

Advice to Mothers

☒ Moms could give themselves the best gift of all this Mother's Day – regret free parenting. Author and psychotherapist Catherine Hickem suggests mothers take the day to reflect on who they are and where they want to go with their mothering for the next year while trusting in God.

“It should be a holiday of self-reflection, prayer, and purpose and less a ‘You survived another year so let me give you a gift!’”

Being intentional about yourself and your role as mom is at the core of what she calls “intentional mothering” because the stronger you are as a person, the stronger you are as a mother. Knowing who you are is the key to raising good kids and the only way to make sure your own fears, expectations and ego don't get in the way.

Even more important, according to Hickem, is that moms need to be intentional about being God-dependent. “When moms lean on God for parenting wisdom, hope, insight, and strength, the weight of motherhood responsibility isn't as heavy because they see that God carries the load for them.”

Hickem adds that moms need to prayerfully self-assess and develop clear goals to work on in the coming year by asking themselves some significant questions.

- Is there a child I need to get to know better this year?
- Do I have a healthy relationship with each of my children?
- Have I acknowledged who they are and what I have learned from them this last year?
- Do I need to say “I'm sorry” for anything in our relationship?

Hickem even suggests moms write a blessing to each child.

This message can convey reflection, gratitude, and insight. It can reveal lessons learned from her children.

If the process seems more daunting than Mother's Day breakfast in bed, take baby steps if needed, but Hickem says self-knowledge and fully depending on and trusting in God for direction are essential for the gift that keeps on giving – regret free parenting.

By reframing Mother's Day, moms will also be setting a great example for their children to embrace and practice with their own children.

Catherine Hickem, LCSW, is the author of the book Regret Free Parenting: Raise Good Kids and Know You're Doing It Right and is a licensed psychotherapist with three decades of experience.