



Mommy is a Person: Taking Care of the “Me” in the “Mom”

Power of Moms Trainer Outline

This workshop outline is designed for a workshop from 2-4 hours in length. There are many tried and true discussion questions and activities included (indicated by *** as well as caps and bold).

You'll want to read through the entire outline and the supplementary articles discussed, think about your own personal stories and ideas, then decide which subjects you'd like to emphasize (highlighting the points, questions and activities you want to be sure to get to works well, plus you can add your notes on personal stories you'd like to share and additional points you'd like to make in the margins).

For a 2-hour workshop, you may want to focus just on the introduction and the 5 facets (part 1), going over part 3 as part of the conclusion. With a 4-hour workshop, you would likely have time to get into all sections of this outline and have some good discussion groups and activities.

Before moving from one section to the next, we encourage you to have participants write down ONE action step. This way, people will emerge from the workshop with a very short list of do-able action items.

When doing small discussion groups, we encourage you to always have a report-back where each group VERY BRIEFLY shares their top 1-2 ideas. When doing large group discussion, we encourage you to take only about 5 comments before moving on. It's nice to say “I love your comments but we're just going to take one more before we move on to all this other great stuff I've got for you.”

Introduction:

- Share favorite points from the article by April Perry, “[Mommy is a Person](#)”
- Talk about how when you're on an airplane, they tell you to put your own oxygen mask on first before helping others around you. If we don't take care of our basic needs, we'll soon be unable to help others.
- “If Mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy.”
- Share any personal stories you have about taking care of yourself or about other moms you know figuring out that they need to take better care of themselves.
- Balance is important to keep in mind throughout this workshop – while our needs are

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very important and often overlooked, our families' needs are also very important. Many moms tip the balance towards their family's needs but some tip the balance towards their needs. Balancing our needs with those of our families is something we need to think about daily, weekly and even minute-by-minute sometimes.

- ***** OPENING QUESTION:** What are the basic rights of all human beings? What do people need to be happy?
- Tie answers from the preceding question into an overview of the following topics that will be covered in this session:
 - Meeting our Basic Human Needs: Five Facet Review
 - Boundaries and Margins (keeping from being overloaded)
 - Progress and Becoming (feeling that you're moving forward in your life)

1. Basic Human Needs – Five Facets

Moms are always concerned with meeting their children's basic human needs. Moms spend a great deal of time and effort ensuring that their children eat healthy foods, get enough sleep, find friends, learn their ABC's and go on to do well in school, develop self-esteem, and so on. But shouldn't moms also be taking care of their own human needs? At Power of Moms and Power of Families workshops, we encourage parents to do a “five facet review” every couple months on their children. Parents sit down and talk about how each child is doing physically, mentally, socially, emotionally and spiritually. We're going to spend a bit of time together today doing a “five facet review” on ourselves and figuring out some areas where we might need to focus some attention. We need to be taking good care of each facet of ourselves so we can be the mom and wife we really want to be. Plus as we work on each area of our own personal development, we're setting good examples for our children. They need to see us working on our own personal goals and they need to see us as the people that we really are, people who need to develop and grow just like they do.

***** WORKSHEET: Take Self-Assessment Worksheet (about 7 minutes seems to work well).** *Worksheet found in separate PDF document included on Trainer Page for this topic.*

We all need to stop and think about how we're doing and what we need to do better. When we feel like we've got a handle on who we are, where we stand and where we're headed, we feel much better about life.

This is a portion of the self-assessment included with the Bloom Game and they'll all have access to the full version of this online version after the training – everyone will receive a 6-month subscription to this great self-assessment and goal-setting tool.

Instruct people to quickly circle the numbers that correspond to how they're doing in different areas but leave the write-in parts blank for now – we'll come back to those parts later.

After they've completed the Self-Assessment, ask “What stood out to you? What areas did you realize you need to focus on more? Were there areas where you felt you were doing well?” Reassure them that they'll get a chance to take this home with them and look at it

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some more and that the Bloom Game will help them set bite-sized goals each week to move towards better and better scores in each area.

Further Exploration of the Five Facets

As time permits, take a few minutes to go over some thoughts for each of these areas and/or divide people into groups to discuss challenges and ideas for each area and then come back and share their responses. You may want to just choose a couple “facets” to focus on. Read through the concepts and activities suggested and choose those that resonate most with you. Share plenty of personal stories as you share the principles.

1. MENTAL:

- **Fun, Spontaneity, Cherished Moments, and Anticipation:**
 - Make time for fun: Fun? Is that really a basic human need? What do you think? Watch your kids. Do they need fun? So do you.
 - Cherish the beautiful moments: “Life is not measured by the breaths we take but by the moments that take our breath away.” The hard moments as a mother may outnumber the beautiful moments, but the beautiful moments vastly outweigh the hard stuff. If we don't make a point of really noticing and cherishing the special moments, we're passing up the very fabric of which life is made
 - Something to look forward to: We all need fun things on our calendars that we can prepare for and be excited about. It's a basic human need. It can be an event, a treat, a simple gathering with friends, etc. Most women are happiest if there's something on their calendar that they're excited about each week. Try to make this happen. What are some examples of simple things you could get on your calendar and look forward to?

- **Breaks and Time to Pursue your Passions**
 - ***** QUESTIONS: Should good moms take breaks? Should good moms pursue their own interests while their children are young?**
 - Share favorite parts of [Mommy's Naptime 101](#); may want to emphasize that it's normal in most cultures for people to have a “siesta” or rest during the day – doesn't have to involve actual sleep, but should involve some down time to read or do something enjoyable that feels like a real break. Even the most menial low-wage jobs offer people 15 minute breaks and ½ hour off for lunch. Don't moms deserve and need some breaks?
 - We all need a little time to pursue some things that are meaningful and interesting to us. How would your life be different if you prioritized time each day to read a chapter of a book, pursue an interest or hobby, work on learning something new, etc.? In just 15-30 minutes a day you can realistically move some of your dreams forward. Share some examples of how you or those you know have been able to pursue a personal goal or learn something new by using discretionary time wisely. One example is a mom who'd always wanted to learn to tap dance. She found some online lessons, bought a cheap small piece of plywood, found some used tap shoes and taught herself to tap dance. Her little boys learned too! With 15 minutes a day, she was able to become quite a tap dancer after a couple months and it brought her so much joy (there's a video about this on Power of Moms [HERE](#)).

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- **Using Discretionary Time Wisely**

- We all have some discretionary time each day (baby's nap time, time that kids are at school, time that they're playing quietly on their own, time when they're in bed at night).
- We can choose to use this time for activities that will help us learn, grow and relax while lifting our spirits or that we can use to do things that may not help us much.
- We need to be deliberate and disciplined with our time and avoid time-suckers that may bring us down.
- *****QUESTIONS:**
 - **What are some time-suckers in your life?** Examples might be: internet surfing with no defined purpose or boundaries around how much time we want to spend on things, TV, doing a project that isn't meaningful to you and isn't particularly meaningful to anyone else and that you should have said "no" to, gossip, Facebook, etc.
 - **What are some activities that always uplift you?** Examples might be: reading quality material, working on a meaningful project, taking a needed nap, watching a TV show that makes you laugh and makes you feel good, talking to a good friend, capturing your thoughts and experiences in a journal or on a blog, etc.

*****QUESTIONS: Do you have time every day that is just for you? What do you do during your breaks? How can or do you use your discretionary time to pursue your passions?**

2. SPIRITUAL:

Nourishing your spirit: scriptures and prayer or meditation

- Whether we're religious or not, everyone needs to take time for introspection, thought, meditation and/or prayer and study of inspirational materials (books, scriptures, etc.) make a real difference.
- *****QUESTION: What do you do to nurture your spirit?**
- Think about these questions and make a note of what you can change: Do you take time to meditate, pray or read inspirational materials daily? How can you do better with this?

3. PHYSICAL:

Pretty much all of us scrimp in at least one of these areas of physical care. Different aspects of this are more important to each of us and that's OK. But we need to think about how we're doing in these areas and make course corrections regularly.

*****ACTIVITY:** Can divide into four groups and have each discuss the questions included for each of the following subjects then have a spokesperson for each group report back to the larger group.

- Exercise: Some people desperately need the endorphins and/or the fresh air that comes from exercise. Some people need the energy that comes from exercise. Some people need the boost to their self-image that comes from exercise. Some people need the health benefits that come from exercise. We all have different priorities when it comes to exercise, but we all need it to some degree. What aspect of exercise is

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important to you (If any)? What can you do to make it happen more often? What are some ways that you have worked exercise into your life as a mom?

- Diet: Pretty much all of us recognize there are some things we could do with our diet to help ourselves feel better and maybe look better as well. Can include some material from Allyson's article: [Fat and Happy](#). Anyone here have what they'd consider a perfect diet? What have you found you need to do regarding your diet to have the energy you need? What has helped you be more disciplined about eating?
- Appearance: What's important to you about your physical appearance? What makes you feel pretty? Is it your hair that really matters to you? Make up? Fingernails? Clothes? Do you give yourself time to spend on the aspects of your personal appearance that bring you pleasure? How have you found the time/money to do what you need?
- Sleep: How much sleep do you need to the happy, nice mom and wife you want to be? How much sleep is realistic for you? Do you prioritize sleep? What could you do to get more sleep?

SOCIAL:

Women are generally social creatures and really need the opportunity to get together and talk with other women.

- What do you do to nurture yourself socially? What social outlets do you have? What outlets have you had previously that you've missed? What more can you do to nurture yourself socially?
- Possibilities: Learning Circle, Book Group (great for Mental nurturing as well), cultivate friendships via phone calls and playgroups, girls' night out, etc.

EMOTIONAL:

Being Enough

- Avoid the "compare snare" (can use parts of Allyson's article – [The Other Mothers](#))
- Blogs – watch out for "comparitis"
- Being your own kind of perfect and your own personal best (can use parts of Allyson's article – [The Perfect Mother](#))
- All that really matters is what the Lord thinks (if your audience is open to religious suggestions)
- Realistic expectations - being realistic about the size of your plate – good vs great, doing small things with great love vs. trying to do big things that don't quite pan out and keep you from smaller things that might matter more.
- Accepting: [It's Going to be Hard – and that's OK](#)

*****ACTIVITY: Thought Replacement Therapy Activity** (share points from Allyson's Article, [What Did you Just Say?](#) and/or Saren's article, [Thought Replacement Therapy](#))

- We all have negative thoughts that we say to ourselves all the time. These thoughts aren't doing us any favors and we can break the habit.
- Ask: What are the negative things you say to yourself the most often? (list them on a board or paper or just write them down – examples: My hair looks awful. My house is a mess. I'm never on time. Why can't I keep it together like so and so? What's wrong with me...)

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- We can't just erase these negative thoughts. The only way to make them go away is by replacing them, repeatedly, with positive thoughts. We need to make our own list of our most frequent negative statements to ourselves and come up with new positive thoughts we will replace them with when they pop up. Then we can create a new "rut."
- What are the positive thoughts we can replace our negative thoughts with? (go through the negative thoughts people brainstormed and come up with a corresponding positive thought for about 10 of them. Examples based on the negative thoughts above: I'm glad I have hair. My house is lived in. I'll start earlier so I can be on time next time. I have lots of talents that so and so doesn't have. Everyone has their own talents. Today's just got some challenges but I can do it...)

2. Boundaries and Margins

- **Quotes:** Great quotes to live by: "Healthy Women have Boundaries and Margins" and "Life is Long" What do each of these quotes mean to you?
- **Having it all:** You can have everything that's really important to you – but not all at the same time. Some things have to go and some things have to wait.
- **Boundaries:**
 - Keeping your boundaries tight around the things that really matter to you is important.
 - Once you decide what works for you and what is important for you, you can work on keeping time-suckers, fluff and extra stuff that doesn't work for you and your family out.
 - When we haven't defined our boundaries, we can easily be sucked into activities that are frustrating and can get into the "woe is me" spirit very easily.
 - It's empowering to decide what we want to do and what we don't want to do – and while flexibility is important and re-evaluating our boundaries is also important, it's easier to decide what to say "yes" to and what to say "no" to when our boundaries are somewhat defined.
- **Margins:**
 - Margins can give you time and space in your brain and in your life to deal with and even embrace the unexpected.
 - On top of boundaries, margins are vital for healthy living – women need to create space for fun and for the unexpected things that happen each day.
 - If we plan so that we'll be living right up against our boundaries all the time, we'll always be stressed and worried by the "extra" things that come up. We won't ever be "pleasantly surprised" and serendipity and spontaneity will be squeezed out of our lives.
- **Rules:** You can decide what's "your thing" and what is not, you can come up with your own rules for what you'll agree to do. *****ACTIVITY:** Have everyone make a list of the rules they want to use as they decide what to do and what not to do (they can brainstorm these ideas outloud together or make their own list then share some of their

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answers). Here are some examples of what people might come up with:

- Will it help your family?
 - Will it use your own unique talents well?
 - Will it be interesting and meaningful to you?
 - Are you the only one who can do it? Is now the right time in your life to do this?
 - **Great general rule of thumb:** Do that which only you can do and that which needs to be done now.
- **Saying NO:** Learn to simply say “I’m sorry, but that won’t work for me” or “I’m sorry but that won’t work with my family’s needs right now.” No big explanations necessary.
 - **Barely do some things.** You’ve heard the old saying, “If a thing’s worth doing, it’s worth doing well.” Cast that aside and replace it with this one coined by Linda and Richard Eyre - “If a thing’s just barely worth doing, just barely do it.” What are some things that are “just barely worth doing” in your life? Can you let go of perfectionism and just barely do them? What are some things that are worth doing – but just barely?
 - *****ACTIVITY/QUESTION:** What are some of the things you can only do NOW in your life? What are some things you’d like to do but that can and should wait? Brainstorm or make individual lists.

3. Progress and Becoming

Once we know where we are, it’s time to progress and gradually become all that we’re meant to be. Lack of progress is very linked to depression. We all need to see that we’re moving forward – even if it’s just inch by inch. We all need to feel that we’re using our talents and abilities and expanding them bit by bit.

Here are some simple practices and keys that can keep you progressing in a very manageable way:

- **Sunday Sessions:** “Sunday Sessions” are a huge key to having a life of purpose and progress and happiness. Take ½ hour to an hour every Sunday (and treat it as an appointment – one that can’t be missed) to look at your past week, do a little self-assessment and plan and set simple goals for your upcoming week.
- **Set realistic, workable goals** – SMART goals (use the [SMART Goals podcast](#) by April and Saren if you want or check out this [article on SMART goals](#))
- **Use the Bloom Game** to set balanced workable goals week by week and to share your scores with friends if you’d like a little extra motivation. You’ll feel a real sense of progress and joy plus you’ll be encouraged to find more fun in your life – you get points for serendipity too!
- **Do the Power of the Month at The Power of Moms** – Each month there will be great articles, questions and challenges that can help you progress in one specific area each

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month with the support of 1000's of other great moms.

- **Pat yourself on the back** – You can do this via keeping a journal and a blog and recording all that you're learning and doing and contributing – as you look back, you'll be able to see your growth.
- **Create or join a Learning Circle** – every month, everyone in the group will work on a specific assignment that will help you progress as a mom and as an individual, then you'll share your progress at the next month's meeting.

Final Conclusion

Re-emphasize any points that came out strongly from discussion. Encourage everyone to make just one decision about one action step they'll take in each of the five areas you've discussed. If time, you can have them write down one thing they want to do or one change they'd like to make in each area and then invite participants to share some of their action items with the group.

Share a personal story or favorite quote.

End with a challenge to do something every single day to nurture yourself and grow yourself. Becoming your own best self is an important way to give your best to your family.