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The Most Shocking Realization of My Life: Somehow Equally Comforting

By Alicia Unterbrink

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It took being a mother to appreciate and understand my own. All the same, I never foresaw resembling her the ways I have come to realize I do. I had sworn to not be like my mother, as I am sure so many children do; after all, a daughter's mother is always the least cool person to her.

Truthfully, the first time I caught myself resembling my mother was by the words that I spoke to my daughter. I could not believe how easily the same phrases rolled off my tongue. Quoting my mother is as natural as breathing now. From falling down while learning to walk to falling off her bike, my daughter has learned to brush herself off and try again due to the same simple yet powerful words I heard as a little girl, "No blood, no foul." While that is helpful to my daughter, I often use another quote of my mother's that is humorously helpful to me when I hear "Mom, Mom, Mom" a million times a day. Instead of pulling my

hair out, I sarcastically say, "I'm changing my name." I get a kick out of that one because my daughter will look at me as if I have gone mad.

Many new mothers refer to parenting books. I, on the other hand, came fully equipped with skills thanks to my mom. When my daughter has a stomach ache, I naturally reach for the Sprite or ginger ale and crackers. It is not due to a research study I have read or any medical advice I have received from a doctor. I can remember holding my daughter when she was an infant, rocking her while listening to her sad attempts to breathe through her stuffy nose. Especially considering her age, I opted for a homeopathic remedy instead of pharmaceuticals. I turned the shower on hot, pulled the curtain closed, and shut the bathroom door with me and my wee little sick one inside. As the bathroom filled with soothing steam, I could not

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escape the feeling of nostalgia; after all, I had my fair share of stuffy noses as a child and had sat curled up in my mother's lap, her stroking my hair and rocking me back and forth while the hot shower worked its magic until finally I could breathe. As a parent, I know now that the true relief belongs to the mother, who receives the satisfaction of making her baby feel all better again.

My mother taught me more than just words though. I naturally approach situations with my daughter in the same manner and way my mother did, which has proven to be very comforting as a parent. The greatest discovery I have experienced out of all is not just understanding but appreciating why my mother raised me the way she did. Kids do

not come with an instruction manual, so I am ever thankful that my own mother instilled so much in me; I have learned that everything she did was a gift, endless priceless lessons, that do not end with me. If I accomplish being half the mom mine was to me, then I will have the blessing of knowing my own daughter will be a great person and mother someday herself. I hope I succeed in carrying on her legacy of mothering. If I do so, I know my daughter will always have me with her long after she is a woman herself, just like my mother remains with me.



*It is only the women whose eyes
have been washed clear with tears
who get the broad vision that
makes them little sisters to all the
world. —Dorothy Dix*