meeting that, you'll feel this emotion. But if you don't hit that mark, that's okay. And don't go for the shame. And, and I just love that and I'm sure many moms will really find that very, very useful. So thank you. Really awesome.

**Nadine:** Thanks, Meg. I also did some research on mom shaming, so I just popped into Google as we do, and a lot of the research around it speaks externally. So like you said, moms shaming other moms or family shaming moms, but nothing speaks about how we shame ourselves.

**Meg:** Absolutely.

**Nadine:** [00:22:00] That voice is the most critical one that we will ever experience.

**Nadine:** If it's judgmental, it's critical, and it really says things that I don't think we say things to ourself that we would never, ever say to anyone else, let alone to our children, but it's something that we say to ourselves. You know, I'm a bad mom, or everyone else is doing so much better, or I don't deserve this. And it's really the deep, dark, horrible things. And that is a completely waste. Waste of our cognitive capacity, waste of anything. And we need to recognize the difference.

**Meg:** Do you have practical tips that you suggest to moms? Is it just something as simple as looking at yourself in the mirror in the morning and saying, I'm okay, I'm good enough, or are there other tips that you can give moms to help them with turning that negative voice and that negative self-talk into something that maybe is more positive and and can result in more positive emotions?

**Nadine:** So I think the awareness of the difference of the two is one of the most important things. So knowing is this [00:23:00] guilt or is this shame? And that is something as fundamental as saying, I did something wrong versus I am wrong. Or I am unworthy. We need to know and we need to, as if we're our own cheerleader, we need to stop that voice and challenge that voice.

**Nadine:** That for me is the most important starting point. It's difficult to say because everyone is so different, but as moms we need to keep it short and we need to keep it simple. We don't like to be overwhelmed by too much information. So sometimes I use a mantra. So wake up and like today, you know, I just wanna show up. Today, I'm going to spend five minutes with my son playing with blocks or just marveling at him. So just a reminder of what you want for the day or what you want as your philosophy. So I think for moms, that's also quite an important one. And I also recognize having these thoughts and reflections also take a lot of energy that we don't always necessarily have.

**Nadine:** But what do you want as a mom? Who [00:24:00] are you hoping to raise and what do you want for your child? And I love that you spoke about failure and that's become such a swear word. If you think about a school report, nobody wants to see the word fail on it. There's so much stigma around it.

**Nadine:** And as parents, we are going to fail. And I mean, Meg, I've been saying that in practice for years. And saying it as a mom was one of the hardest things I had to do. It was almost like I wanted to keep it separate from myself, so it's easy for me to say, oh no, we'll fail as parents and offer the advice, but actually taking it and saying, I'm going to mess up because I can't show up for this person a hundred percent of the time.

**Nadine:** And that's also not what he needs. He needs to fail. You know he's gonna make mistakes. Dax is at the point where he keeps falling over and bumping his head on exactly the same place. So to the point that I understand that movie with the mom put her son in a bubble, I completely resonate with that now, so he's going to make mistakes.

**Nadine:** He's going to realize, whoops, that was too far, [00:25:00] that was too close. And we want that for our kids. And yes, when it translates to us, we actually don't make space for it. We're like, no, I will not fail. I will not make a mistake. I will not apologize, and our kids need that from us.

**Meg:** Yeah. They certainly do. I think it's Ed Tronic who talks about failure and the repair that comes with it. And it's just so important because it's in that repair that the actual magic happens. So, it's not necessarily the failure itself that is the magic in the relationship.

**Meg:** But it is the fact that after the failure, you can actually repair it, you know? I recently wrote a LinkedIn post on exactly that. That actually I had failed terribly with my little boy once. I had really been harsh on him in terms of discipline and he was little. I don't even think he was three. And he looked at me and he said, mommy is naughty. And I knew in that moment that I had crossed a value or moral line for him. I'd stepped over something that he did not believe that I could go there. And he was right.

**Meg:** He was a hundred percent right. And I can remember that because it lives with me. I think about it often and [00:26:00] the beauty in that moment was that I actually could say to him, I'm so sorry. You're right. Mommy is so tired and you've pushed my buttons again. I don't remember anything about what he did but I remember that emotion of knowing that I had failed and that I now needed to repair. And that is just so important because I think he would learn more of me repairing what I had done wrong in that moment than the fact that there had been a a mishap on my part. I'm a human mother. I was tired, you know?

**Meg:** Another piece of that, which kind of alludes to us that sometimes we are gonna go wrong and we actually just need support. And so how is it that partners and other support systems, what role can they play in alleviating guilt and supporting new moms?

**Meg:** If we've got dads listening to this and they're dealing because dads just don't seem to have the same level of paternal guilt as moms have of maternal guilt. Sorry, dads. It's just the way it is. We seem to carry it. Comes with the placenta. But how can dads support moms and, and how can we as moms support our circle of friends as well?

**Nadine:** Such a good question and I'm so glad that you raised just the difference between being a mom and being [00:27:00] anyone else on the periphery. The most important thing is, I find that a lot of dads, and a lot of family members, they don't know what to do. They don't know what the person needs, and the worst thing that you can do when someone, like you said, is absolutely exhausted beyond any point and just doesn't feel like themselves, you can't ask that person to tell you what they need.

**Nadine:** It's basic dysregulation. I always want to explain to my clients that it's like load shedding. Best example. Our brains, when we're emotional, when we're overwhelmed, it's load shedding. Our prefrontal cortex is offline. We can't do anything and you can't ask someone, okay, what do you want me to do when I'm crying, when I'm overwhelmed and I'm exhausted?

**Nadine:** The

**Meg:** I dunno what I need.

**Nadine:** I dunno what I need. And I can't think for you right now because right now I don't even know how to spell my own name. We started off by saying that normalizing these conversations and when we regulate it, so when our brain is online saying, when I'm like this, [00:28:00] this is what I need you to do. And sometimes, your partner or family members also asking them to know you well enough to know how and when to intervene. But this is helpful and this is not. So I hate it when people say, it'll be okay. You'll be fine. In that moment, and I think anyone who's ever heard that goes, how do you know? How do you know I'll be fine? Do you have a crystal ball because you're so dysregulated that you're going, I'm not fine. How will I ever get there? It seems like this impossible task, so it also speaks to what do you need. When you regulated, have this conversation with people around you, because sometimes it means that they need to leave the room and sometimes it's just doing something.

**Nadine:** Stepping in, doing something and knowing, seeing when the mom is there, how can I help,

**Meg:** Or sometimes just listening, you know, I mean, my husband's a bit of a fixer, so he has this this massive urge and I'm sure many partners can actually identify with this to actually just solve it for me. Because he can't bear seeing me disregulated or bear seeing me in disarray.

**Meg:** And [00:29:00] so he wants to fix it and come in with a solution and sometimes I just need him to say, It's just so tough. Like today is a tough day and you know, so I definitely think listening and reflecting can be very useful for partners. Another thing that I think can be really useful is to use the phrase today or for now. Because I think, you know, sometimes when you're in the midst of that, and I can remember this feeling when I had my baby blues, which were really quite severe with my son, I mean, even though there were only a couple of days, and even though they were a few hours, was very, very deep. I really, really was in a vortex of black that I couldn't get out of.

**Meg:** And my mom was incredible and she would say to me, it's just for now. Go to sleep. It's just for now it'll be better. And you know, I think sometimes it's that statement that, you know, people can support each other with. But I love the fact that you have alluded to getting people asking what someone needs when they are okay. So when you're okay, and I know you're gonna dip, we all know you're gonna dip. We've spoken at the beginning that there's gonna be this rollercoaster you're gonna dip. How can I [00:30:00] help? What is the best thing for me to do? Is, is the best thing for me to sit and be with you is the best thing for me to leave the room?

**Meg:** Is it best for me to just reflect at your emotions to you? Or does that irritate you? Because some people hate it when you're getting psychologized. I can hear you are saying, or I can hear you feel, ah, don't wanna be psych right now. So, you know, it's kind of asking them what is it that would be really helpful.

**Meg:** My husband was an incredible co-parent. I mean, there's no other way. I mean, I think I was a good mom, largely because I was in a support system that was fabulous. You know, between my husband, his mom, my mom and the nanny who was within our home, I was held, and I know a lot of women don't have that. And if I hadn't had that, I, I don't think I would've been as good a mother. But Philip gave me space often, you know, he would take the kids. I mean, I've got, one of my favorite pictures is a photograph of him dressed up as a pirate playing pirates with James, who was at the time seven, and Emily, who was three days old in a sling around his body. So she was sleeping and, [00:31:00] and that was him taking care of the kids so that I could sleep, you know, and I came out to find that. And just that giving me that much space that I could actually sleep and just reregulate myself was, was an absolute gift.

**Meg:** So, yeah. So support systems and partners are, are absolutely critically important. So Nadine, I have loved this conversation. I had about 10 more questions for you and we haven't got to them. So I'm afraid to say we might, I might have to take more of your time sometime and reconnect.

**Meg:** I'd love to talk about postpartum depression. I'd love to talk about self-care. These are things that are really important and we have not had time for today. But we've covered so much. Moms, if you have loved this conversation with Nadine, she does work with moms. If you want to spend some time working through these really big emotions and this period of matrescence and transition into motherhood, I think Nadine is a wonderful voice to connect with. So, Nadine, how can moms and dads get hold of you? How can they work with you?

**Nadine:** You can pop me an email. It's Nadine, n a d [00:32:00] i n e@mpac dot co dot za or my business line is 0 8 3 5 0 5 3 3 6 6. It's always easier to pop a WhatsApp and then I respond when I'm not in a session.

**Meg:** Nadine, I know you're in load shedding at the moment and you just broke up, as you said, your WhatsApp number, and I think that's a great way for people to get hold of you. So could you do it again? It's plus two seven and then?

**Nadine:** 0 8 3 5 0 5 double three double six.

**Meg:** Brilliant. Okay, if you didn't have a pen and paper, go back on the podcast and write that down. It's a good way to get hold of Nadine. Um, she is an amazing voice in the space. Um, for those of you who are transitioning into motherhood, Nadine's been there once. I've been there three times. Um, and it is, yeah, it, it really is a journey and it, and it needs to be recognized as such, as an important journey.

**Meg:** And so do, do reach out to people like Nadine who can actually assist you along the way. So Nadine, thank you so [00:33:00] much. It has just been an absolute pleasure to chat to you again. Um, you have got many, many, many pearls of wisdom that I know moms will really have benefited from. And thank you so much for your time and also for the work that you do.

**Nadine:** Thank you so much, Meg. I really did enjoy the chat.