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3 Tips to Make your Mother's Day

Mother's Day creates all sorts of feelings for every mum. For many mothers, it's a day of delight and joy. For some, it is a day of high hopes that hubby (or partner) and the kids will come through with a special something (and no fighting!). In some cases, you get what you really wanted: a "World's Best Mum" coffee cup from the school Mother's Day stall, and everything is *perfect*.

And some people mourn Mother's Day. It's a day of difficulty. The pain of not having your own mum with you, the pain of having a mum who wasn't safe, or even the pain of knowing you're not doing great right now with your own kids (or don't have any) can make the idea that we would celebrate seem insensitive.

Today, as we move toward Mother's Day, our *Insights* article is about *you...* mum - and how you can get more out of Mother's Day. The three ideas I share are designed for every mother, regardless of your approach to, and feelings about, Mother's Day.

1. Get into 'We'-Time vs 'Me'-Time

Canadian researcher, Dr Elizabeth Dunn, has discovered that connection through time together (we-time) is associated with greater happiness than having time alone (me-time). The irony here is that on Mother's Day (or other special occasions) there is often a pull towards that quiet bath, massage, or brunch without kids asking questions and getting in the way!

To be clear, there's *nothing* wrong with having some me-time. In fact, sometimes it's the only thing that provides the sanity you're seeking. If you need it, take it.

But... once you've had that respite, jump back into being mum with both feet!

Close to a century of the very best research tells us that "Happiness is love, full stop." And we experience that love through high quality connection: feeling *seen, heard, and valued*. Relationships where we feel seen, heard, and valued, are life-giving relationships. They elevate us. They build us. They sustain us.

This Mother's Day, enjoy your moments of peace and indulgence. You deserve them. But make time for relationships where you and those around you feel seen, heard, and valued. Maybe you can pause and really 'be there' for your kids? Or perhaps they can dive in and give you that foot rub or back massage - or get into doing the dishes and folding clothes?

2. Savour

Being a mum is hard at times. It's a long game! But studies show that being able to pause and really take in what's happening around us might be one of the most direct pathways to happiness.

Sometimes that little bit of heaven that happens when you see your child (or children) smiling as you receive your gift from them, or feel their body squeezing up against you as they give you that hug, or even as you watch them eating brekky with you (after they've made something scrumptious as a treat!) is all it takes for the world to feel right again.

I know it's a word you hear thousands of times a day/week/month, but have you closed your eyes and savoured the fact that there is a kiddo (or a family of them) who make it possible for you to have the special privilege of being called "Mum"?

3. Do Something For You

Ok, so I pushed the 'we-time' pretty hard. But this is **your** special day. Can you find an hour where you get to set the agenda? Maybe you take a walk, a bath, or some time to lie down and immerse yourself in a novel. Perhaps you can do some art or craft?

And yet, there's the thing where "it's Mother's Day" and it's nice to spend the time doing what **you** want, but with those humans who make you a mum. It could be that you take the family on a ride, a rainforest walk, or a sunset stroll.

Bonus idea: Make Mother's Day Meaningful for Your Mum

The average woman in Australia lives to the age of 83. At the risk of saying something scary, the number of times you'll say "Happy Mother's Day" to your own mum is vanishingly small, and reducing each year.

Take this opportunity to say what needs to be said. Express love. Write a letter of gratitude and read it to her. Tell your mum why she's your rock. Go one step further and tell her how she inspires you as a mum yourself. (And if things are strained, consider whether repairs can be made in meaningful ways. Small steps can make big differences). It's possible that it might be the best Mother's Day ever - because it's (weirdly) not about you - but all about you!

An important note for husbands, partners, co-parents and kids

Hubby, partner, co-parent... this week it's time to step up. Make an effort. Find a way to express the magic that you have in your life - and the unspeakable support you receive - as a result of this great woman in your life. Involve the kids. Support them in their efforts to honour their mum. Make it count. Create space for your kids' mum to spend **quality** time with her children. Do the household chores she'd normally do so she can have that space to do what she wants most - be a present, available, connected mum to her children.

Happy Mother's Day - from the Happy Families Team.



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