

DEAR MOM

**Some heartwarming stories
from families you will recognize.
You will love what they share!**

By Mindy Drayer

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**There's no such love
So deep and true
Than a mother's heart
That's filled for you**

**Thanks for all
The years of bliss
A warm embrace
A gentle kiss**

**I wrote this book
So all will see
You're exactly what
A mom should be**

**I love you Mom,
Mindy**

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Chapter 1. There's No One Quite Like Mom

*There's no one quite like Mom
In all she'll do and say
She makes things so much better
In every single way.*

After securing her baby in the backseat of her car, this proud new mom slid into the driver's seat and backed out of her driveway. After several minutes, she was cruising down the highway without a care in the world. Every once in a while, she'd glance in her rearview mirror checking on her newborn. The baby giggled and made some type of happy sound while playing with her colorful plush toy.

Out of nowhere another car, heading in the opposite direction, crossed the center lane and came barreling into the mom's car. Both mom and baby flew out of the vehicle on impact. She could hear her daughter crying but didn't know exactly where her little girl was. She was disoriented and in a fog of confusion but managed to glance up. That's when she saw her baby still in the car seat alongside the roadway.

Her head was throbbing, and her body was aching, but the young mother started crawling on the highway toward her baby trying to reach her, to protect her. She never made it. Another car was heading toward the accident site. The driver didn't see the mom. She was struck and killed.

Out of all my years in the TV news business, that story stayed with me, affected me. It was one of the worst

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stories I ever had to read on the air. The poor child was going to grow up without a mom and one day someone would have to explain what happened on that highway in Youngstown, Ohio. That her mom was struck and killed while trying to save her.

Something changes the instant a woman becomes a mom. A powerful force of love controls our every move.

If you look up the word “mom” in the Merriam Webster Dictionary, this is what you will find:

“A female parent: MOTHER”

Can you believe that? How can the most important person on the entire planet be described with only four simple words? An abundance of vital details are missing from this empty definition. There has to be something more.

There is. On January 24th, 2019, wAtErMeLoN described “mom” in the Urban Dictionary like this:

“A woman that does a lot for her family, works every day with a monthly day off (sometimes), takes care of her children, even takes care of her husband. She will do anything for her family, she will work 2 maybe 3 or more jobs if she has to. She even usually buys you things that you want even if you don’t deserve or need them. Her love is unconditional even when she is mad at you, she still loves you and you should never forget that. Never take your mother for granted because one day, she’s gonna be gone and you’re never going to know when. It could be tomorrow, in a couple of days, in a couple of weeks, years, it could even be today. The point is, your mother loves you and you should love and appreciate her to because she could be gone any

day. She might already be gone. I am sorry if that is the case but just know that she is still with you, in your heart and memories and she is watching you even if she is or isn't here. So please if you're reading this it will only take a couple of minutes to stop what your doing and go tell your mom that you love her, text her, or call her and tell her. I Love You Mom."

Aside from the obvious grammatical mistakes and misspelled words, that entry isn't half bad. At least it's better than "a female parent" from Webster's.

Quite honestly, it is rather difficult to define the one person who goes above and beyond for everyone but herself. How do you write down all the emotions that are intertwined with motherhood?

Moms are counselors, disciplinarians, teachers and friends. But perhaps more than anything, they are protectors. There is nothing she won't do to keep her children safe from harm. Don't ever challenge an overprotective mom to a duel. You will undoubtedly lose.

Becoming a mom is one of God's greatest gifts and there are all kinds. For example...girl moms, boy moms, dog moms, good moms, bad moms, helicopter moms, sports moms, smart moms, funny moms, and serious moms (just to name a few).

I personally became a mom nearly twenty years ago and I can most definitely say that I learned from the absolute best. Carm Drayer is everything a mom should be and more. Her life hasn't been easy, from losing a son after an unsolved accident to amputating her arm because of cancer. It's been a struggle. But, because of her infectiously positive attitude, you'd never know it.

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My mom lives her life with unwavering love and devotion for her children and grandchildren. They have always come first, and they always will. But how did she get this way? Is it something that unseemingly takes control of your heart the moment that firstborn child is put in your arms? Or is it something that is learned over years of motherhood?

I have so many wonderful stories to share with you. Not just about my mom, but from others who have their own fascinating or perhaps funny moments to share. In some cases, those who submitted passages did so simply out of respect and pride. Here's one example:

Sensational Sandi!

***“Moms are the greatest, aren’t they?
Nobody on Earth can give me the peace and
reassurance that my mom is able to. How
does she pick the perfect words or call at just
the right time? It’s a superpower really, isn’t
it?”***

***Christmas, Thanksgiving, Birthdays,
Vacations to the Outer Banks or Disney
World...all so much more fun with Sandi’s
special touches. Her Peanut Butter Buckeyes,
Candy Cane cookies, Sandi’s surprise treats!
Oh, can’t forget the biscuits and homemade
gravy! All best described as, well, LOVE ON
A PLATE!***

***I’m so thankful for her selfless, unending
generosity, encouraging words and spiritual
guidance. Thank you God for giving me to
my mom. She is a true light in this world. I***

Dear Mom

thank her whole heartedly for loving me with every ounce of being. I LOVE YOU MOM to the moon and back...twice!"

*Mark Blazor
The Mark Blazor Show
610 WTVN*



Each sample serves a specific purpose. At times, you'll relive unforgettable memories that have lingered on through decades casually teaching lessons of tough love. In other instances, you'll read straight forward words of wisdom offering advice to those who may need a hint of guidance. Personally, I've found the following two tips most challenging...

Let Them Make Mistakes:

"It is so hard to watch your child make a mistake, but mistakes are one of life's greatest teachers. A mom can help turn mistakes into learning opportunities. Don't bail your child out, instead, help them problem solve so that the next time the same situation occurs they have the tools to deal with it. By understanding that everyone makes mistakes and that mistakes are learning opportunities strengthens a child's sense of self. Teaching problem solving skills gives your son or daughter the ability to make positive changes in their environment."

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Let Them See You Practicing Self Care:

“Understanding that the decisions in life are made with your child’s welfare at the center, your children should NOT dictate your life. It is important for moms to practice self-care and for your children to see you doing it. Self-care will reduce stress in parents, helping them to be happier and healthier parents for their children. It also teaches your children the importance of caring for your overall well-being, both mentally and physically.”

Ann Flora Hurst, MA, LPCC-S
Open Arms Counseling, LLC
Counselor & CEO

Throughout this book, you may often find yourself caught between feelings of joy and sorrow along with love and laughter. Personally, crafted stories may tug extra hard on your heartstrings, and that’s alright. One thing we should have all learned from “Mom” is that it’s ok to cry. Only the strong aren’t afraid to show their emotions.

Most people know how important moms are in everyday life. But sometimes, we just need a little reminder or two. “Dear Mom” does exactly that. So, if you’re a mom and you’re reading this, THANK YOU for all that you’ve done and all that you are. I hope you enjoy every page of this book. It is most assuredly dedicated to YOU.

To everyone who wrote a passage, I appreciate you more than you’ll ever know. I couldn’t have written “Dear Mom” without your personal inscriptions. I hope others learn something significant from your words, gain insight

or simply realize that every mom has her own personal battle, and we fight it the best way we can.

Maria's Story

"To me being a mom means being selfless. It means nurturing, giving and also protecting. Qualities I learned from my mother who was always there for her kids. So when I was diagnosed with breast cancer, especially the first time around, I thought, how am I going to be a mom? How would I give my family what it needs?"

When I was first diagnosed, my son was just 2 years old. My husband Matt and I wanted to expand our family. We were ready to bring another baby into this world. In fact, I was rather fixated on it. My doctor told me I was healthy, but she wanted me to get my first ever mammogram. She wanted me to get a baseline. I didn't think anything of it. I scheduled my appointment, and the mammogram was checked off my list. It was now time to start thinking of a baby brother or sister. My heart pounded with anticipation as I visualized our growing family. But a few days later, I received a call saying I had to redo my mammogram. It didn't sound like an issue. They explained that things like this happen and so I rescheduled and didn't think anything of it.

It was almost time for the 5pm news and I was getting ready for my live shot when my phone rang. It was my doctor. I quickly picked up the phone but said I couldn't talk long. She understood. All she said

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was, "Make sure you don't cancel your appointment tomorrow, promise me you'll go." I hurriedly told her yes...and finished my live report. That's when I started to process the conversation. All kinds of thoughts were cluttering my mind. I began to worry, and tears started falling from my eyes as I anguished over the brief conversation.

The next day, Matt went with me to my appointment. I had a mammogram and an ultrasound. That's when doctors discovered the cancer. It still gives me chills when I think about it. The following days and weeks were filled with more appointments and second opinions. Not only was I trying to figure out how to treat the cancer, but I immediately thought about my family and how we wanted it to grow. Was that even possible now? How was I going to be nurturing and selfless while going through treatment and recovering? A mom is supposed to be there for her family. That's all I've ever known.

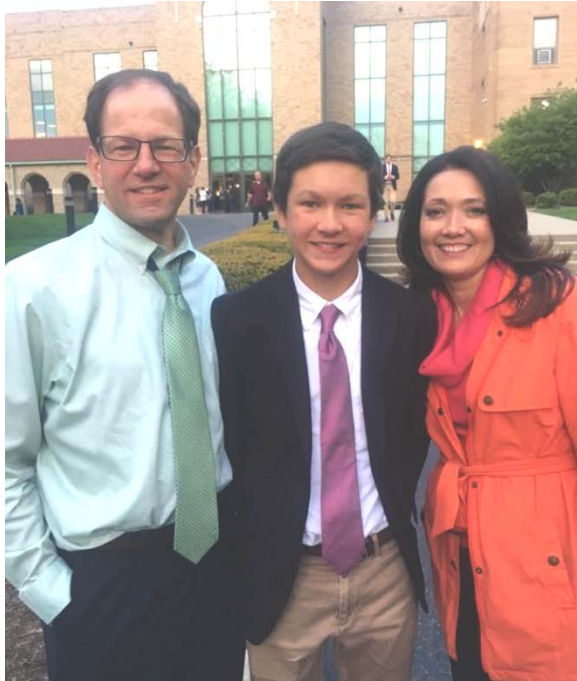
I spent more days researching, looking for answers. There had to be a way I could still have another baby while fighting my cancer with treatments and medications. And then came the crushing blow. I would need to be on medication for 5 years, having a second child was not recommended.

I agonized over not being able to give my husband another baby...and my son a sibling. When finally, I realized that motherhood isn't about the size of your family. It's about being there...and I needed to get better to be there for the family I already had.

Dear Mom

And now...when I think back to both my breast cancer bouts, I realize that my experience shows my son just how strong moms can be. And that being a mother is a gift - one that can be overwhelming, challenging...but never without love."

*Maria Durant
Good Day Columbus
ABC 6/Fox 28 News*



Maria Durant and family



Mark Blazor and his mom from back in the day!



Carm and her crew!

Chapter 2. In The Beginning, God Created Mom

*In the beginning, God created Mom
He knew she'd be the one to guide
us through and through
To protect us from the storm
And help create a better you.*

Dear Mom,

I can't remember seeing you for the very first time. I actually can't remember anything on that distinct day I came into this world, March 20th, 1968. But I can imagine how safe and comfortable I must have felt as soon as the doctor delicately placed me in your arms.

It wasn't something new for you. You'd been through this three other times before. But you were never going to go through it again. I was your last child, the youngest, the "baby of the family,"

You had an army of friends, cousins, aunts, uncles and neighbors from around the country who were waiting patiently for my delivery. But all I had was you Mom. You were there when I took my first breath and when my piercing cries of uncertainty filled the hospital room.

In an instant, you instinctively knew what to do to ease my fears. Eventually, my cries turned to coos and there we were. My tiny body nestled tightly in the arms of my loving mom. I could have stayed there forever, safe from everything and everyone.