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## A Break In Routine

WRITTEN BY VIVIENNE PEARSON | 24 OCTOBER 2012

**Vivienne Pearson finds positives in the unexpected after her daughter suffers a nasty fall.**

My three-year-old daughter fractured her collarbone after an awkward fall out of bed. This sort of event is unlikely to be remembered within any family as a positive experience. Therefore, as someone who tends towards pessimism and has a low threshold for feeling overburdened, it was a complete surprise to me that, on balance, I found it exactly that.



I should say straight up that the pain my daughter experienced was not positive. However, when the fall occurred, we didn't realise how serious the injury was and we managed to get her comfortable enough to go back to sleep. Therefore, the first positive emotion after the fall was sheer relief. We were able to wait until the light of day to start the rounds of doctor's and X-ray appointments and were grateful, both for her and us, that we had avoided a painful trip to emergency and a sleepless night of waiting and testing.

The next positive was my daughter's resilience, which was completely unexpected. My daughter is a drama queen – prior to this, a minor fall would usually see her upset for well over an hour. She has never allowed me to inspect an injury without screaming, and even a slight scratch would cause everyone substantial grief until it had fully healed. I don't know why this situation was different, but she was calm and stoic through the whole ordeal.

She did continue with her tradition of refusing interventions and wouldn't accept pain medication or a sling (even a fairy-decorated one). But she made these decisions calmly, accepted the implications and agreed to revisit them if needed.

She has always been a mummy's girl and previously would have stood up in court to declare that her mum is more nurturing and calming than her dad. But it was her dad who mastered the art of helping her with the tricky move of lying down without pain, and suddenly he was king. I was pretty sure I could learn his technique, but I was not allowed to, and my hubby enjoyed his time in the sun.

Another positive was the kind response she had from others. After the first few days at home, we started tentative trips to preschool. The other kids were gorgeous in their care of her, and this gave my shy daughter a new connection with her peers.

The final positive came a week after her fall, when we decided to continue with a long-planned outing to a country show. This was not without trepidation, especially with a forecast for a very hot day. However, my daughter agreed to wear her sling and we were going with another family, so we knew we'd have a few extra hands to help.

My daughter knew she would not be able to participate fully in the show, but as well as seeing the animals, we promised to find her a ride that was gentle enough to keep her arm protected. To everyone's immense disappointment, there was no ride sedate enough. As we reached the stage when everyone was hot, tired, broke and ready to leave, my daughter understandably started to get upset. One last-ditch attempt to find something suitable resulted in a horse-and-carriage ride that miraculously met every need: it was smooth, free, fitted everyone in and took us on a shady trip away from the crowds around the interesting back blocks of the show. It was unanimously declared the best part of the day. My



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daughter thoroughly enjoyed her ride and was proud that it had been a hit with everyone else.

Her collarbone healed, the fairy sling joined the dress-up box and we lowered her bed. Unfortunately, her drama-queen qualities returned, but I was changed by the experience and am now more likely to see positives even in unexpected events.

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