

There's Value in the Mom You Already Are

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Twenty-five years ago, Jon Kabat-Zinn first published his seminal book on mindfulness, *Wherever You Go, There You Are*. Today, we're drawing inspiration from this idea and applying it to parenting. No matter what kind of mom you want to be in the future, it's okay to start from wherever you are as a mom right now. *There is value in what you already do as a mom.*

Let's back up and consider a situation that could seriously test this idea. You made it through the holidays relatively unscathed, your kids are back in school (hooray!), and life can settle back into its normal, albeit chaotic, rhythm. You're feeling okay. You go on Pinterest for some school snack ideas and are overwhelmed by the artistic lunchtime creations and colorful lunchbox notes. *And*, you see what "picky eaters" apparently enjoy in their school lunches and are horrified that your kids won't even *try* any of those foods. You share your concerns about your kids' eating habits with your husband, who tries to help by telling you "don't worry about it."

When dinnertime rolls around the next evening, one of your kids refuses to even touch the food. You. Lose. It. That night, you close your eyes and cringe at how things went. You just wanted to add a little variety to your kids' lunches...you had good intentions but now feel like an underachieving mom and you're upset with yourself for the evening's epic parent fail.

Sound familiar? ***Being a mom is not easy.*** Even when we have the best intentions, things don't always go as planned. So, it's important to go out of your way to tune in to the strengths you already have and be a little more forgiving of your weaknesses. No matter what kind of mom you are and what kind of mom you want to be, you already have some things going for you! It's just hard to remember those things when you're only focused on your mistakes.

Now, take a moment to think about your expectations about how a mom *should talk*, how a mom *should behave* or what a mom *should do* for her family. Our ideas about how moms *should* be come from our own experiences as kids, from our own personal ideals, from seeing

how other moms speak and act, from TV and movies, and from things our significant others, children, parents, friends, and, yes, even strangers convey.

Some, but not all, expectations are explicit. While your kids have undoubtedly told you at some point that you're mean (at least we assume they have), it's less likely that they've told you that "good moms *never* raise their voices or use a harsh tone with their kids." You may still have a belief that "good" moms *never* yell, so you get mad at yourself whenever you do.

As we emphasized last week, the new year isn't about being a whole new you. *There are a lot of things about you as a mom that you wouldn't want to change and that your family and friends wouldn't want you to change either.* Maybe you're good at walking away when your teenager is trying to pick a fight. Maybe you're great at lightening the mood in tense moments. Maybe you love coloring with your kids. Maybe you can see when your husband really needs you to tag in. These are the kinds of strengths that you may already have as a mom. Check out our free printable, [Self-Talk for Self-Acceptance](#), for quotes and affirmations that can help you remember to be kind to yourself.

Moms have an uncanny ability to identify even their tiniest flaws but ***this week, notice some of your parenting strengths.*** Notice something positive about yourself as a mom on a daily basis and notice what it feels like to see the good that's already there. You can use our free printable, [This Week's Mom accomplishments](#), to help you keep track of your parenting wins. If you find that you're beating yourself up or having a strong reaction to something you've said or done (or something left unsaid or that you didn't do), see if you can identify the "should" that's under the surface. *You don't need to change negative thoughts or feel bad about the fact that you have them!* Just start thinking about where your negative thoughts come from and why it's so easy to see your faults and so hard to give yourself the credit you deserve. We hope this week's blog and free printables will help you develop a more accepting, balanced view of yourself.