

IS MOTHERHOOD FOR YOU?

Want Children? — Don't know?
End The Indecision Now!

3 Critical Decision-Making Secrets...

...that will help unlock the confusion and help you get crystal clear on one of the most important decisions you'll ever make in your life.

DO YOU EVER WONDER IF MOTHERHOOD IS FOR YOU?

Do you ever ponder the following questions?

- Is motherhood a calling in life?
- Is being a mother something you were meant to be?
- Is becoming a mother something you should or shouldn't be?
- Is motherhood something you are just supposed to do?
- Is becoming a mother something you're only supposed to do if you have that "I want to be a mommy," yearning feeling?

Your answers to these questions may have something to do with the direct or indirect messages you received growing up via your mother, parents, grandparents or society at-large. What if you want to be a mom but don't have that maternal feeling or yearning for it? What if you yearn for it but don't want it? Then what?

Now, please consider the possibility that motherhood is **ONLY** something you get to do if it's something you **REALLY** want to do. What if the only deciding factor is **YOUR** desire and **YOUR** decision alone? *What if it's truly about what you want and not about anything other than that?*

Well, hopefully that sounds quite good to you. However, it's only going to sound quite good to you if you know what you want to do about parenthood! It's not going to sound exciting if you don't know whether or not you want children. So...

Do you want to be a mother or do you want a childfree life?

If you don't know the answer to this question and you've been struggling with indecision for any length of time then continue reading...

It's likely that you've been in some kind of turmoil about this for a while. Not knowing whether or not you want to be a mom or raise children or have children is upsetting on many levels. It's not a fun state to experience. No one chooses NOT to know for the fun of it. You probably avoid thinking about it because it's too painful or you just hope that when this or that falls into place you'll know your decision. Or you hope it'll just go away or that it'll resolve itself over time.

I'd like to share with you *3 critical decision-making secrets* that will help you move in the direction of making a decision. The following ideas may seem contrary to popular belief or just plain counter-intuitive. Hopefully this new knowledge will offer you some ease, as *not knowing* has been no cakewalk! It can feel quite lonely and torturous at times. I know because I've spent 1000's of hours over 25 years listening to the pain and tears of women who've struggled with not knowing whether or not they want children or to be a mother.

I've helped women move from confusion to clarity by guiding them step-by-step using the original **Motherhood-Is it for me?**™ program. Denise L. Carlini and I created this program in 1991. Since then countless women and men (Fatherhood-Is it for me?™) have been guided to clarity.

Before I point out these 3 secrets that get in the way of deciding I want you to understand the approach **Motherhood-Is it for me?** takes regarding decision-making about this issue. Before you can make a decision, you have to know first what you *want* or what you *desire*. A decision can be considered after that, but not before your own desire is known with crystal clarity. Desire and decision have to be teased apart. Discovering your desire is a different process from thinking about your decision, and they have to be looked at separately. In the program we go into depth about how to do this. I mention it so you have a context for what you are about to read.

The following 3 concepts all play a part in you *discovering your desire* about motherhood. As I stated, your desire has to be figured out **first** before you can entertain a decision. If you try to do both at the same time your mind will freeze and you'll experience gridlock and stay stuck.

These *3 decision-making secrets* were chosen to share with you so that you can learn to identify these common difficulties in the moment they are happening. They all overlap at times, but looking at each separately will provide the most clarity. Once identified, you can follow through with the recommendations offered in each section and disengage from what is not helpful and begin *doing something that will actually make a difference!* You'll be able to mute the noise of your unhelpful mind that is keeping you stuck and turn up the volume of a mind that is systematically moving in the direction of clarity.

SECRET #1

“Thinking harder isn’t going to get you the answer faster.”

There’s a common belief that if you can’t decide, the problem lies with how you think about motherhood and that you’re just thinking about it wrong. It’s easy to believe the message that if you just focus better, the answer will come. But it’s just *not true* that if you crunch your forehead and think harder, you’ll figure it out! Not only is it not true, doing so will keep you from discovering the answers you want.

Of course, you’re not alone in believing, “I just have to focus.” Many women don’t know what they want when it comes to deciding about motherhood, despite strong messages from society that say women **should** have children. It can be confusing and some women feel bad for not knowing what they want. Some people may draw the conclusion that having indecision or confusion means a woman shouldn’t be a mom. (This is NOT an indicator that you should not be a mom. It’s only an indicator that you don’t yet know your heart’s desire.) Trying harder to think about it can be one strategy to attempt to stop feeling bad. Unfortunately, it just doesn’t work in the long run!

If you’re racking your brain over and over and not getting anywhere, there’s something else in the way of your knowing. The truth is, when you’re upset as a result of not knowing something that you so desperately want to know, you can assume there’s an emotional component that is not being addressed. Right now you may not know what that is, and thinking harder isn’t going to bring it to light. What is actually more likely is that you will *feel* your way to the answer, rather than think your way there. The information you want is in your heart, not your worried head. It’s like climbing a mountain and expecting to find a whale at the peak. It won’t happen. You’re looking in the wrong place.

What do you think will happen if you stop contemplating this issue and stop trying so hard to know? You’ll probably have some emotions surface that feel uncomfortable. Emotions of sadness or anger may surface. If that’s the case there’s nothing to do but breathe into the emotions and let them be in your body and heart. Breathe through them. That is the best thing you can do with emotions. They will move through you if you can be with them and not try to make them go away. And yes, it’s easier to say than to do. It’s uncomfortable but it’s nothing you can’t handle.

Succinctly said:

When you think about this question and you feel urgent or “gripped”- like you must know right now, this is your cue that you are off-course. No good comes from staying in this state of mind. Thinking harder won’t help. Do your best to disengage from the urgency and take a step back and accept that you don’t know and make peace with the not knowing. Assume there’s a good reason why you don’t know your desire and therefore have not yet made a decision on motherhood.

Recommendation:

Once you find yourself trying to think too hard or you feel gripped, take a deep breath down to your toes. Say to yourself, “The truth is, I don’t know the answer to this question today. However, I have known many things before and I will figure this issue out eventually. There is help available to me. I am not alone.” Then redirect your mind to what you do know. Make a list of the things that you do know to be true without having to think hard. Try to recall the times when you easily knew something was true; this will help you relax your mind. Don’t be surprised if when your mind is relaxed you may experience feelings of sadness or loss. If this happens see if you can let yourself be with the feelings without trying to do anything about them. It’s always good to write when feeling emotional. The writing helps process the feelings so they don’t stay churning inside of you.

SECRET #2

“Making a case for YES and a case for NO will keep you stuck.”

Please don't get me wrong. Lists of pros and cons are not all bad. The idea that you make a list of the pros and cons about motherhood, see a visual representation of which list is longer, and then go with the longer list *can* make sense. This is not a bad idea. That is...if it works. However, once you're doing this for the third or fourth or umpteenth time and it's not bringing you the clarity you're searching for, then it's not working. Doing it one more time is *not* the solution.

I want to speak to two reasons why making a case for YES and making a case for NO when you're already feeling anxious or worried or upset actually keeps you stuck. The First reason is because when you're making your lists you're focused on what you already know, not on what you don't know. Obviously you can't already know what you don't know! When you keep the focus on what you do know over and over again you don't have access to new information that you may need that will help you know your heart's desire. There's no place new that will take you closer to knowing.

The second reason is about the function the list making serves. Continuing to make a case for yes and a case for no keeps you away from feeling the pain of ambivalence. This may not be true for everyone, however I've found in the many years I've been working with people on this issue that making these lists feels more comfortable than sitting in the ambivalence. They don't want to feel the shame of not knowing. Certainly, there's no shame in not knowing! However, there are societal messages that say you should “just know.” **Ambivalence can feel far more uncomfortable than the frustration of being stuck in the rut of list making.** Even though the process of making these lists is getting you nowhere, at least you're not feeling the pain of ambivalence!

However, the upside of ambivalence if we can actually let ourselves feel ambivalent, we are open to new information. Opening to ambivalence and uncertainty is what allows us to move closer to our heart's desire. Do your best to make friends with the discomfort of not knowing and trust there are reasons you don't know yet.

At some point, **after** you've already done the work to uncover your desire about being a mom or not being a mom, your decision-making process may include looking at a list of YES to motherhood and a list of NO to motherhood. Again, if you're feeling any degree of frustration, torment, annoyance, irritation or being upset, because you don't know, then absolutely ***do not make a pros and cons list!*** At this point it will only sink you further into not knowing along with feeling worse about yourself. It is only when you feel relaxed, at peace, curious, and easy on the inside, combined with knowing your true heart's desire and ready to make a decision — **that** is the time it may be helpful!

Succinctly said:

Creating a case for YES followed by creating a case for NO will only create gridlock in your brain. The function it serves mostly is to protect you from feeling ambivalent. Ambivalence for many is very uncomfortable and most people will do just about anything to avoid the feeling. The problem is most women don't even know consciously they're avoiding the feelings of ambivalence because they're working so hard to figure out the answer! Basically, STOP making lists and let yourself be in that place of ambivalence or not knowing.

Recommendation:

When you're in a more relaxed state you're open to information coming your way. So, how do you make peace with ambivalence and not knowing and get in a more relaxed state? Make friends with the discomfort of not knowing. In fact, as nutty as it sounds actually decide to be ambivalent on purpose! Say to yourself, "At the risk of feeling uncomfortable, I'm deciding to be ambivalent. I want to make peace with this state of being before I do anything else. As soon as it doesn't feel so bad I may have access to more information that I haven't previously had access to." Also make a list of 5 to 10 decisions that you've previously made that you feel good about. Write a few sentences on each one describing the sensation of how good it felt to have known your truth and to have made the decision that felt right to you.

SECRET #3

“Judging yourself keeps you further away from knowing what you want to do.”

When we're in judgment of ourselves it is very difficult to think clearly! The painful truth is, you don't know whether or not you want to be a parent. It's also true that you are not to be blamed for not knowing. Certainly you are accountable for figuring it out, but that is very different than being blamed for having a struggle.

When you're feeling frustrated or beating up on yourself or worse judging yourself, it's almost impossible to figure out if you want to be a mom. If you're mad at yourself because you can't figure this out, you'll not find any answers. It would be preferable to be mad at the world than at yourself, in this case.

If you're judging yourself I'm sure it started outside of you first. Others have probably judged you for not knowing. Most people are not comfortable with ambivalence, so if you're experiencing ambivalence and you express it publically or even to a few close friends, you may be the recipient of someone else's discomfort in the form of criticism or sarcasm being directed at you. Judging yourself may sound like any of the following:

- **“I've always been a bad decision maker.”**
- **“I'm so selfish all I care about is my time to myself and my sleep.”**
- **“Everyone else seems to know, why can't I? What's wrong with me?”**
- **“Why am I the only one who can't decide?”**
- **“I'm such a loser?”**
- **“Why can't I just.....?”**

Even if you're chronically hard on yourself you can turn this behavior around with a little bit of help. Being hard on yourself isn't who you are inherently. Accepting that nothing is wrong with you will go a long way.

It's okay that you don't know. You may not agree with this statement or it may not feel good to read it. I can assure you it's true. If you're reading this, it's likely you've been searching for answers for some time. Well, now it's time to breathe, accept that you don't know, and know that you're going to be okay. The answers will come to you even if they haven't come before. I can say this with confidence, because I've seen the answers come to so many I've worked with as they let go of the struggle and embrace the ok-ness of not knowing. That's the starting point. You may need help discovering your true desire and it's fine to get help with this, contrary to popular belief. Stop thinking so hard. Breathe and accept that you don't know.

Succinctly said:

It's not so easy to just stop judging yourself because someone says, "Stop judging yourself." It's important first to understand why that might be the case. Sometimes it's easier to be mad at yourself than to actually feel the sadness and loneliness of not being able to make this really important decision. It's not good or helpful for you to be in self-judgment. It would cause you pain to see someone you cherish judging themselves in the same way.

Recommendation:

When we're hurting and it's difficult to be with the pain, I find writing letters to be one of the best ways to slow emotions down and find some compassion inside for ourselves. Write a letter to you from you, from a place of compassion:

"Dear Self, I know it's been hard not knowing whether or not you want to be a mom. I'm sorry it has been hard. You're good and you deserve some compassion around this issue. It's a complicated one even on a good day. etc..."(and continue to write what the cost has been in not knowing).

Write from a place of compassion. The kind that is easy to show your best friend or someone you care about deeply. Think about the times you felt proud of yourself beginning from when you were very young and write them down.

In Closing:

All of these secrets are part of the first step toward knowing: accepting that you don't know AND doing that without any self-judgment of your own. I know this is easier said than done. **It's truly okay that you don't know.** You may not like the fact that you don't know and you may feel bad about it. There is a good reason you can't figure this out even if you don't know what that is. That is the key. Assume the reason you don't know is a good one. Right now, today, you don't need to know what that good reason is.

Don't think harder

Don't make a case for yes and one for no

Don't judge yourself

Do think about what you've done well

Do be okay with not knowing

Do remember the good meaningful decisions you've already made.

From this more relaxed place you're more likely to access new information that will help you know your true desire about motherhood. If you want to go deeper with these concepts about decision-making, everything that I've mentioned here is addressed in depth throughout the **Motherhood Clarity Course™** which is the core **Motherhood-Is it for me?** program, as well as much much more.

What you'll learn to do in this course is to focus on what your heart's desire is before you begin to think about a decision. Your hand will be held and you'll be guided step-by-step toward your heart's desire so that you can make a decision that feels right to you.

I hope something here was helpful to you. If you'd like a

FREE 20-minute "GetClarity" consultation

so that I can help you with your next step
toward knowing your truth about motherhood

contact me at

www.MotherhoodClarity.com

You might not be able to make a definitive decision today about motherhood!

However, the decision you can make today is to...

GET HELP
and
STOP
struggling alone!

Sincerely,

Ann Davidman

Motherhood Clarity Mentor

www.MotherhoodClarity.com