

5 MAJOR MISTAKES EVEN MINDFUL MOMS MAKE

*A Map to Mother from
Your Wisdom*

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#1 - Doing too much for their kids.

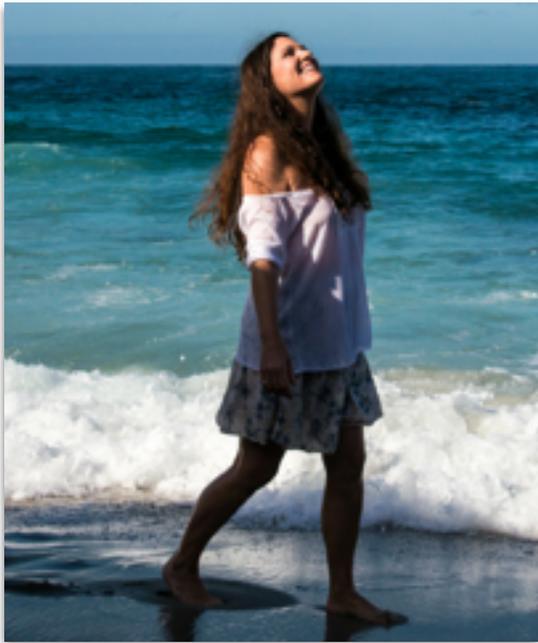
This is always well-intended but backfires in many ways. One of the most important is that it gets in the way of one of the most essential mothering responsibilities: helping kids become more independent. (In other areas of your life this shows up as “I have to do it myself to get it done right,” lack of delegation skills and systems, and perfectionism paralysis.)

Instead:

- ❖ Know your child is able to do a huge amount of self-care & care of the home environment.
- ❖ Understand half of self-esteem (basis of confidence) can only be earned - feeling capable.
- ❖ The more independent your kids are early on, the less likely they are to follow others blindly as teens.
- ❖ Anything another child of similar development can do, your child can do with instruction.
- ❖ The secrets to create massive confidence in your kids, and save yourself days worth of work over a typical month are:
 - Systems of shared responsibility
 - Shared family leadership (including the kids)
 - Knowing and trusting your kids areas of capability to care for themselves
 - Visual reminders, including appropriate standards of performance

Bonus insights - Other ways to stop overdoing:

- Over protecting them rather than presenting a problem solving approach
- Managing your kid’s unreasonable homework load – consider the alternatives
- Cruise directing – rather than letting them discover interesting activities for themselves



#2 - Trying to give from an empty cup.

If you are depleted, much less exhausted, you will lack the emotional energy to mother in a new way. Habits modeled for you in your own childhood, and the wounds some practices created, will run your show if you lack sufficient:

- ❖ Sleep
- ❖ Rest
- ❖ Nutrients (including water)
- ❖ Sex
- ❖ Feminine connection
- ❖ Movement or exercise

Notice which specific self-care practices are really essential for you to be present and make them a non-negotiable, scheduled part of your days and weeks. The most important ones vary from person to person.

(Sleep, food, or movement are almost certainly one of these essentials for you.) Make sure your top one or two needs get met even on those days or weeks you just can't fit everything in.

Bonus insights - Other ways to keep your cup full:

- Realize that if you keep putting up with being short changed in self-care, it will continue.
- Make sure you enjoy some elements of your exercise routine to stay consistent. The more you like about it, the better.
- 'Eating better makes you feel better' is true but puts the chicken before the egg. Feeling better about yourself is the gateway to eating better.

#3 - Working from your worry instead of your wisdom.

What you focus on, becomes a larger part of your focus. If you consistently dwell on the habits, developmentally normal boundary challenges, and other behaviors that annoy you about your kids, you block out your view of their gifts and what they need from you right now. To create the close connection you want with your kids focus on:

- ❖ What they do (or did a couple weeks ago 😊) that makes you smile
- ❖ The kindnesses they do for you and others
- ❖ The strengths that can be developed from their natural tendencies
- ❖ What they need most from you in this moment
- ❖ Curiosity about what they need to learn next
- ❖ What you need most to be there for them and mother from your wisdom

Bonus insights - Other ways to work from your wisdom:

- Spend time to plan out what to do, and what to look at, when chronic misbehavior occurs.
- Give yourself visual reminders of the way you choose to hold your child in your mind.
- Choose how to spend your time based on what you value most - from a written plan.

#4 - Using outmoded ways

This usually shows up as falling back on force-based techniques to try to get your kids to listen, mind, or behave - which create power struggles. Even consequences, almost all things we enforce, are coercive. Unless your mom and dad were both unusually conscious, informed, and progressive in their parenting practices, you took into your subconscious mind many poor attitudes and strategies in your childhood. Unless you have deliberately examined and replaced these models, you are acting from them to one degree or another with your own children.

One common way this shows up is when moms attempt to use consequences instead of punishment to shape their kids behavior. This creates 5 problems more often than not:

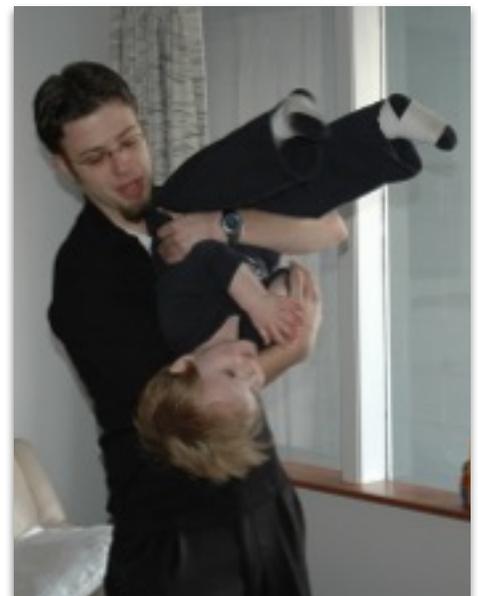
- ❖ Most logical consequences are just thinly disguised punishments.
- ❖ All punishment usually creates resentment toward the punisher, not better behavior.
- ❖ Even logical consequences usually don't address the cause - why the misbehavior happens.
- ❖ A belief in punishment, or its cousins, as necessary justice creates an attitude of vengeance.
- ❖ True natural consequences are not permitted to work their real world magic. Rather than let our children fall down, be rebuked by their peers, or go without minor comforts, we rescue them.

Other common ways programming from poor parenting in childhood shows up are:

- ❖ Power struggles crop up constantly because you don't want to punish or yell, but have no better way to keep the peace.
- ❖ Even though you resolve not to yell, their behavior becomes so irritating that you snap.
- ❖ Despite smiling, doing your best to make things nice, your kids sense your inner conflict.
- ❖ You and your partner are not consistent or actively struggle with the best way to co-parent.
- ❖ You reject how your mom took charge but have no consistent alternatives that feel right.
- ❖ Boundaries are wobbly or non-existent because you jump from this peaceful practice to that mindful method without finding a consistent, effective, cohesive system.
- ❖ You hear your own mother's words - or worse, her tone - coming out of your mouth.

Bonus insights - Other ways to create cooperation:

- Make eye contact before you ask your child to give you attention and listen to you.
- Give kids a chance to give feedback on boundaries or policies, and requests changes, but not in the middle of conflicts or boundary challenges.
- Focus on what your child needs to learn in order to behave appropriately in a situation.
- Keep up on the fun. Never distract children from the present moment. (It's confusing.) At the same time make sure, even while maintaining healthy boundaries, you consciously include silliness and fun.



#5 - Using a cafeteria approach to your mothering.

Taking a little of this and a little of that works fine if you are eating at a buffet or even creating healthy meals. As long as you limit yourself to relatively healthy choices, it's all good. This isn't true for being the mom you want to be. Especially if your models growing up were less than ideal, you need a solid structure to guide you in replacing the parenting behaviors and mindset from your childhood with a workable, efficient, effective, love-based approach. Remember, the earlier you start to mother from your wisdom, not your wounds, the more positive impact you will have on your kids.

Think about how they learn language the first 3 years of life. You never map out grammar, verb agreement, or gender - much less overtly teach them to repeat word for word those things you regret as soon as you say them - but they reproduce it all exactly as you modeled it. You have a small developmental window to help them absorb healthy attitudes, mindset, worldview, and habits. You have immense power to shape their habitual way of viewing others so that kindness becomes part of their nature. You have massive influence to shape their habits of thinking in a creative direction and a self image as a confident, capable, lovable human being. Use it well.

Choose carefully where to get support and guidance. Wherever you get this support, be sure to take the time - rested, top of your game time - to consciously decide how you will mother your children. There is magic in taking time to contemplate and map out how you want to respond moment-to-moment. This is essential if you don't want to simply recreate the models from your own childhood.

If I can support you on your journey as a mindful mother, and a visionary leader in your work out in the world, I am happy to help!

with love,

Souzzann

