
insights and encouragement from the “home front”

MEMOIRS OF A MOM

May 2013

A Mom Can Do Everything

I didn't think I would necessarily have children. I was very involved in a career I loved and felt that babies were for other women. But as the years went by I started to wonder what it would be like to be the tour guide to this wonderful world for a new traveler. I developed plans and had several ideas of how I could really fulfill this amazing role and responsibility. Ultimately, I found the possibilities irresistible and . . .

My first moment of motherhood was amazing! I was in the hospital delivery room after spending several hours watching the Broncos play the Cowboys on a beautiful October afternoon. It seemed like the plays were timed perfectly with the contractions. Finally, we moved to the delivery room and as the last contraction did its job, the doctor said, “Oh, it looks like we have a little half-back!” Then “Oh--it's a GIRL!” Adriann Louise Helton had made her entrance into this world! That was the moment that the most incredible magic of my life began.

A few years later her brother, T.J., joined the family, and I really started earning my stripes as a mom. The delivery room chat from the doctor this time was short and sweet...“Boy!” I tried to understand what he meant. Was it “Boy! That was fast!” or “Boy, what a big baby!” But no . . . he had meant the Baby was a Boy!! What a surprise! This generation hadn't seen any boys yet, so the fun and adventure were really on!

As these two amazing creatures grew up, they constantly amazed me. But what was even more remarkable was how much responsibility bringing them into the world meant and much I didn't know. How could one of the most complex, delicate and incredible creations ever made not come with an owner's manual?! I have to tell you I gave it plenty of time to show up but, alas, it never did. So, with the help of family and friends I gave it my all and hoped for the best. Fortunately, I was given the best raw material possible to work with in these two. I got the credit for being a “Good Mom,” but I have to admit, I was lucky, and my children always made me look good.

The best part of life now is the loving relationship I enjoy with both of these wonderful young adults with the bonus of a treasure trove of memories packed so tight under these many years. They are memories I have of the incredible years I was blessed with as they grew up under my roof. All of the birthday parties, Halloween costumes, ribbons, and dolls. Christmases, GI Joes, and Legos that gave way to elementary school, dance lessons, Little League, and Boy and Girl Scouts. Then came middle school and high school with proms, class elections, and (Yikes!!) real cars. Finally, all too soon, they spread their wings and left for college and then careers. It seems to have happened in an instant as I look back in the compressed spy-glass of time.

I would love to have the chance to revisit those days but as they say, “We go this way but once.” Even now, I can see all the way back to the beginning and feel like I could reach out and touch those precious little feet and marvel at the perfection of their tiny ears. The first time I tied their little shoes and the last time they needed my help to tie them. The first time I packed their lunch for preschool and the last time they took their lunch to school because it just wasn’t cool.

I reflect on all of the lessons I learned raising children and think, “What would I put in the owner’s manual if someone asked me to write a chapter?” The most important thing my children taught me was that a mom can do everything—she just can’t do everything all at once. I was one of the lucky ones. I was able to spend their growing-up years at home watching and participating in everything I could and relishing every bit. “Perseverance” would be an entire chapter as would “Nurture to the Max.” I think I would also make sure there was a chapter devoted to taking the time to “Smell the PB and J’s.” When I called my grandmother to tell her we were starting our little family she told me, “Hold on, Lou dear. These are truly your golden years.” How right she was. Those years were the favorite chapter of my life—and I loved them so!

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