

The York University Staff Association Health and Wellness News and Views

We are granted one day out of the year to devote to our mothers. In my opinion, Mother's Day should be celebrated every day. Many of us are accustomed to receiving a beautiful bouquet of flowers, which is a wonderful gesture. However, this year, why not buy your own? Or at least consider doing something special for yourself. You will be a much happier mom, and your happiness is not only vital for your own health and wellbeing, but for your families too.

After we hustle our kids off to hockey practice, fold the laundry and finally cook dinner. We are left with little inspiration to model the one thing we want most for our children: happiness. It's not that we don't want to be happy. It's more a question of how to fit it into our schedule.

Take some for yourself

It is crucial to get away from the kids, whether it's a long warm bath, poker night with the girls or a week end away. When you take time and space from your kids, you actually miss them! And that's a VERY good thing for you and for your kids. When you get the space you need, you find yourself longing for reconnection with your kids, the quality of your interactions when you reconnect will be much happier.

Bend the rules

One of the best things about being mom is that you get to make the rules, but you also get to bend them. Why not have dessert before dinner? Or let the kids take a bath with the dog? Or go outside and play in the rain? Your kids will love the change. Happy moms know when to turn the mundane into magic.

Live in the moment

One way to nourish positive emotions is to take a moment to appreciate, well, the moment. In the morning, for instance, instead of trying to do ten things at once, take your cup of coffee to the

window and sip it while your child plays. Notice what's going on around you. Will it change your life? No, but you'll probably feel calmer, and in turn be a much happier Mom.

Be yourself

Much of our stress and irritation as mom's comes from trying to live up to today's impossible standards. It's tempting to look around us to see if we measure up with other moms. The best way to be a happy mom - "a good mom" is to be yourself. Don't try to be anyone else's version of what a good mother is. Be the best version of who you are.

Share your passions

Somewhere between the after school chaos and the rush to get to the soccer field many of us lose track of your own passions. We are so enthralled in our children's activities that we forget to share our own hobbies and passions with them. When you engage in activities that you enjoy with your kids you will most likely be smiling and sharing a precious moment. Think about simple ways you can share your passions. Love to paint? Sit down with your kids and paint a picture. You don't even need a brush... Do you love to dance like nobodies watching? Break out your old Cd's (yes I said Cd's) and have a dance off with your family.

Why not have a six pack?

I thought a habit of every happy Mom was a glass of wine at the end of a hard day... but I asked around and not a single happy mother mentioned alcohol. Not even margaritas. What was the most popular answer? Exercise. Working out is an incredible antidepressant, and some days being a mom are just tough. Exercise elicits a flood of endorphins in the brain. The endorphins are associated with positive mood. Working out will enable you to think clearer, concentrate better and be more productive. Why not practice what you preach and become a positive role model for your child. Children mimic the behaviors they see on a daily basis. Help your children begin with a solid foundation of fitness and

health and they will develop a healthy lifestyle for life.

Most importantly Moms need to value what they do. Moms are an integral part of the fabric of the family, not to mention our community.

So this Mother's day and every day after that, lets honour and thank every individual who goes by the name of Mother. Oprah once said "Let's celebrate women, and as we teach our sons, and husbands to hold them in the highest regard. Lets honour both the mothers whose shoulders we've stood on in the past and the daughters who will one day stand tall on ours."

Happy Mother's Day.

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