

# Earth to Planet Mom

Crossroads MOPS  
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## Love Is Loving What They Love

by Michael Pearl

I hear it all the time. I have experience it. You have too - loving what they love, because you love them. Have you ever seen an adult attending the funeral of a rabbit? Did the adult so love the pet rabbit that he just had to work through his grief in a process of closure? No, the average father would rather have eaten the rabbit (before it got sick), but when his little girl came to love the rabbit, Daddy loved what his sweetheart loved. He had no grief for the dead "hairball," but he felt the loss his daughter felt, and so could grieve with her. Love is loving what they love.

I have loved many things in my life that had no personal meaning to me. I have loved scribbled drawings, ugly paintings, lopsided newly sewn dresses, burnt cakes, flat bread, sour pudding, over-salted cookies, days at the park, trampolines, picnics, hikes, vacations where you slept on the ground, canoe trips in dull, slow moving streams, cheap ice-cream and corn dogs, and on and on...Love gives inflated value to things, to places, to moments, to memories. With love attached, the ordinary becomes special, royal, even holy. The greatest pleasure is often found in simple things done together...

I know that as a parent you want to love your children. I know that you do care very much, but we are all very complex beings with many drives and desires. Sometimes we place our own needs before the children. A willing heart without wisdom may not be able to wade through all the conflicting feelings and make the right choices. Life moves too fast; opportunities come and go without giving us time to evaluate the options and to act on principle. Too often, we fail to properly express the love we know we have. Love not shared dies...

Between pure love and hate there is a vast middle ground ruled by an enemy more subtle than hate but just as deadly - indifference. Hate is like a barking dog; you cannot ignore it, but indifference is like termites, silently eating away. Love is loving what they love. Indifference doesn't pay attention to what they love. A child scribbles on a piece of paper and then interrupts our reading to share her excitement over her artistic creation. Indifference somehow doesn't notice that she is thrilled. Indifference doesn't share her love of the moment; indifference just ignores her for "matters more important." "Don't bother me; don't you see that I am busy. Go to your room and draw, and don't leave your color crayons on the floor."

Parents must learn to love what their children are, not what they want them to be. Love their efforts today, not their excellence tomorrow. Love them for loving the effort, and they will never tire of trying.

There is much more to training a child than loving what he loves, but if that one critical element is missing, virtually nothing else will ever be right. If your child is going to be your best friend when he or she is grown, you must love what they love; when they are three, and when they are thirteen. It is what makes the world go round and makes children come back around and call their parents blessed.

*\*excerpts taken from: Michael Pearl, "Loving is Loving What They Love." No Greater Joy (Sept-Oct 2004): pp 5-8-11. For a free subscription, go to [www.nogreaterjoy.org](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org)*

## Upcoming Dates

**Feb 9** - Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus by Jayne and Winston Hodget

**Feb 23** - Growing a Garden

**March 9** - "ME" Reminder of Self in Mommyhood by Donna Roman

**March 23** - Fun Ideas on How To Explain Easter & Craft



## Links

MOPS International  
<http://www.mops.org>

Crossroads MOPS  
<http://crossroadsmops.net>

Crossroads Fellowship  
<http://crossroads.org>

Look us up on Facebook  
Crossroads MOPS

### Savory Pull-Apart Bread

10 sun-dried tomato halves, (not packed in oil)  
2 cups Original Bisquick® mix  
1 package (8 ounces) feta cheese, coarsely crumbled  
3/4 cup milk  
3/4 cup roasted red bell peppers, from 7-ounce jar, drained and finely chopped  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano leaves or 1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil leaves or 1 teaspoon dried basil leaves  
1 garlic clove, finely chopped  
2 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil

1. Heat oven to 425°F. Grease square pan, 9x9x2 inches. Cover dried tomatoes with boiling water. Let stand 10 minutes; drain. Finely chop tomatoes.

2. Mix Bisquick mix, tomatoes, half of the cheese and the milk in medium bowl until dough forms. Mix remaining cheese, the bell peppers, oregano, basil, garlic and oil in small bowl. Drop half of the dough by tablespoonfuls closely together in irregular pattern in pan. Spoon half of the cheese mixture over dough. Drop remaining dough over cheese mixture.

Top with remaining cheese mixture.

3. Bake about 20 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.



### Planting a Container Garden with Preschoolers

Explain to your child that they are planting a garden in containers and that in order for seeds to grow they need soil, water, and plenty of sunlight.

1. Find a spot for containers with lots of sun that is in close proximity to where water will be accessed.
2. Fill the pots with a damp organic potting mix.
3. Let the children place small seeds on top of the mix and push larger seeds into the soil.
4. Water and cover the containers with plastic.

Depending on the age and development of your child(ren), they can help with some or all of the steps. Let children take turns watering the plants and monitoring their progress daily.

### Great Containers for Gardening

Container gardens can be created in just about anything as long as they can hold soil and there are holes for proper drainage (about one half inch).

- Milk cartons and plastic jugs
- Buckets
- Paper, plastic or Styrofoam cups
- Baskets: [Gardening-guides.com](http://gardening-guides.com) recommends adding a liner to the basket, and then creating cross pattern (X) holes. Next pull the triangular ends of the liner through the holes and tape them to the outside of the basket.
- Old boots
- Flour or sugar sacks
- An old aquarium (drain before planting)
- Egg cartons
- Watering can
- Coffee cans
- Chinese food cartons

If it is not possible to plant a garden, either because of the weather or space issues, try sowing seeds indoors. Read books about gardens, gardening or nature. Language and alphabet lessons can include garden-themed coloring sheets such as "G is for garden", "L is for Leaf or Lilly" and "D is for Daisy". Spend time talking about farmers and their role as a community helper.

### Theme Gardens for Preschoolers

Try some of these fun theme gardens:

- Pizza garden: Plant tomatoes, basil, green peppers, onions and oregano. When it is harvest time, use vegetables from the garden to make pizza sauce for a homemade pizza.
- Butterfly garden: Grow butterfly friendly plants (flowers that attract butterflies). Most garden supply stores sell butterfly garden seed mix.
- Stone soup garden: Read the book *Stone Soup* by Marcia Brown [Aladdin, 1997]. Plant vegetables like onions, carrots, peppers, parsnips, beans, potatoes, and corn. Then make "stone soup" after harvesting the veggies.

Do you have a suggestion or information to share in the newsletter?  
Email it to Sarah Clark at [pwfaith@yahoo.com](mailto:pwfaith@yahoo.com)

As always, have fun and be creative!

## We asked our Mentor Moms...

### “What is the secret to a long and happy relationship?”

“There are many good answers, but I think I will choose forgiveness. Forgiveness of others and of myself, and accepting the forgiveness of both God and others.” ~ Martha Hedge

“A great practice is to let go of the "small stuff" and to pray for your spouse each day.” ~ JoAnn Landon

Lisa Suriano ~ “My husband, Doug, and I have known each other since we were 14 and 15 years old. He is my very best friend. We are in our 25th year of marriage and have been parents for nearly 20 years. We DO NOT have it all figured out. However, we find these few ideas work well for our marriage as well as for our relationship to our three children; Megan 19, Andrew 17 and Bryce 16:

♥ Words of encouragement. Encouragement keeps the 'giver' thankful and the 'receiver' reminded of their value.....we do this through telling each other or through writing notes and placing them in lunch bags, pants pockets, windshields, tucked just enough under a bed pillow so it sticks out, luggage (when traveling), etc. We like the notes to be a surprise. We have also written notes on bathroom mirrors or on car windows with lipstick or window paint. In addition, I regularly give the kids or my husband a large 'confetti type' heart to stick in their pockets to remind them I love them. My husband says he loves putting his hands in his pockets and being reminded throughout his day of the love we share. It is tradition with my one son to give him a 'confetti heart' on game days....he STILL looks forward to it as a Junior in HS! Last summer, we did a 'person of the week'. For one week/person we placed a large piece of poster board, with the persons name on it, and taped it to the door that our family comes in and out of. We attached a pen with string (so no excuses that there wasn't anything to write with) and then each time we walked into the house we had to write a word or phrase of encouragement to the person of the week. You wouldn't believe how God used that in our lives this summer! The kids friends who stopped by even wrote on it. As old as our children are, they still enjoyed it.

♥ Have traditions during holidays.

♥ Be reminded that there is a great mystery of not having marriage or life with our children all figured out. God uses the sunshine and as well as the unexpected storms for His glory if we are open to riding out those rainy days/ seasons. Giving up isn't an option. There will be new days and new seasons. In marriage, you will usually experience your 'highest highs and your lowest lows'. My father-in-law shared these words of wisdom right after we returned from our honeymoon. He was right!

♥ We work hard at protecting the sacredness of marriage. Mutual trust is a must. We have to depend on something real and tangible in this world of 'unreliable feelings'. We try to remind ourselves regularly of our vows. It's helpful to memorize them or frame them as a reminder of your union.

♥ Remember the silly things that only you and your husband know about.

♥ Admit when you are wrong....forgive and ask for forgiveness.....My husband is MUCH better at this than I am :) Just being honest :)

♥ I've heard it said so often that 'opposites' attract which I think has a bit of a negative tone. We prefer to say that we 'compliment and complete' one another.

### ♥ Simple Valentine Breakfast Ideas:

- ♥ Heart shaped French Toast-cut your bread out with a heart cookie cutter and then proceed with making french toast.
- ♥ Heart shaped pancakes-Use a metal cookie cutter and pour pancake batter inside.
- ♥ Cut toast into heart with a cookie cutter and spread with red jam.
- ♥ Drizzle a heart with honey or maple syrup on oatmeal or hot cereal.
- ♥ Spread strawberry cream cheese, then strawberry jam on top of a tortilla. Roll up and cut into slices.
- ♥ Make biscuits shaped like hearts and serve with eggs.

## Local Events

**Feb 9-11** - Raleigh's Divine Consign Children's Show, Falls Village Shopping Center, 6675-127 Falls of Neuse Rd. Next to Tookies Toys in the old Dilly Dally. Consigned and New Overstocks of your favorite Boutique and Trunk Show lines. Amazing deals! To consign, volunteer, advertise your business or shop visit the Raleigh page at [www.dcskids.com](http://www.dcskids.com)

**Feb 11, 10-11 am** - Mommy & Me Stroller Skate Day at the AT&T Winterfest Ice Rink in Downtown Raleigh! Moms with infants can ring in the New Year with a great fitness alternative!

**Feb 16, 10:30-11:30am** - Groupwide Playdate at Raleigh School of Gymnastics, 4724 Hargrove Rd (beside the church)

**Feb 24-28** - Ringling Bros, Barnum & Bailey Circus at the RBC Center

**Feb 23, 6:30-9pm** - An inspiring heart-to-heart hour with Beth Moore in preparation for the *So Long, Insecurity* simulcast April 24! Beth will share her vision for the life-changing event. Room 751 at Crossroads Fellowship.



### Love Recipes

*Excerpt from Food & Love by Gary Smalley*

A new way of looking at how we can love effectively, using the acronym

L-O-V-E:

**Listen** (hear and understand your spouse)

**Offer** yourself (meet your spouse's needs)

**Value** and honor (regard your spouse highly)

**Embrace** (offer affectionate touch)

If we can learn to express our love through these 4 components, we can have strong marriages that will last for a lifetime.



### 5 Love Languages by Gary Chapman

**Words:** 1 Cor 8:1 says that love builds up. One way to express love emotionally is to *say* words that encourage the other person: 'You look nice in that outfit' or 'You did a good job' or 'I really appreciate what you did'

**Quality Time:** In this love language *undivided* attention is crucial. Simply being in the same room watching television doesn't count. Looking at each other and talking, or taking a walk together, or going out for dinner and talking are quality exchanges.

**Gifts:** Some years ago, I did a master's degree in anthropology. We studied non-literate people all over the world and found that gift giving is a universal part of the love-marriage process. The gift says 'He was thinking about me when we were apart.' The size of the gift is not important. It's the *giving* that expresses love.

**Actions:** 1 John 3:18 says 'My children, let us love not merely in words - let us love in practice' (Phillips). We express love when we do something for others they would like. Chores such as washing a car, cooking a meal, vacuuming a floor or painting a bedroom can be ways to say, 'I love you.'

**Physical touch:** Physical touch has always been a way of communicating love. In marriage this includes holding hands, kissing and embracing as well as the sexual act.

**Checking on Love** - For the next two weeks you and your spouse play a little game called 'Tank Check.' After work, one says to the other, 'Zero to Ten, how is your love tank today?' An answer of 10 means the person feels secure and loved. Anything less than that requires the response: 'What can I do to help fill it?'



## What is MOPS?

MOPS was created with the goal of meeting the needs of Mothers Of Preschoolers (infancy through kindergarten). MOPS is a place for women to make friends, share experiences, laugh together and receive understanding and gentle encouragement. MOPS groups are run by mothers for mothers of preschoolers. Our program includes an encouraging message, time for ladies to gather and talk in small groups, a craft and a variety of other activities intended to deepen friendships and spiritual growth.

Crossroads MOPS meets every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month, September through May, from 9:30-11:30am at Crossroads Fellowship.

For more information visit our website at <http://crossroadsmops.net>

## 2009-2010 Steering

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# February 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 MOPS	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 Groupwide Playdate	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 MOPS	24	25	26	27
28						