



### CHAPTER 7: WHEN A MOTHER FEELS GUILTY


We would probably all agree that guilt is part of the territory of being a mum. It's hard to live up to all the expectations that others may put on you as a mum and it's easy to feel guilty when you'd don't meet those high expectations. As Rob suggests on page 83, *"Motherhood is a risky business because mothers get blamed for the ills of the world."* The hope is that as you work through this chapter you can put any guilt that you may be feeling into perspective.

 Before you begin, note down anything that you found helpful in this chapter.


#### 1. Guilt comes with the territory

*"Guilt is an occupational hazard; learn to live with it – it comes with the placenta."* (Page 14).


 What sort of things do you feel guilty about as a mum?


 What are some other things that mums might feel guilty about?

#### 2. The pressure of expectations


 What do you think of the suggestion that expectations are different for mothers now than in previous generations?

#### 3. The pressure of isolation


 Sharing your doubts and concerns about your children with others can be helpful. How do you feel about doing this?

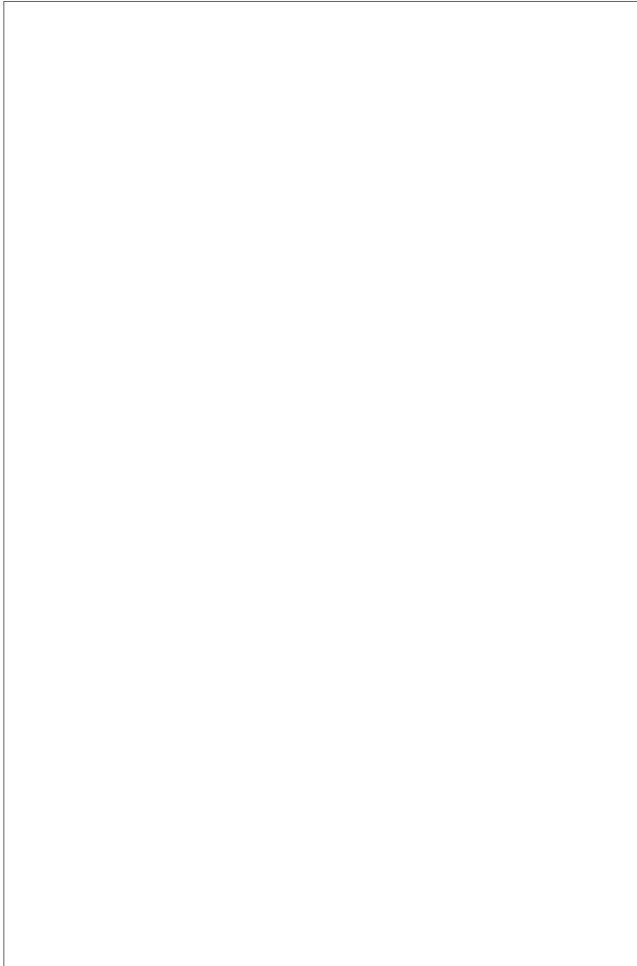
 Who do you think you'd feel comfortable sharing your doubts and concerns with?



 Dianne found one poster to be particularly inspirational (page 89). What kind of image or slogan would you find useful to lift your spirits and to help you positively face another day?




 Why not create an inspirational poster for yourself? You could perhaps use lyrics from a song or a helpful phrase, or draw a scene of motherhood that will encourage you when you look at it.




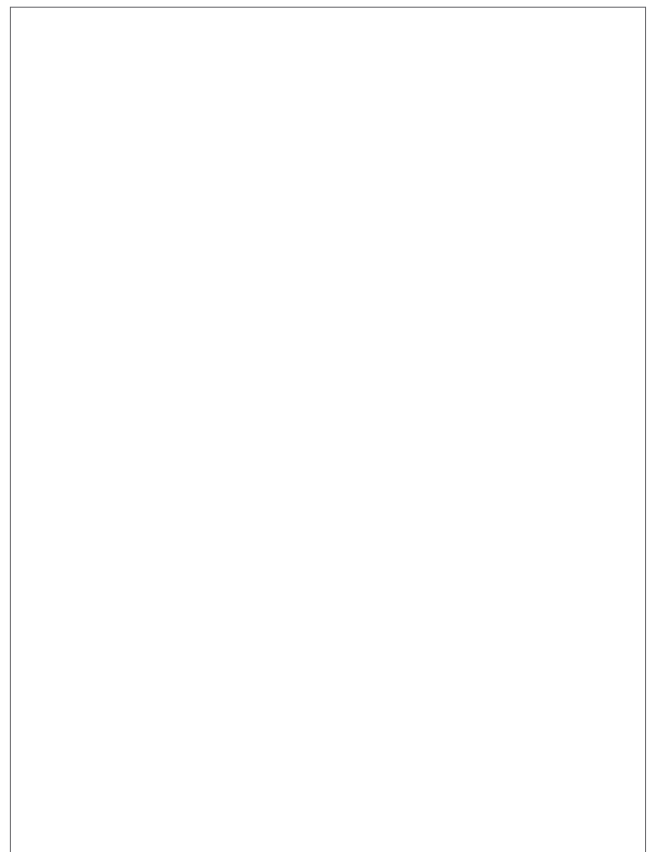
#### **4. The experts**

Sometimes expert advice can be particularly helpful, and at other times we simply need to find 'what works for us'.


 Have you ever tried to follow someone else's advice only to find it didn't work with your children, or that it works with one of them, but not the other? How did you find a solution? What did you do?




 Using what you learned from that situation, how would you reassure another mother struggling to find a solution to a challenging situation she's having with her child?



## 5. It would be a great job if it wasn't for the children


 If you have more than one child, describe their similarities and their differences.

 If you have one child, write about their character and what makes it easy to parent them and what aspects you find more challenging.

To end, spend a few minutes thinking about this quote below.

*"The truth is that each of these children is unique – and they can change. Try not to break your heart over the child who is testing you daily."*

*Somebody put it well: 'Don't read your child's school reports as though they are a prophecy of their future lives.' In other words, don't read the score at half-time."* (Page 96).

 How might this apply to your own family situation?

### Next time ...

We'll continue to look at Chapter 7 and reflect on the teenage years.

