

## A MOTHER'S LOVE

A Mother's heart lights up the whole world  
So full of love, commitment and passion  
There is never a quota or any ration.

The heart of a Mother is bold and strong  
Holding a space for the family's evolution  
For love and peace is the only solution.

Born to be compassionate, devoted and strong  
Her heart always beating to the vibration of love  
A Mother receives energy sent from above.

Always beaming with divine inspiration  
Mothers unite, holding hands together  
Creating a circle of love—forever.

A Mother's love creates a fine lineage of care  
Love layered upon infinite love  
Hand fitted within the family glove.

A Mother loves with her whole heart  
Breathing in and out a love so intense  
Her whole world becomes immense.

We feel, we teach, we expand and we soar  
Flying amid the possibilities of life  
We may be single mother, grandmother or wife.

~ JODI SEIDLER

*Jodi Seidler is a The Mother of Re-Invention, single parent expert and the creator of  
[www.makinglemonade.com](http://www.makinglemonade.com), The Single Parent Network*

# Contents

10 Ways to Open Your Heart to Your Mother . . . . .	1
Adopted with Love . . . . .	6
Advice . . . . .	8
A Mother's Intuition . . . . .	10
A Mother's Love . . . . .	11
A Woman's Wisdom . . . . .	12
Babies . . . . .	13
Being a Mother . . . . .	18
Challenges . . . . .	21
Childhood Dreams . . . . .	24
Children . . . . .	27
Daughters . . . . .	32
Dear Mom . . . . .	38
Dinner Time . . . . .	39
Do It Anyway . . . . .	41
Epiphany's Child . . . . .	42
Faith . . . . .	45
Family . . . . .	47
Fathers . . . . .	50
Feminini-Tea . . . . .	51
Forgiveness . . . . .	52
For the Mother Who Has Everything . . . . .	53
Foster Children . . . . .	54

Four-Legged Children .....	55
Gardener of Love .....	62
Generations.....	66
Gift from My Son .....	69
God .....	72
Grandmothers.....	77
Guilt & Motherhood .....	85
Headstrong Love.....	88
Heart of a Marine's Mother .....	90
Holidays .....	94
I Once Gave Them Life .....	97
Keeping Your Balance .....	102
Kid's Rules for Life .....	104
Lessons Learned.....	106
Life .....	112
Loss & Grieving .....	114
Love.....	125
Loving Yourself.....	129
Making a Difference.....	132
Mary, Mother of Jesus .....	133
Materni-Tea.....	137
Men! .....	138
Miracle Babies .....	143

Mom's Pink Robe .....	150
Motherhood .....	153
Mothering Yourself .....	163
Mother Within .....	168
Mothers .....	172
Mother's Day .....	186
Mother Nature .....	192
No One Could Have Told Me Then .....	193
Or So I Thought .....	195
Parenting .....	197
Perfect Parents .....	212
Prayer .....	213
Precious Child .....	216
Pregnancy .....	219
Raising Spiritually-Centered Kids .....	222
Rent an Aunt .....	224
Securi-Tea .....	225
Sereni-Tea .....	226
Sense of Self .....	227
Single Parents .....	230
Sisters .....	234
So Glad You Choose Me .....	238
Sons .....	240

Sparkle-Tude Boosters .....	245
Stay at Home Moms .....	246
Staying Authentic .....	247
Teenagers .....	248
The Dress .....	255
Through the Eyes of Children .....	257
To My Child .....	258
Unconditional Support .....	259
Tranquili-Tea .....	261
Values .....	262
Welcome Child .....	263
We're Goin' to College! .....	264
Woman .....	269
Women in Religion .....	271
Words Cannot Express .....	274
Working Miracles .....	275
Worthiness .....	276



Journaling Worksheets .....	279
Author Information .....	289

# 10 Ways to Open Your Heart to Your Mother

*Dear Mom, I've Always Wanted You to Know: Letters from the Heart*

## 1. HONOR YOURSELF

Take a few moments to honor and appreciate yourself. Acknowledge your courage to open your heart, articulate your emotions on paper, and grow from your willingness to write a letter to your mother. When you take the time to reflect inwardly, you nurture yourself.

## 2. RECONNECT TO YOUR HEART

Take some deep breaths and connect emotionally with your mother. Self-reflection requires a change of pace of what you may be accustomed to. Allow yourself the time to relax. Create a quiet, private space to write your letter. Perhaps choose a favorite place in nature, listen to soothing music such as Enya, Steve Halpern, or classical music, or enjoy your favorite food or tea in a place where you feel peaceful.

## 3. CREATE A DESIRED OUTCOME

Expand your thoughts beyond your present image of your mother and your relationship. If you are encountering challenges with your relationship, be open to experiencing her in a new light. For example, you may want to resolve past hurts or be more loving toward her. You may want to understand more or develop more of an appreciation for her. This exercise is not about dumping on your mother. It is about exploring your emotions through letter writing, resolving past hurts, and experiencing positive shifts within yourself and your relationship with your mother. Aiming for a desired outcome will guide you to be more centered on what is most important. Let the process unfold naturally. Dianne Collins, creator-author of *Quantum Think*®, says, "It is like planting the seeds for a garden of love and appreciation, honor, and respect. In such a relationship garden, even if weeds sprout, you

## 10 Ways CONTINUED

can just handle them and remain in awe of the beauty blossoming there.” Write, visualize, and feel one positive expression from writing the letter.

### 4. EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS HONESTLY

Eliose Ristad says, “Feel the opposites that comprise your being human. Feel the power in these opposing forces within you. Without these opposites, you would be as bland and characterless as unsalted mush.”

Certain words listed below may prompt a particular feeling you have or have had toward your mother. To release a negative feeling, you might want to write about that feeling and see what you discovered about yourself in the process. This exercise is about acknowledging a specific feeling, releasing it, and learning from it. It is about letting go of what holds you back. If it evokes a positive feeling, you may discover something new about your mother. Remember, this is a springboard to guide you. Only you know what is true in your heart.

Choose one or two emotions listed below when you think of your mother and write about them. Also describe what you learned about yourself through this process.

*Fear, Embarrassment, Joy, Celebration, Enthusiasm, Sorrow, Sadness, Regret, Remorse, Grief, Guilt, Freedom, Letting Go, Joy, Release, Gratitude, Appreciation, Respect, Courage, Bravery, Risk Taking, Control, Regret, Bossiness, Criticism, Epiphany, Forgiveness, Insight, Resentment, Anger, Betrayal, Jealousy, Competition, Estrangement, Love, Understanding, Acceptance, Compassion, Forgiveness, Peace of Mind*

### 5. APPRECIATE ALL OF THE MEMORIES

Be grateful for all of the memories you have with your mother and learn from them. Recall defining moments, challenging times, or

## 10 Ways CONTINUED

particular gestures. You may not know how you feel until you put pen to paper. Simply let your ideas unfold naturally without forcing them. Welcome your uncensored emotions without judgments. If judgments arise, gently release them as part of the process. Be patient and loving to yourself.

As you revisit your feelings, jot down 5 memories of your mother. You may have fewer or you may have more, but 5 is a place to begin.

### 6. EXPLORE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

We view our relationships according to our perspective on life. Many times, we cannot see beyond our own experiences. As you think of your relationship with your mother, begin viewing her in various roles in her life: as a woman, wife, daughter, grandmother, volunteer, professional, and friend. Seeing your mother in a new light can provide a fresh perspective on the way you view her, yourself, and your relationship.

Write down 5 or more things you've noticed about yourself and your mother when you explore these different roles.

### 7. THINK FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION

As daughters, we may focus on the relationship with only our mothers. We blame our mothers for the beliefs they may have adopted from their mothers, and so on. If we explore the past, we notice that certain behaviors have been passed on to us from generation to generation.

Jot down 5 of these belief systems. If you are not sure about those in other generations, speculate and write them down anyway.

### 8. GO BEYOND STEREOTYPICAL EXPECTATIONS

We often expect our mothers to be a certain way from the cultural messages we grew up with, and when they do not meet our image, we feel disappointed and even resentful. Often, our expectations cloud

## 10 Ways CONTINUED

us from appreciating our mothers for who they are. Once we can identify with our false expectations, we can honor their uniqueness.

Jot down 5 expectations you have now or once had with your mother. Also write down what you discovered from this process.

### 9. MAKE CHALLENGES YOUR GREATEST GIFTS

We often blame our mothers for the hardships we experienced while growing up and the hardships we still experience: for not being there; for being there in the “wrong way,” for the woman we are; for the woman we are not; for the challenges we had to overcome because of our mothers. Many times, our challenges turn into resentments, which prevent us from being in the present moment. Feelings of anger that may have begun with our mother may even move into other relationships.

Write down 5 resentments about your mother. Explore your challenges with your mother as gifts and write down what you discovered.

### 10. OPEN YOUR HEART

The objective of these 10 exercises is to examine your relationship with your mother from new perspectives and open your heart. When we view our experiences in new ways, we enrich our relations with others and ourselves. Feel free to use some or all of these exercises to support you in writing your letter.

Begin your letter now. Be true to your personal voice. It will always lead you to the right place. The rest will follow.

## 10 Ways CONTINUED

### 10 QUESTIONS TO PONDER

1. What did you learn about yourself from your experiences with your mother?
2. What did your mother represent to you growing up?
3. What did you want but did not get from your mother?
4. If you only had one day to resolve the issues with your mother, what would you say?
5. What do you constantly complain about regarding your mother?
6. What kind of relationship would you like to have with your mother?
7. Is there one event with your mother that changed the course of your life?
8. What resentments or dislikes do you have regarding your mother?
9. What do you admire about your mother?
10. What does your mother represent to you now?

~ LISA R. DELMAN

*Speaker, author of Dear Mom, I've Always Wanted You to Know . . . Daughters Share Letters from the Heart, Penguin 2005. Founder and visionary of the international Heart Project. Encourages women to articulate their emotions sacredly on paper initiating a journey that often leads to self-discovery, healing past wounds, and an opportunity to feel liberated. [www.TheHeartProject.com](http://www.TheHeartProject.com)*

*Copyrighted. Reprinted with permission from the author.*

## Heart of a Marine's Mother

I knew that if I were to survive missing my 19-year-old son while he left for war, the only way I could do it was by asking for support . . . asking for prayers. Not something I had ever asked for before in a grandiose way. I was the typical overextended mothering type, doing more for others before paying any attention to me and my needs.

And never would I think to reveal anything so private about me—an equally grandiose—heartache.

For the first time, I poured out my heart to family, friends, business associates and even acquaintances . . . and asked for help.



*Sent: Thursday, March 03, 2005 9:12 PM*

Our hearts are heavy, after Michael, my husband, with our daughter, Nicole, tearfully gave our farewells among a smothering of hugs to our son, Dominic. As I write this, he is probably on the plane to Kuwait, where his unit will wait for a few days for the remainder of the battalion, then helo out to Camp Fallujah in Iraq.

I know statistically the percentage of war fatalities is not much different than the statistical percentage of fatalities from car accidents, crime, etc., in the U.S.

I know that the media focuses on the fatalities.

I know Dominic is under God's protection and care and under the powerful prayer support of so many.

I 'know' the likelihood that he will return to us 'just fine.'

Yet as mother of my only son and youngest child, and speaking for Michael and Nicole, our hearts still hurt to send him off to a war zone.

Maybe it hurts so much because we know too well about the realities of war from Michael who served as a medic in Vietnam.

## Heart of a Marine's Mother CONTINUED

As a mother, I've put off 'feeling' about this. It all finally 'hit me' after the Marines suddenly moved up their deployment a week and shortened their liberty from an expected three or four days, to only 12 hours.

Dominic clearly wanted to be in the military since he was five years old. His father and two grandfathers set the precedence with commendable military service careers. What is a mother to do?

We ask for your (continued) prayer support for him, his battalion, and the troops that serve. For their safe return. For peace. We thank all who have already given love and support.

My 'work' is cut out for me as I stay busy to help keep my mind positive about all this . . . I will write again soon.

In the meantime, peace be with you and yours. May you take an extra moment today to look at your children and loved ones with grateful loving eyes and hold them warm and close to you.

Maria



*I couldn't believe the response! I wrote back with:*

Well you touched our hearts! Thank you so very much for your love and prayer support.

And thank you for your patience in responding to you. We were overwhelmed with the responses-emotionally, most definitely yes, and also in number and size. We received almost 200 email responses, which filled 52 pages! I just finished compiling the responses and I'm sending them off by regular mail to Dominic today. I believe he will be overwhelmed as well.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts. I reached out and you responded with your heart. As the responses came pouring in (many calls, too), I sat and cried as I read them . . . many wrote about:

## Heart of a Marine's Mother CONTINUED

- *Also being a parent, relative or friend of someone also in Iraq and relating to the emotion of that*
- *Of appreciating my sharing a very personal and deep part of me and being moved by my writing*
- *Of being part of Dominic's 'virtual support team'*
- *Of gratitude for the military and the sacrifices . . .*
- *Of God and the angels protecting . . .*
- *Of love and prayers and prayer lists for Dominic, our family, and the entire situation overseas*

I don't know any other way to thank you but to say I love you. We love you. I/we do feel much better knowing how Dominic is wrapped in your love and prayers.

With Love, Maria, Michael and Nicole



The following eight months took its toll on me . . . crying to sleep at night, weight gain . . . keeping myself extremely busy . . . examining my life: "Had I been the best mother I could be?" All the while we anxiously waited for any news from Dominic . . . and the day he would come home. I was so afraid to reveal my tender heart and ask for support . . . to cope with a Marine's mother's greatest fears.

I forgot to look at the other side until the time was upon us: To celebrate this Marine's mother's answered prayers . . .



*Sent: Saturday, October 15, 2005 5:18 AM*

*Subject: Dominic is HOME!*

*Dominic just arrived—he's home, in our arms, safe and sound! . . .*

## Heart of a Marine's Mother CONTINUED



The prayers protected Dominic's unit of about 250 Marines. They suffered only one accidental injury on the deployment, despite being surrounded by fatalities in other units in their same areas during the same time.



I dedicate this story to other mothers of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines with loving prayers to embrace and protect their own and their family's tender hearts, their sons and daughters and their units, and most importantly for all the world . . .Peace.

~ MARIA CARTER

© 2006 Maria Carter, [www.fallinlovewithyourlife.com](http://www.fallinlovewithyourlife.com)

## Holidays CONTINUED

### “FAMILY CIRCUS” CHRISTMAS *Mommy Throws A Tantrum!*

When I started this vocation called Mother I had it all down. I just knew my children (two, maybe three) would be the most perfect in the neighborhood. I was going to give June Cleaver a run for her money! Donna Reed . . . Ha! Betty Crocker, oh pleazzzzze! Over and over again in my head I said Ha! Then I actually had a child. And another. And another. And another. And another . . . boy, this wasn't how I played it all out in my head! Five babies in six years! Wow! Just getting out of the house I had to find shoes to go with 50 little toes . . . oh, and the socks needed for those same 50 little piggies! It was and still is an adventure!

Christmas was a fun time at our house but a frustrating time for me personally. I could not figure out why I could not have the sit-down dinner with everyone pressed, styled, combed, clean, smiling, happy and oh so grateful, singing Silent Night in perfect pitch just before the “Norman Rockwell” Christmas dinner was served!

One particular Christmas I was so frustrated. I tried all the “right” things and, when that failed, I resorted to bribery, blame, lavish promises and, finally, at whit's end . . . a tantrum. Not just whine, shed a tear, then go-about-life tantrum . . . a full blown on-my-face-tantrum in the living room in front of the Christmas tree kicking my feet, pounding my fist, screaming . . . “Why?! Why? and then to have my oldest (who was all of 5 years old), come tell me “Z, Mommy. ‘Z’ comes after ‘Y.’ Don't be sad, we will work on your alphabet together! You can get it!”

Thank God he didn't know the real reason for my tantrum! I dried my tears and looked at them. Really looked at them. They were happy, perplexed at mommy at that moment, but they had all their little hearts needed. A mommy and daddy who loved them.

## Holidays CONTINUED

A safe place to put their blankie and to them, a fun place to be. They had more live in playmates than anyone they knew!

I suddenly realized what the problem was. Not the kids—not my husband—but me! Not the me me—but the attitude me.

I missed out of the real wonders of the first few Christmases because of my terrible choice of holiday comfort friends. Yep, the trio Shoulda, Coulda and Woulda and their cousins Only and If had come to once again to the Hall house to “celebrate” the year! I don’t remember consciously inviting five more to our already full house . . . but nonetheless they showed up every year and seemed to be staying longer and longer! Uninvited . . . how rude!

NO wonder I was so frustrated! I kept striving for the “Norman Rockwell” Christmas and kept getting “Family Circus” instead! I had my holiday comfort friends cheering me on, again. That year I gave them the boot! And I discovered “Family Circus” isn’t so bad!

The Friends still try to visit occasionally, usually when my spirits a bit down . . . but there is no room! I still hold on to the fantasy of “Norman Rockwell” Christmas Dinner but only in my dreams. As I watch my pieces of Heaven laugh, run, play, each other . . . I really have made best friends with the “Family Circus.” And I learned the whole alphabet too!

~ TERRI L. HALL

*Contributor's request: Please do not use any part of this out of context.*

*Editor's Note: In our conversation receiving permission to print this original work for the first time, Terri added: “In time God blessed me with a new life (in more ways than one) and now am remarried (for almost 10 years) and have a total of 12 children and 6 grandchildren with one on the way (only 7 kids are still at home). It has been an adventure!”*