Published on *Happily Whole* (https://www.livinghappilywhole.com)

The Fresh Imperfection of Motherhood

May 9, 2014, written by katie



It feels free and fresh! It's liberating and youth-reviving. Each year when I'm first able to open the windows, air out the winter-worn house and hear the spring breeze blowing through my screens, I smell that certain fresh air scent and it sinks right into my soul, soothing it. I hear the birds singing their 'how are you's?' alongside lawnmowers manicuring neighbor's lawns and I long for this feeling to last.

Ah yes, I'm sitting here now hearing it all around me, taking in the lush green scene, freshness so bright right outside the window I can almost taste it. That distinct taste of spring.

You know how certain smells and scenes suddenly transport you back in time? Well, in this very moment I vividly sense a time seemingly so long ago, a time in my life when I was a wife—yes, a real-life wife living what I knew as my lot, my calling to care for a family including a father.

The scene: It's fresh and free, just like opening the windows for the first time in spring! I'm sitting on a

stone, a stone big enough to hold two, blowing bubbles at a baby on a blanket right near me in the grass. The breeze carries those bubbles away to the baby's wonderful amazement. She's all giggly in awe.

Then, I lift my eyes to across the yard where we planted some evergreen trees to someday offer a bit more privacy.

What I saw when I peered towards those trees was a man, my husband, with the same kind of wonderful amazement, of giddy awe, that was on my baby girl's face. I recall distinctly his look of peaceful satisfaction. It settled onto his eyes from someplace deep within his soul. Those eyes were looking at me. At ME!

Amazement and awe….for me?

He sauntered in his classic strong stride over to me and kissed me soft on the head. He looked at the baby on the blanket and said, 'You've got the best mommy in the whole wide world, Sugarpop,' and he plopped down on the rock next to me with his knees busting through those torn jeans.

When he spoke those words…'the best mommy in the whole wide world', my world busted right open. My heart heard it all echoic and amplified. ***And things were as they should be.***

Right there in the freshness of the springtime sun with green grass growing and neighbors mowing, words from a man I loved made my soul surge with inspiration to live that mommy-life, the image he held for me, as the mother of his baby girl.

He said it so often, how highly he thought of me as a mom, in his own quirky quips or with a romantic twist. He said it again in hospice [1], laying there in bed after his legs lost their motion and but his heart hadn't caught up yet. I, with all the strength I could muster up in that moment, promised I'd do my best by his two girls.

'I will be the best mom I know how. I'll teach them who you are and I'll keep faith the focus… I promise.'

He laid there, looked at me from his sunken eyes yet strong with conviction and reiterated his confidence-to-a-fault how perfect a mama I'd always be for our girls. He held not a doubt in his still clear head.

That time, without the fresh air all around me, without the lush green lawn and without the baby's eyes watching intently those bubbles, I felt his love and hope as fresh as it ever had been before. And in that moment close to death, ***things were as they should be.***



Now, back at my desk typing feverishly as memories come flooding back, I don't understand how one man could fill me up with so much love and trust. I'm sure he wanted it to last me a lifetime! A lifetime without him here to keep saying it, a lifetime without my eyes and heart to hear that fresh sentiment that freed me of my motherly doubt.

Alas, I've failed. I've found flaws in my mothering in places I never knew existed when I had to question whose words came from my mouth—mine or my stubborn six year olds. I've flailed in frustration behind the closed bathroom door in tears over their tantrums. I've fought back words and worries not fit for a life filled with the love and gratitude he saw in me that day on the lawn.

Because mothering, if we are all honest, is not always worth honoring. ***Carrying children in our wombs does not perpetually dress us up in garb deserving of matriarchal gold medals!***

We all hide behind our messes, we all host pity parties, we all look to the wrong places for purpose in our parenting from time to time.

Motherhood is not the female equivalent of sainthood. I know it for sure since I'm no saint! Motherhood is down and dirty, in the trench kind-of work. It's revealing and sometimes reviling.

And so I wonder, how long will his words last when I find new flaws every day? When he's not here convincing me, how can I keep going with a face fresh filled with springtime hope day in and day out?

But Kevin did convince me of one thing. I've failed but he would not be disappointed. He succeeded in laying something so hard on my heart and deep in my soul that's it's become the essence of my motherhood. Kevin knew my faults better than anyone but he never held them against me. He held them up away from me, where I couldn't reach them to fuel further self-doubt.

Just like his confidence in me never waned, neither does the grace of God. How my husband saw into my flawed mothering is a metaphor for how God sees me mothering…**how GOD sees you, too, through eyes of grace and mercy.** (And Lord knows I need mercy, don't you?!)

Now without Kevin's words and tangible touch, without him peering at me with eyes urging me on, I hear that same lesson from my heavenly Father. Every time I blink back tears, every time I question why I possess the privilege to parent my girls, with each exhausting 'time out' for talking back or hundredth time asking, 'can you user kinder words for that?', I remind myself ***God's got enough grace for me***.

Whether you have someone cheering you on or you are all alone, whether you feel fresh or you feel flawed, whether you're living mindfully as a mother or your lonely and lost….***God has got you covered with a grace we cannot consume.***

So, while motherhood isn't always beautiful like bubbles to a baby in the bright blue sky, ***motherhood is a career we're called to by the Creator of ALL things***. With each new morning, cover yourself with His grace and walk wearing confidence in Him. He knew what He was doing when He placed your babies in your belly!

That truth will always be fresh and freeing to me! So, I'm opening these windows wide to the promises from God and the confidence I have in Him. I smell the sweet scents of spring as I hold fast to my faith guiding me through a one-woman-obstacle course. And, this spring as I air out my home, I'm remembering the metaphor Kevin gave me for how God sees me as the mother to his two precious baby girls: a mother covered in grace and mercies new each morning.

Dear Mothers…parent with grace because God's got enough for you!

Katie

Source URL: https://www.livinghappilywhole.com/articles/kevin%E2%80%99s-corner/fresh-imperfection-motherhood

Links
[1] https://www.livinghappilywhole.com/articles/kevin%E2%80%99s-corner/reliving-last-days