

The Process Of Forgiveness

What a mother thinks sends impulses into her children's minds. In fact, I remember being quite disturbed, sometimes angry, when my friends spoke ill of their mothers. Somewhere deep inside of me, without words or sound, I knew that to have your mother in your life was a blessing. My aunt did the best she could for as long as she could, but I was not her child. When my father and stepmother sent my brother and me to live with her, it was like a double whammy. My mother, who wasn't really my mother, was gone, compounding the unspoken yearning I had for my natural mother, whom I hardly knew and didn't remember. I used to always say that I was not a good mother. I was a great provider and rigorous disciplinarian, both of which made me a horrible mother. I can say that about myself now because I have learned the true role and function of a mother in a child's life. In fact, my name, Iyanla, means great mother. It is more than a name. As such, fulfilling the duties of the title is something that I have grown into and learned with much prayer and great study. As a function of life, great mother is not, I'm sure, what my children experienced, nor is it what they needed or expected from their mommy. Her relationship with her children begins when they are in the womb. How a woman thinks about, cares for, and nourishes her own being mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually sends powerful and important messages into the fabric of her children. What she says sends vibrational energy into her children's hearts. What she does and how she does it creates the expectations her children will have for themselves, within themselves. The depth of a mother's involvement with and her relationship to her children is unique and different because of the strong emotional and physical bonding that has occurred. How she bonds and whether or not she bonds teaches her children what they can expect from the most important relationships they will have in life. One day in a busy marketplace, a mother bumped into a stranger as he tried to pass. I wasn't paying attention and did not see you. The stranger said, Please excuse me, too, for I am as guilty as you for not paying attention. Both the stranger and the mother were very polite and laughed lightly as they walked their separate ways. Later that day the mother was at home preparing the evening meal for her family. Her son came into the kitchen unnoticed by his mother and stood beside her. When she turned around, she nearly tripped over him and knocked him to the floor. Move out of the way, she yelled at him. Leave me alone. With his heart broken, the child walked away, going into his room, where he cried. The busy mother had not realized how harshly she had spoken to him. Nor did she recognize the gift that had been in his hand. Later that night the mother lay awake in her bed reviewing in her mind the events of the day. When she closed her eyes to whisper her nightly prayer, a small voice whispered into her ears, While dealing with a stranger, you were polite and courteous, yet when it came to the child you say you love, you chose harsh impatience. Go back into the kitchen. Look in the corner by the door. There you will find the flowers your son picked for you. He stood quietly in the kitchen waiting to surprise you. What you offered to the stranger is the very least of what your son deserves from you, his mother. The mother shot upright in her bed. Untangling herself from her bedcovers, she did as directed. Sure enough, she found the flowers. She quietly went and knelt at the side of her son's bed, not wanting to disturb him. I confess that I yelled at him and caused him pain. I confess that I allowed what I had to do to be more important than being the mother You created me to be. A mother must be aware that if she were to die tomorrow, the

children she leaves behind will experience the loss of her presence for the rest of their lives. It is not uncommon for a mother to fall short of the importance of her role. It also goes without saying that before a woman becomes a mother, she is a woman with patterns and pathologies to be healed, needs and desires to be fulfilled, lessons to learn, and a life's purpose to fulfill. When that was not in place, I was left to my own devices. Just ask my children. Still your mind for at least 5 minutes or listen to the Stillness Meditation. Read the Forgiveness Prayer once silently and once aloud. Scan the Emotional Triggers List. Complete the day's practice in quiet reflection or with meditative music. You will be forgiving all thoughts, beliefs, memories, and experiences you may have judged as wrong, unfair, unkind, or unloving. This does not mean that your experience of your mother is wrong or that her behavior was right or appropriate. The process of forgiveness is designed to neutralize what is going on within you in order to make space for another possibility to unfold. Regardless of how you hold her in consciousness, your mother represents the very beating of your heart, because her heartbeat was the first sound you heard. To forgive your mother opens and heals your heart. Today, I ask for and allow myself to receive and experience everything that had happened. Today, I claim my freedom as I declare my willingness and readiness to release my mother from all of my anger, hurt, woundedness, judgment, disappointment, and sorrow hidden anywhere in my consciousness or being. I surrender all memories, experiences, circumstances, and situations where I have held my mother with blame or fault.