

A Mother's Love

What defines a mother's love? A mother's love begins when your child is conceived rather than when your child is born. The yearning to love your child occur every step along the way from womb through delivery, infancy through toddler years, and beyond. Yes, it's busy times – juggling and juggling, coddling, no stone goes unturned from home to the workplace and back. Travel interspersed, busy days and schedules vary. Extended family and/or nannies may help balance the work/life shuffle and keep the babies at bay when life seems unpredictable and unmanageable at times, and only the child does not know the toll you invest with their best interests at heart! You never stop caring, thinking about them, to ensure they are loved, provided for and their needs tended to day after day, week after week, as they begin their journey in life.

What goes into it? Long hard days, busy days, prepped and planned meals, cooked family dinners, then, repeated – laundry just the same. The household rituals are never done. The wonderful, playful memories we have with our children stay with us forever. Playdates, family pets, school schedules, doctor appointments, child illnesses and then the stressors, injuries, recoveries, etc. and the enthusiastic sounds and sights of your child's smile when you come home from work, attend a sport or educational event, go on family vacation, or simply put them to sleep at night. The joys, the hugs and love we share as one family. The repetition in our lives filled with fond memories each and every day is the 'life of a Mom'.

Then, as a child grows and perhaps the family grows, our children become independent. We tend to set them free as a butterfly and focus on our lives. Some of us are sleep deprived as we focus on our children. And while we juggle parenting challenges and life stressors that may cause pain and heart ache from relationships gone sour, our health takes a toll. We try to set ourselves free like a butterfly too but it is not as carefree as without children. We awaken to life's reality. We do a self-check-in on ourselves. Our decision to put children's happiness first and foremost, over our own, is a mother's natural instinct and priority always.

After several years of family repair and anguish, continued disappointment and dismay, we wake up to disbelief that Mom's cannot change the world. Moms cannot change other's behaviors especially if our partners are not willing to change themselves – not for me or even for the special lives we were lucky enough to bring into this world together. So the pain wakes you up, over and over again, and continues, then, we shift our focus and pain in different directions. We place our energy into work and avoid confrontation while tackling separation then divorce, and life's new challenges dealing with cancer. A little hope and inspiration with renewed vows for longed love, we postpone and procrastinate these important life decisions and decide to place life on hold for a while to deal with health issues. However, after continued deceit, abandonment, years of verbal abuse, alcoholism and infidelity, well, we make our final decision to proceed with the final divorce once again. Yes, it may be the second time around, but we know it's the right decision for all of us.

Shortly thereafter, more grief and despair from corporate unemployment, co-parenting kicks in, more post-cancer surgeries, several complications which follow – and reality, as a single Mom. OMG! What the heck just happened?! Reality does settle in fast. Thank goodness we are overjoyed with our kids and have strength, perseverance, promise to succeed, resilience, and a clear vision to move on. Our children make us smile every day and we take one day at a time with patience.

Life can be lonely. We are alone and know that we can do this now -- for our children, for ourselves - - a mother's love perseveres. A mother's love never ends.

New adventures thru pre-teen and teenage years, young adult to adult years, we are there for them always. We rise to the occasion, carpool and coach, as parents often do. Show and exemplify respect for one another. Our jobs as parents and teachers continue, life coaches by day and night. Our children are first and foremost on our minds and on our agenda. As they age, we get older while their family, social, work and life priorities change. We continue to show love, devotion and support. We try not to pass judgment and weigh in and provide constructive feedback. Sometimes, we have to be a good cop or bad cop to get the job done, but it always gets done. That's the life of a Mom, always nurturing.

We may not always be on the same page. We may be on the receiving end but we know they are in our hearts all the time. Some day when they have their own children, we hope and pray they too will learn what it's like to be a Mom or Dad, to love one another, to have the utmost respect for one another. Then one day, they will learn, we were always there for them.

It's not about forgiveness, it's about the greatness! When my father passed, I wrote a eulogy about the Good and the Greatness he brought to our family. I can only hope that my children will see the same in all that continues to flourish in the greatness of our family, together, now and always.

A mother's love lives on forever.

This story is dedicated to my two beautiful children who are equally loved. Love, Mom Xoxo

Here is a passage from a book my mother shared with me (in 1999) after my second child was born. I'd like to share this story with you. It touches upon a time in my life during the early years when I struggled to find contentment in my marriage and the ongoing hardships to keep the faith. This story reads as follows and is called "Hugs for Mom—Inspiration", stories, sayings, and scriptures to encourage and inspire love by John William Smith.

"When it comes to matters of eternity, moms have a special sense. Somehow moms can see beyond disheveled hair, freshly torn jeans and smudged faces. Moms can look into the tearful eyes of an unhappy two year-old or the questioning eyes of a moody teenager and see not only what is – but what can be.

As you interact with your children in your daily routines – routines that may seem mundane and far removed from eternity – remember that you are imparting a sense of something much bigger than the here and now. You are imparting seeds of faith. As your children watch you react to sadness, joy, tragedy, success, and failure, they begin to learn what it means to have faith in something beyond themselves.

Your gentle reassurance when things go wrong, your unfailing confidence in the face of apparent failure, your ability to trust God when life seems to be falling apart – these responses give faith structure and meaning. You are the “embodiment” of faith – faith “with skin on.”

Every new day presents opportunities to pass on little bits of your faith – little bits of eternity. Enjoy a beautiful sunset together and remind your children of the God who made it. Use the death of a loved one to talk about heaven. When hearts get broken or dreams fall apart, remind them that God holds the key to real happiness and that he is the rebuilder of hopes and dreams. When uncertainty clouds their vision, lead them to their knees in prayer – pray with them often and about everything. When Satan wins a battle, wrap your arms around them, gently embrace confidence back into them, and tell them of God’s unconditional love – a love that will love them no matter what.

When it comes to matters of eternity . . . moms have a special sense.”

