

The book cover features a light beige background with several abstract, organic shapes in muted colors. In the top left, there is a light orange shape. In the top right, there is a light green circle. In the bottom right, there is a larger, darker orange shape. The title is centered in a dark teal serif font.

# Touched Out, Talked Out

A Guided Workbook for Mothers  
Who Feel Overwhelmed by Closeness

by Mina Todorova

## **Welcome, Mother.**

If you are here, it means you are doing something brave.

You are noticing the discomfort, the exhaustion, the irritation. You are facing the truth that sometimes, you don't want to be touched, talked to, or needed—**even by the little one you love more than anything.**

This is a space for honesty without shame. A space to reconnect to yourself while still holding your child with care.

Let's begin.

# 1. Naming the Invisible: What's Really Happening?

The feeling of being “touched out” or “talked out” isn’t just mental. It’s deeply **physiological** and **emotional**.

When you're constantly on alert—responding to cries, demands, touch, mess, conflict—your nervous system stays in a prolonged state of **hyperarousal**. Over time, your body gets flooded with stress hormones, even in calm moments.

It’s not just your mind that’s tired.

**Your entire system is overstimulated.**

## **Reflection Prompt:**

Think of the last time your child touched you and you recoiled.

What had already happened that day? How long had you been “on”?

## 2. Repetition Isn't Just Noise: What Toddlers Are Really Doing

That same question over and over again.

"Can I have a banana?" (You already gave it.)

"Are we going to the park?" (You already said yes.)

"Mommy?"

"Mommy?"

"Mommy???"

It feels like *a slow erosion of your sanity*. But to your toddler, it's **regulation**.

Repetition:

- Builds predictability in an unpredictable world
- Reassures them of your attention
- Gives them emotional anchoring

Especially after overstimulation, separation, or disconnection (even minor), repetition is their way of **checking**: "**Are you still with me?**"

### Reflection Prompt:

When my child repeats themselves, what do I usually feel?

What happens if I pause and make full eye contact—just once?

### 3. When Closeness Feels Like Pressure

There's a myth that good mothers want to be physically close to their children at all times. But bodies need boundaries. Minds need space.

You might notice:

- Flinching when your child climbs onto you
- Irritation at their voice, even when they're asking nicely
- Feeling like you'll *scream* if you hear "Mama" one more time

This isn't a lack of love.

This is a signal: **Your system needs reprieve.**

**Reflection Prompt:**

When I crave solitude, what do I fear will happen if I take it?

## 4. Why Haven't I Built Structural Replenishment?

You *know* you need rest. So why haven't you built it into your day?

Here are some deeper emotional reasons that might resonate:

- **"I should be able to do it all."**  
(Perfectionism, often rooted in early survival strategies.)
- **"No one ever gave me rest—so I don't know how to claim it."**  
(Unmet needs in your own childhood.)
- **"If I stop, the guilt will swallow me."**  
(Internalized mothering standards, cultural or familial.)
- **"I don't know who I am when I'm not needed."**  
(Identity enmeshed in care.)

None of these are faults. They are *wounds that need tending*.

### **Reflection Prompt:**

What is my earliest memory of asking for space—or being denied it?

What beliefs did I inherit about rest, worth, and mothering?

## 5. Your Child's Escalation Isn't Punishment

When you retreat, your child might escalate:

- Louder voices
- More touching
- Following you from room to room
- Repeating the same words more intensely

This isn't personal. It's **attachment biology**.

They sense distance, and their instincts scream: "**Get closer!**"

But this doesn't mean you're wrong to step back.

### **Practice:**

Tell your child, "I love you and I will be back when this timer rings."

Leave a comfort object or drawing. Trust that *consistency teaches security*.

### **Journal Prompt:**

What happens in my body when my child protests separation?

What happens when I allow both our truths to exist at once?

## 6. Realistic Tools for a Tired Nervous System

These aren't Pinterest-perfect. They are **raw and doable**.

### For moments of overload:

- Put on calming music and lie down with your child silently.
- Hold a hot drink. Let your child stir or smell it—connect through shared quiet.

### For repeated questions:

- Answer *once* with presence and touch. Then gently say:  
“You already know the answer. Let’s say it together.”  
(Empowers them to hold the answer inside.)

### For boundaries:

- Create a soft visual routine:  
“When this candle is on, Mommy is having quiet time.”  
Light it every day at the same hour.

### Optional Worksheet Prompt:

Create your own "Sensory First Aid Kit"—what brings you down from overload?

Think: warm socks, peppermint tea, nature sounds, a locked bathroom door, 5 minutes of adult conversation.



## 7. Repair Without Guilt

You will lose your patience. You'll raise your voice. You'll brush away a little hand and instantly regret it.

The work is not to be perfect.

It's to **return**.

A gentle "I was overwhelmed and I'm sorry" teaches your child:

- Emotions are safe
- Parents are human
- Love includes repair

### **Journal Prompt:**

What would I say to my inner child if she felt rejected for needing too much?

Now say it to yourself.

## 8. Final Words from One Mother to Another

If your body is saying “**enough**”—it’s not betraying you.

It’s speaking for all the parts of you that went too long without being held, heard, or cared for.

You do not need to mother from depletion.

You can start small.

One pause. One boundary. One moment of breath before the answer.

You are not failing.

You are becoming more whole.

With care,

Mina