Famous People on Motherhood

**Mothers are fonder than fathers of their children because they are more certain they are their own. *(Aristotle)***

**The most important thing a father can do for his children is to love their mother. *(Henry Ward Beecher)***

**The mother's heart is the child's schoolroom. *(Henry Ward Beecher)***

**I suppose every child remembers some special virtue their mother has -- some piece of wisdom that has saved them from disaster or a word that made the path infinitely easier. I love my mother for all the times she said absolutely nothing. The times when I fell flat on my face, made a lousy judgment, and took a stand that I had to pay dearly for. Thinking back on it all, it must have been the most difficult part of mothering she ever had to do: knowing the outcome yet feeling she had no right to keep me from charting my own path. I thank Mother for all her virtues, but mostly for never once having said, “I told you so.” *(Erma Bombeck)***

**You spend a lifetime trying to get them off the ground. You run with them until you're both breathless. They crash. They hit the rooftop. You patch and comfort, adjust and teach. You watch them lifted by the wind and assure them that someday they'll fly. Finally they are airborne. They need more string and you keep letting it out. But with each twist of the ball of twine, there is a sadness that goes with joy. The kite becomes more distant, and you know it won't be long before that beautiful creature will snap the lifeline that binds you two together and will soar as it is meant to soar, free and alone. Only then do you know that you did your job. *(Erma Bombeck)***

**In 1935, e. e. cummings published a book of poetry with funds provided by his mother. The dedication went: “No Thanks to: Farrar & Rinehart, Simon & Schuster, Coward-McCann, Limited Editions, Harcourt, Brace, Random House, Equinox Press, Smith & Haas, Viking Press, Knopf, Dutton, Harper's, Scribner's, Covici, Friede.” All those publishers had rejected his manuscript. *(Washington Star)***

**It would seem that something which means poverty, disorder, and violence every single day should be avoided entirely, but the desire to beget children is a natural urge. *(Phyllis Diller)***

**When Mrs. John Bruce Dodd went to church on Mother's Day, she was not inspired. Though mothers were extolled, fathers were not even mentioned. For Mrs. Dodd, that just wouldn't do. She thought of her own father who sacrificed and worked to raise six children. Her dad, William Smart, was left with children aged three to 16 years when his wife died. Fathers deserved a special day too, she decided, and she was going to do something about it. In 1910 she spoke to the Spokane Ministerial Alliance to present her idea, and on June 19, the first Father's Day was celebrated. Local newspapers publicized the new holiday, and stores featured gifts appropriate for father. Young men wore roses to church that day, a red rose for a living father, or a white rose in memory of a deceased father. Mrs. Dodd spent the day in and out of her horse-drawn carriage as she distributed gifts to shut-in fathers. By the time Mrs. Dodd's father died in 1919, the day his daughter started in his honor was celebrated throughout the United States. By 1922, it was a nationwide observance in the U.S. and widely celebrated in Canada. *(Christian Clippings)***

**Thomas Edison’s tribute to his mother: I did not have my mother long, but she cast over me an influence that lasted all my life. The good effects of her early training I can never lose. If it had not been for her appreciation and her faith in me at a critical time in my experience, I would never likely have become an inventor. I was always a careless boy, and with a mother of different mental caliber, I would have turned out badly. But her firmness, her sweetness, her goodness, were potent powers to keep me on the right path. My mother was the making of me. The memory of her will always be a blessing to me. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**If pregnancy were a book, they would cut out the last two chapters. *(Nora Ephron)***

**I think every working mom probably feels the same thing: You go through big chunks of time where you're just thinking. "This is impossible -- oh, this is impossible." And then you just keep going and keep going, and you sort of do the impossible. *(Tina Fey, actor, writer, director and mom)***

**In Little Man Tate, Jodie Foster plays a defiant single parent who encourages a gifted child. Foster says she directed and acted in the film “because I understood it so much.” Her mother had also been a single parent with an exceptional child. It takes a smart heart and the carapace of an armadillo to emerge sane, let alone healthy, from child celebrity. Thanks to a mother who urged and loved, rather than pushed and shoved, Foster did it. “My mother had seen a lot of wayward souls in Hollywood,” Foster recalls. “She didn’t want a cripple for a daughter. She wanted me to fly. She also wanted me to have a serious and heroic career. Mother listened to me and considered me her best friend. If it weren’t for me, she wouldn’t have anything; if it weren’t for her, I wouldn’t be anything.” *(Richard Corliss, in Time)***

**A man who has been the indisputable favorite of his mother keeps for life the feeling of a conqueror. *(Sigmund Freud)***

**Jane Goodall has spent the past 30 years in Africa as the world’s top authority on chimpanzees. Goodall recalls the support that helped get her started: When I decided that the place for me was Africa, everybody said to my mother, “Why don’t you tell Jane to concentrate on something attainable?” When I was two years old, I took a crowd of earthworms to bed to watch how they wriggled in the bedclothes. How many mothers would have said “Ugh” and thrown them out the window? But mine said, “Jane, if you leave the worms here they’ll be dead in the morning. They need the earth.” So I quickly gathered them up and ran with them into the garden. My mother always looked at things from my point of view. *(Newsweek International)***

**Syndicated columnist Ellen Goodman says her mother was the type "who listened to your problems until you were bored with them. *(Diane K. Shah, in Newsweek)***

**Holiday Inn founder Kemmons Wilson owes his $200 million fortune to his mother! “She told me I could do anything I wanted -- and she told me so many times that she finally convinced me.” *(The National Enquirer)***

**A father may turn his back on his child, brothers and sisters may become inveterate enemies, husbands may desert their wives, wives their husbands. But a mother’s love endures through all. *(Washington Irving)***

**Mom wouldn't let me say can't. “You can do anything if you put your mind to it,” she'd say. But she'd also do anything to help. *(Derek Jeter, shortstop for the New York Yankees)***

**Whatever else is unsure in this stinking dunghill of a world, a mother's love is not. *(James Joyce, in Elle)***

**When you are a mother, you are never really alone in your thoughts. A mother always has to think twice, once for herself and once for her child. *(Sophia Loren)***

**Joe Louis Barrow’s mother gave him money for violin lessons. She thought music would be an acceptable career for him as an adult. One afternoon, schoolmate Thurston McKinney asked Joe if he’d like to come and spar with him at the local gym. Joe took the 50 cents his mother had given him for the music lesson and rented a locker in which to stash his violin. McKinney was a local Golden Gloves champ, and when Joe almost knocked him out, McKinney exclaimed, “Get rid of that violin, boy! You belong in the ring!” Joe fought on the amateur circuit using his first and middle names so that his mother wouldn’t find out, but once he’d made a name for himself as the Brown Bomber, Mrs. Barrow gave her son her blessing. *(Jill Dorchester, in Tidbits)***

**Benito Mussolini, too, said all he was or ever hoped to be he owed to his wonderful mother. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Dikembe Mutombo, the towering center of the Houston Rockets, has donated more than $15 million to build a 300-bed hospital in his hometown of Kinshasa, the capital of Congo. Mutombo, who has been named the NBA’s Defensive Player of the Year four times, created a foundation for the effort in 1997 when his mother died; she couldn’t get to a hospital because civil war had closed the streets. The new facility, which will open next month, will be named for her. “I felt that building a hospital was the No. 1 way to change things,” Mutombo said, “where people can go and it is not a road to death but a road to return home.” *(The Week magazine, August 25, 2006)***

**Today, Marie Osmond is a devoted mother of eight – three biological kids and five adopted. But there was a time, says Richard Barber in the London Daily Mail, when motherhood became a burden too great to bear. Following the birth of her son Matthew, in 1999, Osmond succumbed to a case of postpartum depression so severe that she sometimes couldn’t get out of bed. One day, she walked downstairs and handed Matthew over to his nanny. “I can’t stay here,” I told her. “There is something terribly wrong with me.” With that, Osmond says, “I turned away from her, away from my life, and walked out the door. I have no idea how my feet carried me to the car. My body was racked with hysterical crying. I began to understand for the first time why a person would want to take their own life.” Filled with grief and sadness, she drove 250 miles and holed up in a motel. But soon, she was rescued by a phone call from her mother, Olive, who had raised nine children of her own. “I’m going to tell you something I’ve never told anyone,” said my mother. “I went through exactly the same thing when I had my last child.” “That’s my brother, Jimmy. Isn’t that extraordinary?” With medication and therapy, Osmond, now 50, recovered her equilibrium. But she’s not sure what would have happened had her mom not tracked her down. “That call,” she says, “helped me turn the corner.” *(The Week magazine, November 27, 2009)***

**My mother said to me, “If you become a soldier you’ll be a general; if you become a monk you'll end up as the pope.” Instead, I became a painter and wound up as Picasso. *(Pablo Picasso)***

**In 1954 Elvis Presley recorded a 10-minute demo at Sun Records in Memphis, TN.  He paid $4 to record 2 songs for his mother: “My Happiness” and “That’s When Your Heartaches Begin.” *(Bob Barry, in Daily Celebrity Almanac, p. 14)***

**The music world was stunned by the sudden death of Elvis Presley on August 16, 1977, when the King was found unconscious in his Memphis home. Only 42 years old, he was the same age his beloved mother (Gladys) had been when she passed away. *(Audrey Cunningham, in Tidbits)***

**What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery? Never to have known my mother or my grandmother. *(Marcel Proust, in 1892, at the age of 20)***

**I think, at a child's birth, if a mother could ask a fairy godmother to endow it with the most useful gift, that gift would be curiosity. *(Eleanor Roosevelt)*
California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger observed Mother's Day in his weekly radio address by recalling that when he was a boy his mother would carry him in a backpack over a mountain to visit the doctor. While the former movie star often talks about his father -- a police chief in his native Austria -- he rarely speaks about his mother, Aurelia, who died in 1998. He said her “unconditional love” was illustrated by the mountain treks she took when he was sick. “It was an hour and a half hike,” the Republican said Saturday. “But it didn't matter to her if it was snowing, or raining, or bitter cold. All that mattered to her was taking care of me.” *(Rocky Mountain News, May 9, 2005)***

**Motherhood is not for the fainthearted. Used frogs, skinned knees, and the insults of teenage girls are not meant for the wimpy. *(Danielle Steele)***

**It's clear that most American children suffer too much mother and too little father. *(Gloria Steinem)***

**A Mother’s Role: Despite her many professional accomplishments, Meryl Streep says she has always visualized herself as a mother first. When choosing roles, she keeps in mind her four children. “Everything we put out in my business leaves an imprint on kids who are way too young to be looking at much of the stuff that's out there,” Streep says. “Yet my kids want to see what they perceive as tough and edgy because edgy is the adjective of the day. All it is to me is depressing.” *(Matthew Gilbert, in Boston Globe)***

**The interesting thing about being a mother is that everyone wants pets, but no one but me cleans the kitty litter. *(Meryl Streep, in Vogue)***

**Actress Meryl Streep had this reply when asked about the possibility of winning a third Oscar: “I'd rather be voted mother of the year by my family, because nobody realizes that being a good mother is harder than making a movie. Being a housewife and a mother is much more difficult.” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**My mother had a great deal of trouble with me, but I think she enjoyed it. *(Mark Twain)***

**During the Revolutionary period, George Washington himself came very close to becoming a part of the British forces fighting against America. As a young man in his teens, he was determined to join the British Navy. He needed his mother's consent because of his young age, which she verbally gave. He made his way to the port, had his baggage placed on the frigate, and was trying to embark when it was discovered his mother had changed her mind and had refused to sign the papers allowing him to go. In all probability, as a member of the British Navy, he would have been fighting against America, instead of leading it to its independence. *(D. James Kennedy)***

**All women become like their mothers. That is their tragedy. No man does. That's his. *(Oscar Wilde)***

**There is no breathing human being on this plant (who) did not benefit by a woman saying yes twice: yes to make you, and yes to have you. *(Pharrell Williams, musician, in GQ)***

**Winfrey's maternal alternative: Oprah Winfrey has no regrets about not starting a family, said Lacey Rose in The Hollywood Reporter. The media mogul -- who grew up in poverty in Mississippi -- has always believed in putting her career first, and knew she'd never have enough time for children. "If I had kids, (they'd) hate me," says Winfrey, 59. (They'd have ended up on the equivalent of the Oprah show talking about me; because something (in my life) would have had to suffer, and it would've probably been them." But Winfrey has found a different outlet for her maternal instincts, by creating a girls' school in South Africa. She talks daily with the kids -- most of whom will become the first members of their poor families to go to college -- about everything from boy trouble to handling success. "When you're the most successful person in your town, everybody thinks you're the First National Bank," she says. Winfrey, who is reportedly worth $2,9 billion, learned that people's needs depended on what they thought she had. "It got to the point where nobody asked me for less than $5,000. I felt pressured for a long time to say yes because I (couldn't) lie and say I don't have it. My salary is printed in the paper." *(The Week magazine, December 27, 2013)***

**Good job! Continue to make movies of inspiration and humor! And always remember to help others. It is true with age comes wisdom. Love, Mom. *(Text Reese Witherspoon received from her mom the day after the Golden Globe Awards ceremony; she had been nominated for best actress, but didn't win)***

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