

Katrina Alcorn

Speakers Kit

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About Katrina

Katrina Alcorn is a writer and experience design consultant. Her first book, **Maxed Out: American Moms on the Brink** was published in September 2013 with Seal Press/The Perseus Books Group. Her writing has appeared in many places including The Huffington Post, TIME.com, and The New York Times/Motherlode, and she has spoken at more than a dozen conferences internationally. She holds a master's degree in journalism and documentary filmmaking from UC Berkeley.

Alcorn can offer a unique perspective on stories that relate to the following topics: juggling work and family; why parents burn out; why businesses should care; women and health; and what's wrong with work and how to fix it.

She lives in Oakland, California, with her husband and three children.



“Mothers today are on the front lines of a deep dysfunction in society, trying to make up for the fact that there aren’t enough hours in the day to do everything that is now expected of us.”

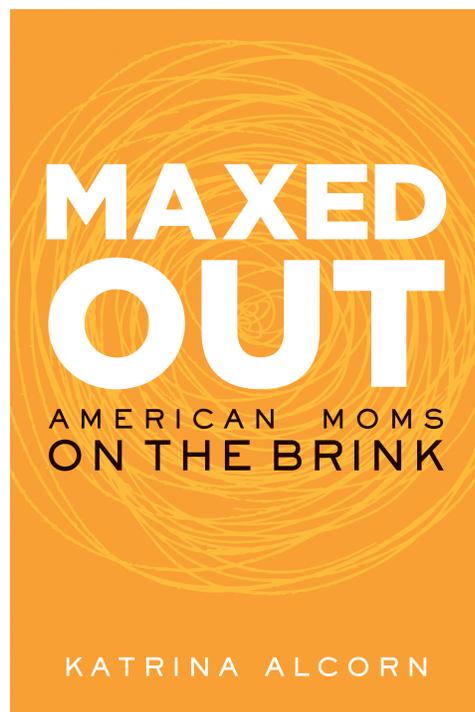
—from *MAXED OUT*,
Chapter 21

About the Book

MAXED OUT: American Moms on the Brink

Katrina Alcorn was a thirty-seven-year-old mother of three who had it all: a loving husband, healthy kids, and a dream job. Then one day, she simply stopped, the way a watch stops when the battery dies. She couldn't get her body to obey what her mind kept saying it should do. On Monday, she was giving a presentation to a potential new client. On Tuesday, she was at home on the couch, weeping, incapacitated.

Just like that, her carefully built career shuddered to an end, and a year-long journey through depression, anxiety, and insomnia began. As she learned over many months to heal her body and mind, she searched for answers to one question: [What the hell happened to me?](#)



She started talking to the other working moms she knew, and found out that many of them, too, were teetering on the line between “everything’s fine” and “total collapse.” Whether they were attorneys, social workers, web designers, or academics, they, too, were barely getting through their days.

MAXED OUT tells a deeply personal story about “having it all,” failing miserably, and what comes after. Along the way, Alcorn weaves in surprising research about the dysfunction between our work and home lives, and the consequences to women’s health. Mothers are the breadwinners in two-thirds of American families, and yet, as Alcorn explains, the American workplace is uniquely hostile to the needs of parents. Ultimately, she offers readers a vision for a healthier, happier, and more productive way to work and live.

More at maxedoutbook.com

“This is important, even essential, food for thought. We have to stop and take stock of our lives. We have to make sure that if it all ended tomorrow, we would feel right about the way we spent our time. That’s the conversation this book wants to start.”

—**Kelly Corrigan**—*New York Times* bestselling author of *The Middle Place* and *LIFT*

Media Interviews

Katrina Alcorn is available for interviews about her personal journey from a “maxed out” working mom to happily self-employed mom.

She has been interviewed for radio, television, and print media, including:

- The Washington Post
- The New York Times
- Business Week
- TODAY.com
- MSNBC’s “The Cycle”
- CBS National News
- CSPAN BookTV
- CNN Money
- Canada’s Globe & Mail
- Detroit Free Press
- The San Francisco Chronicle
- National Geographic
- Diablo Magazine

“This is a deeply important story told by a highly gifted writer. So many working mothers are living in ‘emotional debt’ these days that this book is bound to strike a chord.”

—**Arlie Hochschild**—prize-winning author of *The Second Shift* and *The Time Bind*.

Speaking Topics

Katrina Alcorn has spoken at more than a dozen conferences internationally, including the Web 2.0 Expo and The Commonwealth Club. She is available to speak at conferences and corporate events. Her personal story — of maxing out as a full-time working mom — provides the backdrop to these and other topics. She can speak on the following five topics, or to tailor her talk to suit the needs of your particular conference or event.

Popular Topics

1. **Lessons from a Burned Out Working Mom**

Job burnout is a growing problem, but few people are will to discuss it openly. When it happened to Alcorn, she thought it was the end of everything: her well-being, her career, and her identity as a can-do person. But after years of writing and soul-searching, she's discovered that burnout has forced her to change in positive ways. This talk is about learning to give up the idea that you can please everyone, how to set better boundaries at work, and most importantly, how to honor your own time. It is a call to arms for women to take back our quality of life, and find ways as a society to share the joys and difficulties of caregiving.

Themes: Personal growth, feminism, women's health

Who's it for? Women, parents, anyone who cares about wellness

2. **Work & Family: A Public Health Pandemic?**

The U.S. has been called the most family-hostile nation in the developed world. Women, in particular are becoming psychically "maxed out" in their attempt to work and care for family. This is having a serious impact on our collective health. Alcorn shares her darkly humorous odyssey with medication and psychiatry after burning out. By weaving in research and anecdotes from other women, she reports from the front lines of this unfolding public health crisis. Her story illustrates the limits of medication in curing a cultural ill, and will inspire the audience to look for healing in unexpected places.

Themes: Public health, women's health, limits of modern medicine, job stress

Who's it for? General public, health care professionals

3. **Why the New Math Is Making You Crazy**

Some are calling it the new math, but it doesn't add up. 2 parents = 3 full-time jobs. School gets out at 2:45 PM, but parents don't get out of work until 6. Women are encouraged to breastfeed for 1 year, yet the U.S. doesn't have guaranteed paid parental leave for even 1 week. Young children get sick 8-11 times per year, (per child!), but half of American workers have zero sick time, even for themselves. Alcorn's main message to women: If you're not making the numbers add up, it's not your fault. This talk is a reality check, and a gentle call-to-arms for women to honor themselves and take back their time.

Themes: Working parents, personal growth, feminism

Who's it for? Women, parents

4. Lean In or Push Back?

Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook, sparked a national discussion with her advice that women need to “lean in” to their careers. But many of us have leaned in too far, and its making us sick. In this talk, Alcorn will speak from personal experience about the dangers of “leaning in,” namely, burnout. She will argue that women are doing more than their share at home, and that society has benefitted too long from our free labor. She will explain what’s at stake for us all, and how men, managers, and policymakers, can lean in.

Themes: Workplace culture, business leadership, work-life policies

Who's it for? General public, women, business leaders, policymakers

5. Who Are You Calling ‘Family-Friendly’?

Many companies boast they’re “family-friendly” in an attempt to attract talented female workers. But few companies really deliver on that vague “family-friendly” promise. Alcorn draws from real women’s stories along with her own experiences burning out at a so-called “family-friendly” company. She will walk through specific examples of how company policies fall surprisingly short of what women need to be healthy, productive workers. The talk will end with a new definition of family-friendly. Managers and HR professionals will walk away with practical suggestions to to transform the workplace that don’t cost a lot, and may actually save the companies money and increase profits.

Themes: Management, business benefits, human resources

Who's it for? Business leaders, HR, employees who want to change the workplace

Contact

Media interviews & speaking engagements

To schedule a media interview or book Katrina Alcorn to speak at your event:

Call (510) 393-8530

Email katrina@workingmomsbreak.com

Other ways to connect

Blogs

- workingmomsbreak.com
- huffingtonpost.com/katrina-alcorn/

Facebook

- [facebook.com/workingmomsbreak](https://www.facebook.com/workingmomsbreak)

Twitter

- twitter.com/kalcorn

“It’s crazy to put working parents in situations where they’re bound to go crazy and then act like there’s something wrong with them for going crazy.”

—from *MAXED OUT*, Chapter 23