

Kristina Wirthlin: #1 Mom award

Have you ridden a long and considerate train of thought, one of a serious nature, and found yourselves contemplating the one who taught you love, the one who stands by you and is in constant struggle to give you safety and protection? In other words, have you ever marveled at your mother? When a person does this they begin to understand but still do not fully grasp the idea and the role of a mother. My mom is someone who spends time, sacrifices resources and gives thought and emotion in the service of others. She by all accounts has the best personality any kid could ask for in a mother.

Probably the most appreciated talent of my mother is that she is an amazing cook. She supports our family with this wonderful gift of hers never tiring from her arduous labor. Some of the wonderful products of her supernatural gift include: fajitas, bulgogi, a Korean dish, corn chowder, chicken parmesan and on occasion her world famous leg of lamb. All of these dishes, of course, are filled with variety and nutrients that never tire the palate and fill the soul. Many often astonish at her ability to pick up a new recipe and flawlessly craft it up like she had made the dish her whole life. One of her most impressive dishes that she perfected on her first try was one of our house favorites, her Korean bulgogi.

Once upon a happy Sunday that my sister and brother-in-law, Eli, were in town. We decided that to celebrate this occasion we would make a special dish that Eli had enjoyed on his mission in Korea for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. My mom, my siblings and I were all pitching in to make this illustrious dinner. The main dish, bulgogi, consisted of steak wrapped up in a sweet and spicy red sauce. Often, bulgogi is served on rice. We also add sides of cucumber, kimchi, kimchi pancakes and of course the world's finest Costco whole milk. On this occasion it took almost an hour to prepare the meal, a stipulation well worth this delicacy.

We all sat down, filled ourselves with this fine meal and enjoyed it. In fact Eli, the Korean food connoisseur, said of this dish which my mom had so expertly crafted and I quote, “This Bulgogi is the best Bulgogi I had ever had.”

I was very incredulous and shocked because, coming from Eli, that was high praise. He is not a man to throw around empty praises and false hopes. What he said was how it is. The only word that could come out of my thoughtful and eloquent mouth was, “What!” I did not think that my mother’s ethnic dish was in such high regard.

“Your mom is a really good cook Tom, you ought to consider yourself lucky,” he responded. This remark struck me and I came to realize that I had always undervalued my mom’s cooking and the time she spends to make our home meals delicious. I had lived with someone who could change plain old broccoli into bruschetta, cow liver into crème brûlée and even my failed experiments, all disgraces to the culinary world, into works of art. I had simply taken for granted the fact that my mom was an amazing cook and had served me so much with that gift.

On October 23, 2019 My mom once again was caught in the act of sacrificing for me. She was driving across the State to Salt Lake city, Utah to see my Cross Country meet. This endeavor meant she was driving four and a half hours out to go up, watch my meet and drive back four and a half hours back all in the same day. I ended up really needing her support. This particular meet had been a really hard course. I did not run very well at all. I went 30 seconds slower than my fastest time, which for a three mile race is significantly slower.

Standing right outside the finish line breathless and light headed I was surrounded by crowds of people constantly pushing and pulling to get out of this cesspool of proud parents and stern coaches. Along with this concourse of Cross country enthusiasts came a dull murmuring and occasional shouts of “good job” and “congratulations”. My feelings however were estranged

from this atmosphere they were that of exhaustion and disappointment. The prospect of attaining a high degree of achievement and success in this sport which I love seemed grim. Luckily, My mom was there for me. She had made the Long trek and was there to stand by me. She gave me a long, warm and sweaty hug, bought me a T-shirt, which was designed for this Cross Country meet, and encouraged me to keep on trying and never give up.

My mom is responsible for my ability to read and write. I remember long minutes at the table sitting in front of my mom's copy of *Learning to Read 101*, the book that with maternal guidance gave me literacy.

I was falling behind in preschool. Everyone else in my class seemed to be really good at reading and writing. They all would repeat and recite the words which the teacher gave them. I however, was off thinking about that really cool pirate toy I had played with and how I wanted to be able to do outside recess again. I simply could not focus. My mom stepped in coming to the rescue and started filling the cracks of my education that my teachers had left empty. She took twenty to forty minutes of her time to help me. she managed to do this, and keep our bustling household of ten in order. She would sit by me patiently waiting for me to pronounce the syllables right and finally form them into words. That wonderful maternal figure of mine even made prizes for when I focused and finished my lessons. This incentive helped me focus and work hard to learn. Every time I read a lesson I would get a sticker and when they added up I could get a prize at the store.

On one of the occasions of my extracurricular study I, like many times before, once again got distracted and tired of this monotonous work. Promptly and deliberately I stood up and started running around. Forgetting about the prize ahead I let myself get distracted by the shenanigans of my siblings. My mom patiently waited and said, "Tom are we going to be able to

make it to Target this week, I don't know?" Standing their wheels turning I slowly grasped the hint and silently submitted. I understood from her prod and that if I didn't start paying attention I would miss out on my prize. This patience and virtue in her service was how my mother slowly but surely taught me to read and write.

My mom has helped me out; she has taught me to love life. She loves me and shows her love in her actions. She is a woman motivated by and is fascinated by the idea of service. She has spent her whole life in fidelity and service especially to me and her other children. She has saved me and without her service I would be far from where I have gotten in life.