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This Blogger's Hopping!

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As a 'baby blogger', everything feels a little foreign in this online world of writers. I long to listen to everyone who's gone before me, sitting quietly like a fly on their backend online office wall. It's intimidating out here (or in here….) on the web!

I just want to fit in….but then again I don't. Actually, I want to do things MY way! Always have.

So while I'm learning lots from bloggers I love, I've decided to write and share from my heart and soul whether it's my story of loss, faith and hope for new life or it's me living well with real foods and refreshing fitness.

Confession: Yeah, even with my own resolve, I'm still sitting here sorta intimidated as a brand new baby blogger!

That's why I was so tickled…and honored…when Heather [1] from 40 Year Wanderer [2]asked me to

participate in this little thing called a *Blog Hop*. My first reaction was to decline because, of course, I don't have anything to say in a world of real writers! And how embarrassing would that be when everyone realizes I don't measure up!?

But Heather is an incredible encourager and Sister-in Faith cheerleader! She made me feel like I could fit in, in a good way. She'd already asked me to participate in her #ALL IN online group and, just WOW! Even when she's down, she's lifting others up. Heather's lived through a lot from being a lost wanderer to one found for eternity. Her words paint a picture of a life redeemed on a canvas of what God's created in her. Go ahead…check her out here [2]. She may inspire you, too!

Now, for my answers to my assigned *BLOG HOPPING* questions. Be sure to keep reading because then I'll move on to the FUN part as I introduce three bloggers I invited to hop along ahead of me!

1. What am I writing or working on?

Oh, someday perhaps I'll tell you I'm working on a book, presenting my version of living well to an audience filled auditorium or launching a living well movement that offers a refreshing take on what's so often more draining than desirable: living well in a world of social standards, eating rules and fit regulations.

But I'm not there. I'm a MOM….a single mom….a working, widowed, single mom whose blog story has just begun.

SO, HERE, in my story [3], is where my working and writing heart lives. Well, besides tirelessly in the ministry of motherhood (and failing a little every day!). I'm working here to tell you how a life lived well can be SO MUCH MORE than sets of rules and weary regulations. *It can be empowering, uplifting and incredibly rewarding when* ***the foundation is, well, faith instead of fads****.*

Yeah, so my work's all about living well from the inside out by putting faith first and sharing words of refreshment, recipes and workouts.

In my 'spare' time (whatever that means!), I also regularly contribute to aNew Season Ministries [4] where I write more devotional style along with a group of Christian women all writing from a place of faith.

2. How does my work differ from others in its genre?

I really appreciate this question. It gives me an opportunity to tell you this: **There's no truth, no hope and no lifelong epiphanies I've received through living a fit life.** I have, though, gained eternity by living well starting in the seat of my soul with everything else springing from that source.

**I am a Christian woman writing about wellness* and letting her faith seep into every crack and crevice of recipe creation, workouts and telling my everyday stories to go along with each taste I savor.

**I am a lover of all things wellness, but not in the worldly way*. Sure I hold credentials in the fitness and wellness industry…but I am noticing life in a new way, a non-credentialed way. Living well from the INSIDE OUT is the only qualification that really matters to me to share.

Who cares what you eat if food's already your god consuming all your emotions and energy? Why workout when fitness fills your soul and you still feel empty?

Ladies, I want you to know you are already beautiful! You're God's creation. He's looking at your soul when so many of us are still stuck looking in the mirror. We can do self-care the way He

wants us to, out of adoration for the bodies He built us.

Instead of obsessing over aesthetics or striving so hard to reach earthly standards, I'd encourage you to use living well as an act of gratitude, a way to energize your overall life and another means to live inspired.

So, yes, I see my perspective as different. I write about living well through my every day experiences, my grief, my motherhood, through food and fitness. I include all my little life lessons (the good, bad and downright embarrassing) in hopes to connect more women to living life refreshed, well and in authenticity.

3. Why do I write about what I do?

This one's the easiest and toughest to answer. You see, I've seen how God takes hurt, pain and struggle and turns it into a life lived well. So all my living well refers back to Him. I mean, when I naturally relate a new recipe to a soul-savoring lesson, it's obvious to me that I'm drawn forward by my faith from any which way direction! So, as I share my humble version of health, I inhale His Word and exhale the lessons of wellness I'm given.

And since I know I am…here's the hard part…better off as a widow than I was before I experienced the biggest loss in my life, I want to share with women everywhere how everything (yes, even our tangilbe self-care) rests on something bigger than all the striving we do to meet a cultural standard. It's all a tool to to accomplish His work through our hearts to our hands.

Please note: While I may be better off, I did not say life's all easy-peasy or I love how I'm living now more than I did during my life as a wife. **No**. In fact, the every day is exponentially more exhausting, messy, lonely and perhaps even less fun. But, even in the hardships and stress of single parenting, the frustrations of figuring out financing alone and the exhaustion at the end of every overflowing day, I now have a greater grip on what I am doing here! From motherhood to my own little heart's ministry here, *I write to help other women see how little ole messy, imperfect and damaged me lives well!*

4. How does my writing process work?

Huh? A process? According to the experts, I'm supposed to have some sort of amazing desk set-up, inspiring ambiance or unique way of pressing pen to paper to create wonderfully written words. But, well, I don't. Right now, I steel moments when my girls are in bed or occupied to transfer words from my many journals, saved on my phone or scribbled on scrap pieces of paper into some type of meaningful article. I prefer peace and quiet to background giddy girls or even white noise. I like a window nearby and maybe something refreshing to sip (tea, kombucha or, on a cold day, coffee). And almost always, I work well after reading a verse or staring into some inspiring words. Maybe my writing will feel more refined when I have more time to fawn over the form. But for now, it's about what I notice in my life. Yeah, I guess that's my one real prerequisite in the process: ***being a noticer in and of my own life***.

And now, moving on to the FUN stuff! Here are three bloggers who I adore, follow and feel inspired by.

Please hop on over and check them out! (I've linked to their full bios on their names and also to their blogs.)

**Kit Hinkle.** **[5]** Well, what can I possibly say about this lovely lady?! She's a widow gone before me, she's a mother of three boys and she leads the **aNew Season** **[4]**team of writers I'm a part of. She leads by tireless example, through heartfelt faith and in utter dedication to God's will and timing in her life. She writes out of genuine, overflowing love for every reader who lays eyes on her words. And besides her very real writing style, Kit inspires me to live my widow, single mama life better. She is one woman who has made a *beautiful difference* in the experience of my loss and transition into a new season!… Check her out here: **Kit Hinkle** **[6]**

**Ginger Harrington.** [7] I 'met' her online. Somehow we connected and that's what I feel about Ginger…connected. She's lively and loving and even typing about her here, I'm smiling big at my screen. Ginger's faith is BIG and her writing style ozzes Biblical values with real-life application. Sometimes it's serious but often with a light, funny twist I'm seriously drawn to. I mean, just look at her photo! Talk about fun loving and living well! You see, I'm not funny and Ginger makes me laugh. I love her for that…and for sticking to her sweet messages grounded in the Word. Check her out here: Ginger's Corner [8]

**Liz Anne Nay Wright.** [9]Ahh, yes, Liz. Her sweet, sincere soul-satisfying words touch my heart in so many ways. She another sister in Christ and widowhood. She's a homeschooling mama of four boys (which I cannot even imagine with all the sparkles and lace in my parts!). She lives out loud for the Lord and serves others in missions and online with her words by writing for aNew Season [4]. She also keeps her own blog about building a life after loss. She's tireless, engaging, real and true through and through! Check her out here: Daily Joy in the Journey [10]

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[1] http://40yearwanderer.com/about/
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