

# ***5 Steps to Dealing with a Mommy Identity Crisis***

In a world where you are suddenly covered in baby vomit, half-eaten goldfish are smooshed throughout your hair, you have completely forgotten what it's like to use the bathroom in peace, and find yourself begging your child, "please do not poop on me," it makes sense that you may face an identity crisis. Join me as we uncover 5 Steps to Dealing with a Mommy Identity Crisis!

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Lizzy Christian received her Master of Arts in Human Services Counseling - *Crisis Response and Trauma* from Liberty University's Graduate School. Lizzy started her career as a High school Athletic Director and transferred over as a School Counselor to follow her passion for helping the hurting. Lizzy is now a firefighter wife, writer, and full time mommy. She is a Mary Kay consultant and a contributing writer to Start Marriage Right and Relevant Magazine.



## ***Mommy Identity Crisis – Embrace the Chaos***

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**August 24, 2016 is the day that my entire world changed.** My little Liam entered the world and completely rattled my entire thought process, way of being, and ultimately MY plans for the future became unclear. Before Liam, I dreamed of becoming some big wig hospital Psychologist or Counselor at CHKD. When I held my Liam for the very first time, I no longer knew what my new “normal” looked like.

**Since it is often on my mind that I could have the Huntington’s disease gene, priorities have shifted immensely for me.** My father passed away when I was 18 years old, but he was *sick, in assisted living, and needed around the clock care for the majority of my life.* **Because I have a 50/50 chance of the same outcome, I know that a high paying job is no longer what truly matters to me. My heart desires to be the best mother and wife I can be and I realize that looks different for every person.**

I love taking care of my home, grocery shopping, planning menus, scrubbing floors, doing laundry constantly, organizing, vacuuming EVERYTHING too many times a day, and spending quality time with my son. I love taking him on adventures and seeing him thrive in nature, by exploring the world and appreciating God’s creation at such a young age.

**I know that every woman does not have the opportunity to be a full time mom because of the many demands/careers outside of the home, so I do not**

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**take it for granted. I have also struggled with my thought process since Liam was born.** It was our plan for me to return to work full-time, but at the few interviews and even part-time job I had for a time, my heart was with my son. I could not shake my dream of being his full-time caregiver. I've gone back and forth a million times, fighting my heart and mind – my desire to help improve finances and other goals our family has.

My husband is a Firefighter/EMT so he is gone for over 24 hours at a time. *His schedule is weird!* My husband is also in Paramedic school, and pursuing some passions that God has instilled in his big heart. It has been amazing to see, but I also questioned why that was not happening to me. ***Why is my heart longing to be at home?*** *I went to school for an MA in Crisis Counseling for a reason, RIGHT?*

Finally, over the last few months, listening to our Pastor's sermons (which have always been ON POINT with what battles I've been fighting) and having the opportunity to explore some other things I can do and want to do while still caring for my son, **it has become apparent that my identity crisis has been based on what people think of me.** To win the approval of others. *The nod of "success."*

***Our society focuses so much on career and financial success that it has truly been a horrendous emotional and spiritual battle for me. I want people to think I***

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*am successful. I want the approval of people close to me. I want people to think I am doing something that matters.*

***Here's the thing – whether you are a full-time mom or NOT, what you are doing DOES matter. If you are busy changing diapers, making bottles, washing miniature baby clothes, or scrubbing baby food off the door (my son was and IS a food slinger), know that your job is important.***

- ***If you have to work outside the home, what you are doing MATTERS.***
- ***If you are a single mom, girl – you are a superhero!***

***Parenting is not a task we should take lightly or for granted – we are raising future doctors, lawyers, teachers, and first responders. We are teaching them about Jesus, opening their inquisitive minds to the world, and helping them prepare to navigate through life. What a task!***

**Here are 5 steps I invite you to take *with me* as we embrace the chaos of Mommyhood:**

### **1. Appreciate Your “New Normal”**

My previous definition of normal was going to work for 8-10 hours a day, hitting the gym, and then coming home, going to bed and getting 7-8 hours of sleep. Now, my “normal” is *always a surprise (thankfully I like surprises... 😊)*. My son likes things one day that he hates another. Sometimes he wakes up 3 times during the night and sometimes he doesn't. He is definitely an adventure – I am always being tested in a new way, learning something new, or having to fall on my knees and ask the good Lord for patience because it is wearing thin at 9:00 a.m. **My new normal is always changing and God is using Liam to help strengthen me mentally, physically, and spiritually.**

***My new “normal” is also baby kisses and snuggles, sword fights, making firetruck noises, trying to be creative because my son is a picky eater, reading picture books, singing songs I had long forgotten, and letting my heart strings become more attached to this little life that God has so richly blessed me with. I would not trade it for the world.***

### **2. Realize It Won't Last Forever**

*Lord-willing*, the food slinging, temper tantrums, and booger picking won't last forever. There are difficult tasks that we, as mothers, must face daily. Discipline, sick babies, and being hit with toys in the face are all part of the phases of raising a child. While some days we hate the lack of sleep we get,

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there are also nights that I am hoping my son wakes up and wants to snuggle.

***The days might be long, but in the overall scheme of life, we will miss those moments.***

***Embrace the late night cuddles and try not to let the food throwing and temper tantrums bog you down and leave you feeling defeated.***

I hardly ever use the bathroom without Liam trying to sit on the bathroom floor to keep me company. But, *one day*, it will be difficult to get a hug and a “goodbye, Mom!” because he is headed to school, work, or to his girlfriend’s house (insert ugly cry here). I try to remind myself of this when I am hoping for a peaceful shower or trip alone to the bathroom.

***Enjoy the now – whatever that looks like for you.***

### **3. Establish a Support System**

I quickly learned that it is instrumental to have a support system in place – someone you can call when life is extremely difficult. Someone who will bring you a delicious, caffeine-filled coffee when you are on the verge of tears and you are so tired that your eyelids won’t stop twitching (*thanks, Mom!*).

I am so thankful for the support we received from family and friends. For those who brought meals and goodies when we brought Liam home from the hospital and while he was still so little I did not want to take him too many

places. For those who encouraged me when I felt as though my emotions had been trampled on, and for those people you can admit, “Man, this parenting thing is a lot harder than I anticipated!”

**Find your support system. Find people you can encourage and people who will encourage you. It is also important to have “parent” friends, people who understand that you can’t go out late at night because babies thrive in their routines. People who understand that sometimes children do scream in public places and that does not mean you are a bad parent. *Children are unpredictable.***

#### **4. Find Time for Self-Care**

I remember the day we brought Liam home from the hospital so vividly - I was vacuuming and cleaning and trying to keep everything “perfect.” Boy, did this attribute to my fatigue and intense feelings of failure in the very beginning. I felt that as a new full-time mom, I could never stop for a minute and take time for myself. I felt that I needed to get things done constantly. I felt guilty for wanting to have some time to myself.

While this is something I am still working on, I am slowly learning the importance of self-care. To be the best YOU for your husband and children, *it is okay to take time to pray, meditate, take a hot bath, read your Bible, write/journal, bake, or workout.*

**Find what rejuvenates you! Running and cleaning have always been very therapeutic for me, but that is definitely not the case for everyone, and that's perfectly fine. *Take care of you too, momma!***

### **5. Embrace the Chaos & Make Memories**

I named my blog, “Beautiful Chaos,” because I believe there is something so spectacular about finding beauty in the mundane. To find the beauty in simplicity and learn to appreciate every single day – whether it's simple or chaotic. *Too often, we believe that for life to be extraordinary, we have to constantly buy new things, travel all the time, and give our kids the most expensive brand of everything.*

**There is something so beautiful about giggling in a tent that you make in the living room, star-gazing, chasing fireflies, and learning to appreciate the beauty of a moment. I pray that you and your family can find the beauty in every moment – the lessons learned from the tear-filled moments, the ones where you fall on your knees asking for patience, and the ones where you laugh so hard you almost pee on yourself (*hello, mommy bladder!*).**

***I pray that as you continue this adventure of motherhood – you learn that the mother you are is the exact mother that your child needs. So, embrace the chaos and enjoy the journey!***

***Stay tuned for additional resources for moms coming to [lizzychristian.com](http://lizzychristian.com).***