



I'm that Mom

A manifesto for mothering like it matters.

by Flo Gascon <http://flogascon.com>

Mothering matters.

Those of us who nurture know that there is no substitute for tender loving care. The daily acts of routine, rhythm, and response are what keeps the world spinning for our kids. Each day we're building the relationships that are the very center of our home, our lives. Every interaction is the basis for the attitude with which our kids will go forth. The choices we make, the words we use, the hands that hold, the love that we offer makes a difference that can be seen, felt and enjoyed. We literally hold the future in our hands.

Yet, our work as mothers is overlooked, diminished or unappreciated. Conventional wisdom often scoffs at us, mocks us or issues dire warnings and we may respond with our own defensive rejections. There's something missing from the conversation. Our voices are lost.

We can change that. Together in community and alone in our determination we can act mindfully. It's time to stop apologizing for the prioritization we give our mothering. The way we do it matters.

Mothers are powerful.

Whether we have jobs outside the home or not, the most work that provides the biggest opportunity for impact is in raising another human being. We can either make their lives full of wonder or lacking their own voice. Mothers carry a great responsibility and we seek information, solutions and alternatives to maximize happiness. We tend to not talk about all of the success we have in what we do; the millions of ways, large and small, that we enrich our children's lives by putting their best interests first. *Let's do that!*

Mindful parents use their powers for good and we do it much more frequently than we err. We make our kids' lives better with every bowl of ice cream we serve, every mile we drive, every interest we embrace, every comfort we offer even if it goes against the grain of common advice or tradition. With that we are making the world a better place, today and tomorrow.

Mothers create lineage.

Pitting parents against each other isn't helpful. It's not about who's doing it better or right. But do you know that there's another way?

That your relationship with your child doesn't have to be a tug 'o war?

That you don't have to be the bad guy to ensure they play by the rules in the game of life?

That you can be the kind, supportive mom you vowed to be when you first held your child?

That you can be a confident leader and loving confidante?

That you can create a space for your child to become who she's meant to be?

That you don't have to always know the answer because kids have their own ideas, too?

That you can step back sometimes?

That what you give comes back a hundred fold (and more)?

That you can let go of the authority and still be respected and consulted?

That you can be the touchstone from which your baby, toddler, child, teen, adult child will always draw trust, strength, guidance, and understanding as they navigate their lives?

That the sweetness of the newborn days can continue to be yours?

Yes. I'd like to share my guiding principles that have developed through intuition, experimentation and experience. These ideas are at the forefront of my interactions, my decisions, my conversations with my kids. I'm that mom I always wanted to be.

Do you know the kind of mom you want to be? I invite you to be that mom.

I'm that mom who
didn't buy it.

Child-rearing is for following the inner truths of
the child right in front of me

not the advice of educated strangers or even
well-meaning family and friends.

I'm that mom who
*recognizes the
beauty of her role.*

I can preserve her every freedom by opening the door to her life not closing her off behind one of regulation, institution or belief, no matter how sacred or patriotic.

I'm that mom who
*didn't become who
my culture raised me
to be.*

A life is for questioning, discovery, seeking, unfurling and turning away from ignorance, tradition, mores, and arbitrary rules that confine, restrict, mold and negate.

I'm that mom
*who decided to trust
and found it led to
deeper trust.*

Living from the inside out means embracing possibility rather than wondering about failure.

I'm that mom who
*protects her child from
bullies, pressure, and
harmful rhetoric and
standards.*

Life is meant for reveling in self not shaking in a shell.

I'm that mom who
*lives in a home that
is not spotless*

and is proud when the builders say how glad they are to see someone living in the house they built.

A home is for playing in not for staging an illusion.

I'm that mom who
*lets her kids explore
without checking up
on them constantly.*

The world is a place to be lived in not for
cowering in fear and peering around every
corner.

I'm that mom who
*doesn't take things
away from her
kids.*

Toys, video games, cell phones, and all personal effects are for enjoying not vehicles for threatening and punishing.

I'm that mom who

*prepares food
throughout the day
without complaining.*

Meals are for savoring not for shaming.

I'm that mom who
*lets her kids eat
according to their
body's cues.*

Food is for exploration, experimentation, and
enjoyment not for guilt.

I'm that mom who
*doesn't tell her
child to suck it
up.*

Emotions are for expressing and understanding
not for stuffing down.

I'm that mom who
*will make five trips
between the car and
the second floor,*

turning the house upside down in search of the stuffed animal even though I am in a hurry.

Requests are for honoring not for minimizing and dismissal.

I'm that mom who
has her hands full
of things that we
"don't need".

Those things are for security and comfort; it is not indulgence.

I'm that mom who
*misses her kids when
we're apart and can't
wait to get back to
them.*

Attachment and connection are the reasons to
be alive.

I'm that mom who
*doesn't have a
needs hierarchy.*

Being taken care of is a right not a privilege.

I'm that mom who
*sleeps with her child
because connection
doesn't sink into the
sea with the sun.*

Intimacy is created not endowed.

I'm that mom who
*watches every step of
every dance routine*

even though she knows them by heart because
what she is really

witnessing is joy.

Passion is for doing not for practicing or
working towards.

I'm that mom who
*knows that what her
child can do is
enough*

and there is no need to critique and take over
each step.

Skills are for owning not for mimicking.

I'm that mom who

*doesn't force her kids
to share or make nice
when they don't want
to do it.*

Compassion, empathy and friendship are best applied and developed when they are heart-felt not coerced.

I'm that mom who

*seeks beauty,
options and hope
when sadness comes.*

Lifting up is better than giving up.

I'm that mom who
admits her
mistakes and
apologizes.

Humility is stronger than pride and power.

I'm that mom who

*keeps looking inside,
deeper, even though
it hurts*

because my child deserves freedom from broken ideas, methods and history.

Growing up is for making your own memories not re-living the hardships of your parents.

I'm that mom who

*pays attention to
every interaction with
an eye to build rather
than tear down.*

Childhood is for growing not for healing.

I'm that mom who

*does everything she
can so that her child
will always know
how adored she is.*

Mothering is for unconditional loving not harsh judgement.

I'm that mom who
*sometimes loses her
way but keeps trying
to do better.*

Experience is the mother of wisdom and it is the most certain path to peaceful homes and vibrant lives.

About Flo Gascon

I am a writer and mentor for moms who feel stuck and in need of a fresh approach to their days. I provide tools and ideas to create a peaceful home and a vibrant life by breaking out of the have-tos and embracing the want-tos.

I share ways to be the mom you want to be while also paying attention to your own needs. I know how hard that can be in the hustle and the bustle of dishes and soccer practice so I am a truth-teller of way it is. An advocate for the way it can be.

I believe the most direct way to figure something out is to figure yourself in. I provide mentorship through my [blog](#), e-books and e-courses. There are retreats in our future, friends.

The best year yet begins anew each day. Currently, that looks like romping on beaches with two wonder-filled daughters aged 7 and 11 who have never attended school, keeping the home fires burning so my husband can earn our income, and orchestrating intimate family [retreats](#). I wrangle reproducing sticky notes, take photos, drink tea and make dreamy plans for my life by the sea.

If this manifesto speaks to you in some way, I hope you'll stay in touch. Send your friends to join the conversation as we bring out the best in our kids and ourselves. This is just the beginning!

With so much love and light,

Flo

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