

How Do You Feel Successful as a Mother? - Episode 58



Power of Moms
A Gathering Place for Deliberate Mothers

Most mothers come from a background where success is defined quite clearly – grades, money, promotion etc. – and struggle with the transition to motherhood where the question often comes up: “What have I done today? Did I do anything?” Many days feel like we are going in circles ALL day and we feel like we have little to show for what we do.

Saren offers her advice by recalling a time when she had 5 preschoolers at home and was struggling to understand her accomplishments after cleaning up the same messes and watching the freshly mopped floor flood with juice. She suggests that you find something to point to that you did that day.

Make a very short list of realistic things you could do:

1. For the house
2. For the family
3. For you

These things don’t have to be monumental, but can simply mean “clean out that one drawer.” Create this list of little projects that can help show and visualize what you’ve accomplished. Saren also mentions that this technique worked for her because it gave her something specific to point to, and this is part of her definition of success. Your definition might be different so set out to define what makes you feel successful.

For example, April measures her success by the cleanliness of her house. Obviously, her children come first, but April acknowledges that environment plays

a role in her happiness. See a great article April wrote called "[Have Your Ever Put the House Before the Children?](#)" April knows that at the end of the day, if she is sitting in a huge mess, that mess weighs her down and effects how she mothers her children.

Sometimes we have to let some things go. Some dishes might not get done, and some floors may be left unswept. Define how environment affects our mothering. Define what that is that you need to do to take care of yourself that helps you have a better mood and relationships.

Why do we want to feel success? Pride? Maybe. But most of us want to just feel good about ourselves and feel a sense of control in our lives, allowing us to be the moms we want to be. Being a successful mom is not an "all about me" attitude. It involves a lot of sacrifice. But that sacrifice can be fun and rewarding.

Recently, one of April's daughters was running for school elections. Their house was taken over by posters and stickers. In this time together, April realized what had made that particular week successful: figured out how to run a campaign, discussed what slogans worked best, created side-by-side, worked together, and invested in the child.

This work was successful and fulfilling for mother and child together; however, having something you are personally excited about helps develop you as a person in addition to benefiting your motherhood. When all personal goals are abandoned, usually we can be happy but not quite as fulfilled as when working on something that is personally exciting. When time and energy are put into things that make you happy, your mothering will be better. Your goals don't need to be big and fancy, just find or continue to do something that makes you happy, that you're personally excited about.

April loves writing. Saren loves training. Their loves led to writing a blog and training for moms. You never know where your "love" will lead. Sometimes it leads to something big (like Power of Moms), other times it makes you feel good and develops talents, providing a sense of progress.

Take a baby step toward a dream. Process is just as important as outcome. So much pressure is put on the outcome, but the process is SO important. We're not going to see the outcome in our kids for a long time because they have a whole life to live. We get snippets and beautiful moments, but for the most part the process needs to feel successful without waiting for a specific outcome.

Be willing to shift up the process when something isn't working. For example, one hormonal day, April was a bit snappy with a child and felt like a horrible mom. She made a surprise lunch date with that child and had a fabulous lunch to talk, apologize, create a code word for when one or both are cranky. Shift that perspective, acknowledge that the situation didn't go as planned, and find a way to make it right when you don't do everything perfectly.

A big part of success is starting over, doing it a second time or tenth time, and adjusting how we do things. Transform the lack of success and turn it into a launching place for more success. Every mom has those moments where you snap, but the mark of a successful mom is figuring out what to do to move forward and learn from that mistake so if/when that moment comes up again, you have the tools to respond. Failure is an important part of success.

Acknowledge the good. Recognize what you *are* doing instead of focusing on what you are not doing. Don't expect too much of yourself. We all have things we want to do better, but we need to change the negative statements to the positives. Count your successes!!

Mothers want to be successful and deliberate mothers, and have the tendency to expect more than is healthy. [Brene Brown](#), in an interview with Oprah, discusses two words that are dangerous to knowing our own success: "never enough." We need to remember that we are doing a great job.

Take Away/Summary:

- Define what makes you feel successful. What gives you that sense of accomplishment? What are the things that make you happy?

- How can you make the process part of the success? Remember that the process can be the success.
- Have something that you are excited about. Small? Big? Make it personal!
- Start over when you mess up.
- Recognize what you are doing. Recognize that you are enough. Giving your best effort is enough.
- Count your successes! Pat yourself on the back whenever you can. Share your success. Share your best ideas.

You are more successful than you think. Give yourself a boost!

Transcribed by Rosie Liljenquist