

A day for Mom

Adulthood and marriage change perspective of mother for the better

As a teenager and young adult, I did not have a close relationship with my mother. In fact, I was rather estranged from her much of the time. It felt to me as if she misunderstood everything I said and did.

Eventually, I came to see that our discord had little to do with her lack of understanding, and more to do with my lack of clarity during those chaotic years. I had no clue who I was back then. And, as Anne Morrow Lindbergh points out in her book, "Gift from the Sea," "When one is a stranger to oneself, then one is estranged from others, too." Such was the case.

It wasn't until I married and moved away that



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my relationship with my mother took a turn for the better. Marriage has a way of changing your perspective on many things — especially how girls view their mothers. For starters, I realized how spoiled I had been under my mother's care. Mother had been the laundry fairy, the kitchen fairy, and the fairy who always had kept the house clean.

But as a new wife, I came to see my mother as so much more. For the first time, I saw her as an individual, a young bride barely 17 years of age, with hopes and dreams very similar to my own.

I recalled her struggles in the leaner years — struggles of the most personal kind — and wondered how she managed to respond with such aplomb and decency. I considered how hard she must have worked to create a comfortable home for her family.

She raised three daughters — two of them twins — in a day when there were no disposable diapers. No perma-press fabrics. No hot-rollers. No dishwashers. No microwave ovens. I could go on.

I thought of her being thrust into the spotlight that comes when you're a minister's wife, and the shadows that she must have — on occasion — walked in, for that same reason.

As my life began taking shape, my instinct for creating a home-sweet-home brought yet other revelations about my mother. I recognized the valuable gifts she possessed — and still does. In all of the photographs of my childhood, her talents are apparent, from the fantastic clothes she created with her Singer sewing machine to the sparkling countertops in the kitchen.

And speaking of kitchens, as a young wife, I marveled at how mother had faithfully

served three meals a day, come rain or shine. And that tradition continues to this day.

Through the years, I realized nobody had ever, or could ever, care for me with the same intensity as my mother — not my father, not my sisters, not my husband, not anybody. That's not taking away from their deep love for me, but in God's miraculous and divine plan for children to be born and nurtured, a unique capacity to love is reserved for mothers.

It's a mystery, but once you're a mother, it makes perfect sense.

As I matured and adjusted to the many seasons of womanhood, a mighty bond

formed between my mother and me. I guess you could say I left home a stranger but returned as a friend.

Today, as I've been doing now for more than a quarter-century, I seek out Mother's wisdom on a regular basis, and I rely on her prayers. She rewards me with words of encouragement and heaps unmerited praise upon my head.

In this great circle of life, I'm not sure about a lot of things, but one thing I know: If I have any good in me at all, it is largely because of the goodness of my mother.

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