

Thank you for your Messy House

I recently visited a friend's house with five children. As I arrived for a morning coffee she was frantically vacuuming. She had left for the school drop off in a rush, and clothes were still strewn through the hallways and toothbrushes and toothpaste smeared the bathroom (pretty much what my house looks like too before I do a morning tidy up, and I only have three children and a husband who doesn't leave quite so early for work!). She didn't mind though, and I felt honoured to be allowed into her 'real' world. Sometimes saying yes to a lovely morning coffee with friends is just too much if to you that also means having to create a perfect house.

As another close friend arrived she stepped into the kitchen to help out and 'join' in with the household and two preschoolers at home. This particular friend is great at that. If I'm cooking dinner when she arrives, she picks up a grater. If I visit her house, she carries on folding her washing and cooking dinner while we chat. She makes me feel like we can be part of each other's' chaos and daily lives, rather than presenting perfect fronts which I am prone to do. It almost feels like the 'village' that makes family life seem so much easier, but modern life makes hard to find.

While I'm not suggesting never cleaning your house, it did strike me that it is pride that makes me reluctant to present a less than perfect front. Often my children make me feel quite anxious, because I can't control their every action and make it perfect, and for someone who's a perfectionist by nature that's hard! The inevitable daily mess of life with children is also hard, one that has only become harder with the recent addition of our third because there are so many jobs I just never seem to be able to get to now.

However, if I'm honest about my ever-growing list, a lot of the stuff on there is pretty unimportant compared to making the time to enjoy my children; my fast-changing six month old who was only a newborn a moment ago, my three and a half year old who is on the verge of 'little boy' and my almost six year old who is becoming more mature every day. It would be a shame to miss it in a storm of anxious tidying up.

So thank you for your messy house, and for letting me into your 'real' life. If I can get over my pride, I will try to do the same.

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