



FREE Group Discussion Guide



No Purchase Necessary

This group discussion guide includes everything you need to start a Mom's group today!

Wherever necessary, quotes from the book are reprinted in the discussion guide.

This discussion guide includes enough material to support 30 group meetings.

Each discussion will help your group reflect, share, and celebrate your time as "Mommy."

Available on: [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



Standard Edition

Motherhood lasts a lifetime
but you're only ...

Mommy
for a Moment

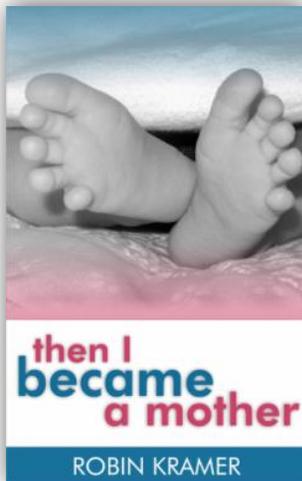


Moment 1: Love Being Mommy

In the introduction to her book, author Robin Kramer recounts a baby shower game that requires guests to tear toilet paper off a roll. They then have to write down a piece of mothering advice for each “square.” One woman’s advice stands out:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*

Just love her.



Such an obvious statement, yet it was one that had been overlooked in all the squares of advice that just had been spoken. Out of anyone in the room, I figure that this woman – a wife who has a happy marriage, a mother of four legitimately interesting and kind children, a woman who laughs a great deal – would know. In my years of knowing her, she never had made me feel less of a person, less of a woman, because I was not yet a mother. She never raised an eyebrow if I mentioned that my schedule was full, or countered that I wouldn’t know busy until I had four kids of my own. She seemed to enjoy motherhood, to enjoy her kids.

Her secret was out: she just loved them.

Introduction

Reflect

If you were playing the baby shower game, what would one of your “squares” be?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy, share what you like so far about the book.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment from your own baby shower that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by asking for their “square” of advice.

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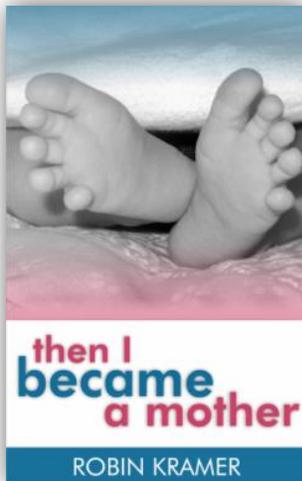
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Moment 2: Special Delivery!

Robin recalls her mixed emotions before the delivery of her first child. She is acutely aware her life will soon be dramatically different:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



It isn't just the closet. It's everything. My life, my space, nothing is going to be the same in a few short weeks. Our house is being flooded with objects that I didn't know existed, and for some I still don't know their purpose...

They announce that my life and my predictable environment soon will be disrupted, and I can't even foresee how...In the midst of all my anticipation and joy, I simply need to cry and prepare for the change.

Introduction

Reflect

What pre-delivery fear of yours turned out to be the most unfounded?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your favorite part from the Introduction.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment from your delivery experience that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by celebrating the safe delivery of healthy children.

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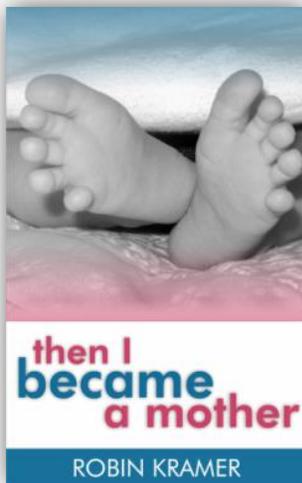
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Moment 3: Everything Will Be Fine

Robin wishes she could time-travel to comfort herself as a new mother:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Life with a new baby eventually becomes natural. It takes time to realize this.

I wish that I could step back in time to those early moments of motherhood when normal seemed so far off, to those days when I feared that the crying would never stop, or that the baby would never wake up to eat, or that the baby would never stop waking up to eat. I'd gently place my hands on my own tense shoulders and whisper into my ear, "Robin, everything will turn out just fine."

Introduction

Reflect

What is your biggest concern as a mother right now?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your "take-away" from the Introduction.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment from your first days of motherhood that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by listening to their mothering concerns.

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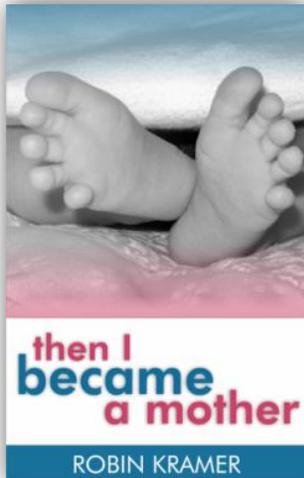
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Moment 4: Ah, Pregnancy Brain

“Pregnancy brain” is real! Robin recounts driving off with an entire pizza still on the roof of her car. She goes on to reveal how stories like this serve to aid other pregnant ladies:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Although it's not funny when you tell your husband that you really aren't bringing a pizza home for dinner, when you're shaking out underwear to remove the crystals that burst from the now-bloated diapers that you ran through the rinse cycle, or when you're explaining to your child's preschool teacher that you're not typically like this, these incidents make for good stories. Other pregnant women thrive on them.

It's oddly comforting to learn that your normally competent pregnant friend once forgot to raise the clipper length while trimming her husband's hair and entirely buzzed him.

You commiserate, and then you more easily forgive yourself when you do something similar.

Chapter 1, "It Gets Easier"

Reflect

What's the most glaring example of when you fell victim to “pregnancy brain”?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share what you like so far about Chapter 1.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment from your pregnancy that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by sharing your funny pregnancy stories.

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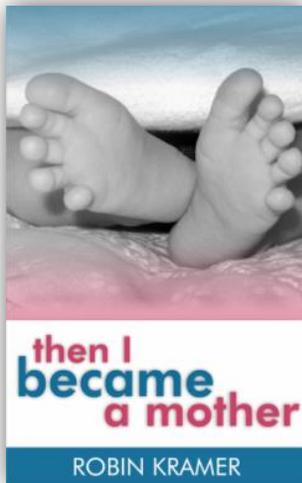
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Moment 5: Aboard the Emotional Roller-coaster

Nothing can prepare a mother for the kinds of emotions she will experience part-partum. Robin looks back on her own emotional experience after the birth of her first child:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



For me, the counterpart to the loss of memory during pregnancy was the loss of emotional balance after pregnancy. It's notably less easy to laugh at this. It certainly isn't as exciting to share with friends.

The brief sections on baby blues that I had read in pregnancy books sounded so benign, so tidy, as if the post-partum phase might prompt me to cry at a touching commercial or linger over a sentimental greeting card.

Chapter 1, "It Gets Easier"

Reflect

What was your emotional experience post-partum?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your favorite part from Chapter 1.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment your hospital stay that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage new moms during their hospital stay, whether through a visit, flowers, a card, or a phone call.

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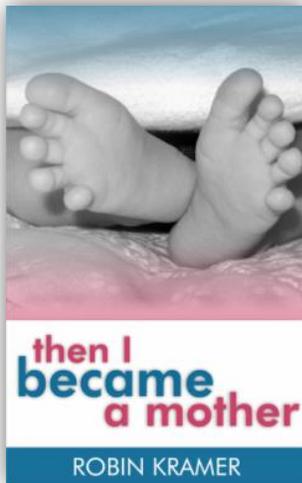
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Moment 6: Swaddling the New Mom

New moms often feel pressure to have it “all together” from the beginning. Robin suggests that they should give themselves a “grace” period:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Rarely do new mothers allow themselves the grace to be new. Our normal lives are suspended, yet we don't permit ourselves to be real and raw and messy.

We swaddle our babies, bundling them tightly to ward off chills and ensure that they feel secure, but as a new mother, I longed to be swaddled as well – to have the loose ends tightened, to settle and soothe my uneasy reflexes, to admit, without shame, that I didn't automatically have the new role figured out.

No new mother feels as if she does. It takes time.

Chapter 1, "It Gets Easier"

Reflect

At what point after your baby was born did you finally feel like you had returned to a state of “normalcy?” Or do you still feel far from “normal?”

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your “take-away” from Chapter 1.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment from your early months of motherhood that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by “swaddling” them with your love and a listening ear post-partum.

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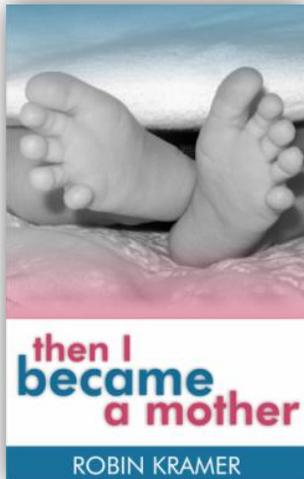
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Moment 7: You're "Mommy"

New moms work hard preparing themselves for the birth of their children. Robin says that there are simply just some things you can't be prepared for: She suggests that new moms should give themselves a "grace" period:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Nothing sufficiently prepares you for the moment when you return to your home with a creature small enough to cradle in one arm and powerful enough to turn your world on its head.

No books, no visualization techniques, and no advice, however helpful, will brace you for the moment when a new life is placed in your arms and you're sent out the door.

Chapter 2, "Learn As You Go"

Reflect

When was the first time you fully realized that you were now a "mommy?"

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share what you like so far about Chapter 2.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment from your homecoming with your baby that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by bringing them meals after their homecoming with baby.

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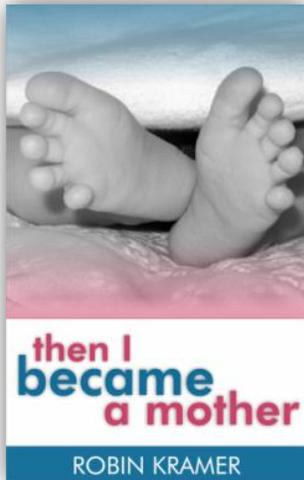
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Moment 8: In Hindsight...

Robin observes a pregnant couple attempting to create their baby registry. She recalls that she also expressed the same confusion when she was in their shoes:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Originally, Joel and I had planned to move through the baby department systematically. We'd advance row by row and generate a comprehensive registry list.

Instead, we ended up wandering from one aisle to the next looking for safe items to select – some clothing and socks, a package of receiving blankets, a few hooded towels. We gave up after an hour and went out to dinner.

Now that I've had three babies, I'm no longer confused by stroller systems, breast pumps and convertible car seats. I'd have no problem creating a registry because I've walked that road before. This couple hadn't.

Chapter 2, "Learn As You Go"

Reflect

What turned out to be the most useful item on your registry? What do you wish you would have left off?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your favorite part from Chapter 2.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment from your baby-gear shopping experiences that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by walking them through the baby department that first intimidating time.

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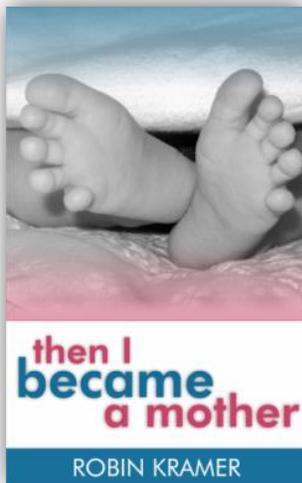
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Moment 9: Adaptation

Robin realizes that each new stage of motherhood is going to require her to adapt:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Every new phase in parenting requires growth.

Last year when I sat in my daughter's elementary school cafeteria on Back to School night and listened to the principal's welcome speech, I felt just as novice as when I first had walked through Target's baby department. I surveyed the other parents in the room and tried to read their faces. *Does anyone else feel like they're not supposed to be here?* I wondered. *How did we get to a point where we're discussing nightly homework? That's it; I'm just not ready for first grade!*

Yet, we learned how to squeeze math worksheets in after dinner and before soccer. We adapted.

Chapter 2, "Learn As You Go"

Reflect

What have you already learned as a mother? What do you feel like you're learning right now?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your "take-away" from Chapter 2.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment from the past week that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by pointing out their ability to adapt to each new mothering situation.

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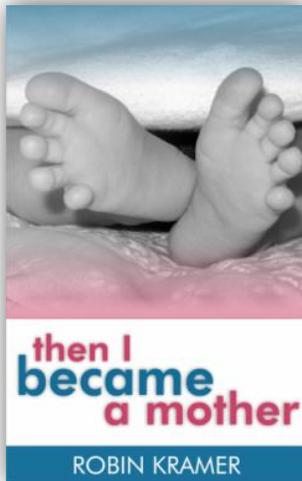
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Moment 10: The Baby Paparazzi

Robin remembers a less-than-encouraging encounter with a couple while shopping with her first baby:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



“She’s pretty,” she said without smiling. “Is she a good baby for you?”

“Yes, thank you. She’s a very good baby,” I answered, tugging on Reese’s loose sock.

She drew her lips tightly and sniffed as if she didn’t believe me. Placing her thin hand on my arm, she warned, “Well then, just wait, honey. It only gets harder from here.” Her husband silently nodded his agreement.

I had been taken aback. What do I answer to that? Thanks for the encouragement? I had returned his nod with my own and watched as they walked away, their umbrellas dangling from the cords around their wrists.

Parenting books didn’t provide tips for these moments.

Chapter 3, “Say Goodbye to Personal Space”

Reflect

What are your own tips for handling all the attention your baby gets in public?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share what you like so far in Chapter 3.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one public outing with your baby that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by sharing your tips for handling the baby paparazzi.

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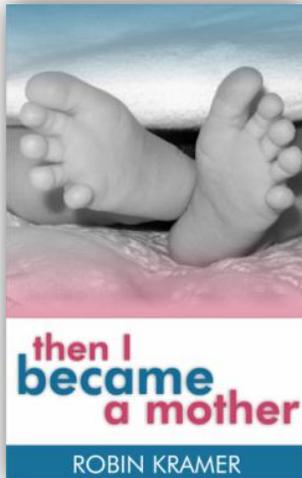
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Moment 11: Remember When You Went to the Bathroom Alone?

Robin describes the concept of personal space as an “illusion” for those with small children:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



They reach out and touch your face while you're talking with them. They twirl their sticky fingers through your hair. They open doors to occupied bathrooms. They weasel their way onto your lap when you're paying bills or working at the computer. They sidle up beside you as you're removing scalding dishes from the oven. They're compelled be close while you're sorting laundry, wriggling their little selves nearer in a way that undoes all the folding that you've just done.

Unyielding physical demands – feed me, change me, hold me, rock me, help me, wipe me, clean me, dress me, carry me – start at birth. The demands remain constant during the early years.

Chapter 3, "Say Goodbye to Personal Space"

Reflect

When are you most aware that your space is no longer your own?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your favorite part from Chapter 3.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment of extreme closeness with your baby that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them to enjoy those short-lived snuggles with their little ones.

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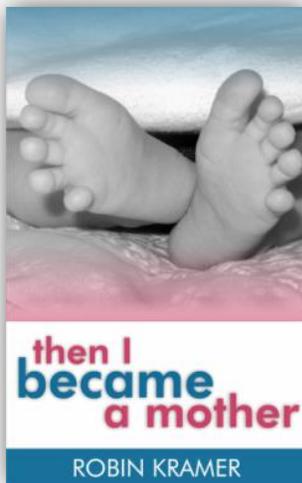
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Moment 12: Savor Your Mommy-hood

Robin recognizes that this “close” stage of parenting is temporary:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



One day the girls won't immediately run in our direction whenever Joel and I enter a room. They won't climb onto our laps whenever we sit down, wheedle their way between us whenever we hug, or fall asleep as they rest their heads on our shoulders, their thumbs absentmindedly slung in their mouths. My clothes will no longer be marked by stains from little fingers, and sticky hands will no longer make their way into my own.

And when we exit this stage, I'll miss it.

Chapter 3, "Say Goodbye to Personal Space"

Reflect

What can you do on a daily basis to remind yourself to savor this brief moment that you get to be “mommy”?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your “take-away” from Chapter 3.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one of your baby's habits that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by reminding them that this “mommyhood” stage is temporary. They'll miss it when it's over.

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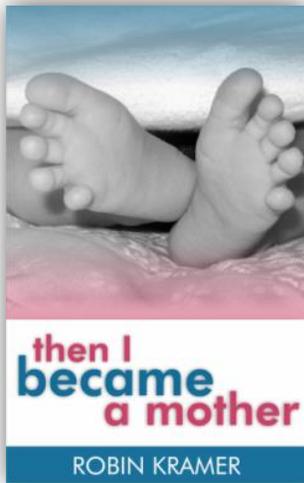
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Moment 13: You're Still YOU

Robin encourages women to remember who they were before they became mothers:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



I've never yet met a woman who wasn't a better mother for remembering who she was before she became a mother.

Motherhood is an all-encompassing life alteration, a deeply-seated shift in priorities, an invitation to live with your heart outside of your body.

Yet, it's wise for a mother to remember that she was a woman before she became a mother. Even if you only can do so in small increments, it's important to tap into what makes you tick, whether it's gathering with friends, enjoying a hobby, plowing through a stack of books, exercising regularly, or taking long, soaking baths at the end of long, draining days.

Chapter 4, "Remember Your Former Self"

Reflect

What did you enjoy doing most before you had a baby?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share what you like so far in Chapter 4.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one activity you recently enjoyed doing with your baby that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by asking about their pre-baby interests.

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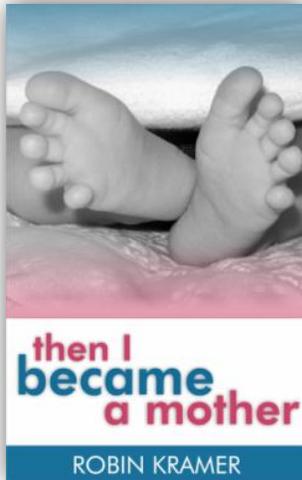
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Moment 14: Grace...Ample Grace

The conflict between working and stay-out-home moms is needlessly divisive:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



The decision on whether to work after becoming a mother can be complex, riddled with conflicting emotions – guilt for staying, guilt for leaving, guilt for enjoying leaving – and complicated with any number of situational constraints like finances, outside expectations, internal desires, and available opportunities. Rarely is it a decision made lightly, and rarely is it a decision that remains entirely unquestioned...

Grace – ample grace – is needed for each and every situation, without judgment.

Chapter 4, "Remember Your Former Self"

Reflect

How do you feel about your own decision to work--or-not--after having a baby?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your favorite part from Chapter 4.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment you felt "graced" with motherhood that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by listening to their post-baby work decisions without judgment. Urge them to never feel guilty about choosing what is best for their own families.

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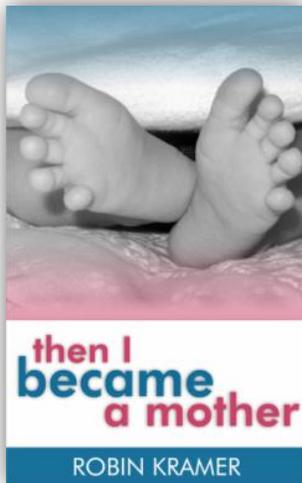
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Moment 15: The Gifts That Keep On Giving

Robin admits that she sometimes views bedtime as a “finish line.” On those days when she craves mommy-time to be over, she reminds herself of this truth:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



My children aren't blocking me from fulfilling what I want to get out of life. They're not distractions to bypass. They're not small hurdles to overcome on my way to better, more entertaining things.

They're not eighteen-year interludes until my life plan can unfold once again.

They're gifts...

Chapter 4, "Remember Your Former Self"

Reflect

How has becoming a mother made you an improved version of your former self?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your “take-away” from Chapter 4.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment you felt “gifted” with your child that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by reminding them that children are gifts from above.

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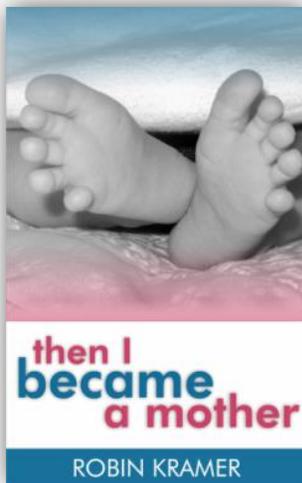
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Moment 16: Slowing Down

Robin acknowledges the need to slow down for her children.

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Since it doesn't come automatically, over the years I've made conscious efforts to live more moments intentionally rather than rushing my children through them.

The challenge is to yield to their pace and rhythm rather than always adhering to my own agenda.

Chapter 5, "Redefine Accomplishment"

Reflect

Which mothering tasks are you most tempted to rush through? Which do you enjoy slowing down for?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share what you like so far in Chapter 5.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment you slowed down for your kids that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them to enjoy slowing down for their kids.

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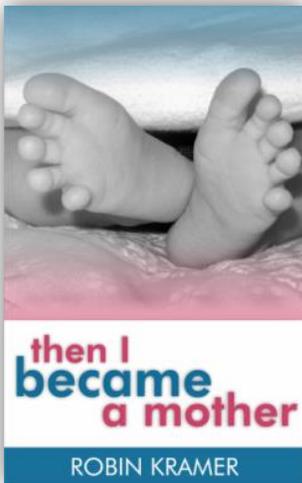
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Moment 17: Building People

Robin comments that our daily moments as mommies are the building blocks in our children's lives:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



As mothers, we're building children who will eventually become adults. It's slow work. During the early years of diapers, Cheerios, and tantrums, we lay foundations--not ones of cement and reinforcing bars, but ones of conduct and values and morals. It's both crucial and unglamorous.

It's hidden from sight and rarely commented upon when viewing the finished product, but its quality determines whether the structure will withstand strain or whether it will crack.

Chapter 5, "Redefine Accomplishment"

Reflect

What is one thing you are accomplishing as a mother right now through your menial and repetitive actions? Which do you enjoy slowing down for?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your favorite part from Chapter 5.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one mothering routine that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by pointing out the amazing results they produce, i.e., raising whole people!

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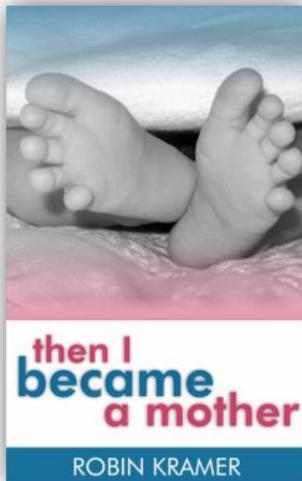
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Moment 18: Well Done

Robin poses some key questions for mommies as we evaluate our definition of “accomplishment”:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



What if we moms could see all that we're doing – all the creating and training and coaching and supporting and loving – rather than dwelling on all that we're not?

What if we could realize that we only need to fill our daily twenty-four hours with what we're called to do, not what we impose on ourselves?

What if we gave ourselves grace and redefined accomplishment?

Chapter 5, “Redefine Accomplishment”

Reflect

What “obligation” could you free yourself from right now by redefining “accomplishment”?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your “take-away” from Chapter 5.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one recent mothering success that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by sharing how freeing it's been to redefine “accomplishment.”

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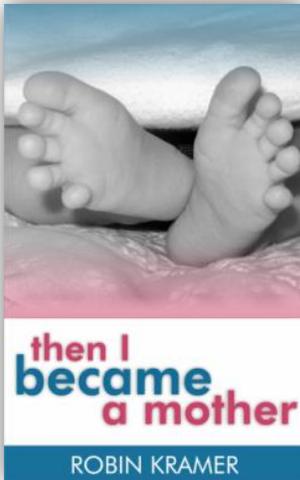
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Moment 19: No Mother is an Island

Robin asserts that all mothers benefit from support networks:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Whether support comes in the form of local family members, neighbors, friends, church members, occasional visits from parents or in-laws, or the constancy of weekly play groups, there's great value in accepting help when help is needed and drawing strength from relationships.

We can't parent in an isolated state. We can't rely solely on our own stamina. We can't box ourselves in and be misled to believe that we're alone in our experiences as mothers.

Chapter 6, "Build a Support Network"

Reflect

How has this group helped serve you as a support network?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share what you like so far in Chapter 6.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment from your childbirth class that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by inviting them to join your Mommy for a Moment group.

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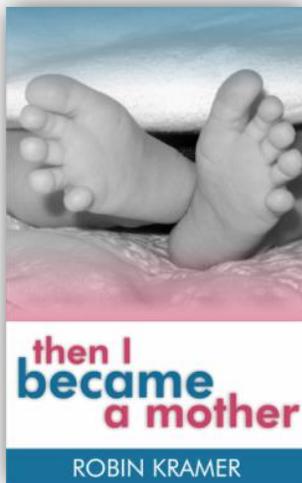
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Moment 20: A New Social Network

Robin comments on the changing nature of our social networks as mothers:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Both of those neighbors – as well as my own family – have moved away from that neighborhood. Time has elapsed and our families have expanded. Our yards no longer are adjacent, our children aren't in the same schools or activities, and our paths have diverged.

This is normal. This is life. It doesn't diminish the value of their support during my first months of motherhood.

Chapter 6, "Build a Support Network"

Reflect

How do you think you will remember this particular group once your "paths have diverged?"

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your favorite part from Chapter 6.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment you experienced with a fellow mommy that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by being a member of their mommy support network.

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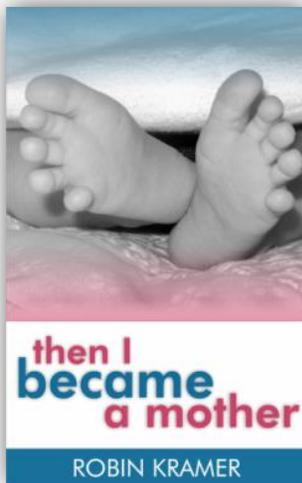
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Moment 21: Transparency Refreshes

Robin states that nobody is helped when we pretend we've got our act together:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



As uncomfortable as it initially might be, airing out our concerns and admitting our flaws brings freedom – not only to ourselves, but to others as well.

I've never surprised another mother when I've been transparent about my worst moments in parenting. Instead, my disclosure paves the way for her to open up in return...

Chapter 6, "Build a Support Network"

Reflect

What is one thing you need to be transparent about right now?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your "take-away" from Chapter 6.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one time you felt encouraged by another mommy that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by opening up to them about your current struggles, and inviting them to do the same.

Motherhood lasts a lifetime
but you're only ...

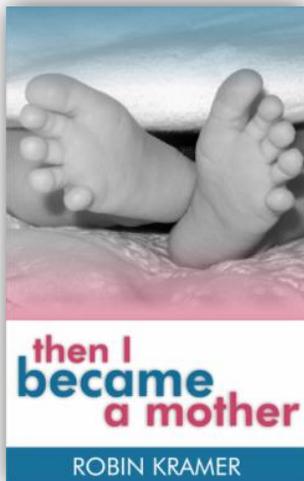
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Moment 22: The Comparison Trap

Robin describes how comparing ourselves to others leads us to focus inward rather than outward:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



It sucks the life out of us, shrivels gratitude, and taints how we perceive ourselves. Perhaps even worse, comparison paralyzes us from contributing.

When I'm consumed with my own perceived deficiencies, I'm not looking to meet the needs of others. My vision is so narrow that I might not even notice the needs of others.

Most people would agree that harboring insecurity is negative, but clinging to it can feel safe. If you're insecure, there's no reason to step out. Why attempt to make friends with the new mom in the neighborhood who finished her early-morning jog before you manage to brush your teeth or change out of your pajamas?

Chapter 7, "Avoid Comparison"

Reflect

When are you most tempted to compare yourself with other mothers?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share what you like so far in Chapter 7.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one fun activity you do with your child that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them to avoid comparing themselves to other mothers. (Especially those they "meet" via social media).

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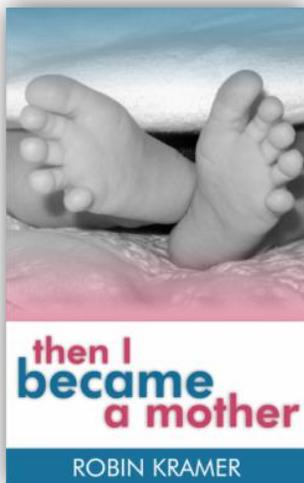
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Moment 23: We're All in the Same Boat

When Robin finds herself comparing herself to others, she pauses to remember who she really is:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



A person who doesn't have it all together. A person in need of forgiveness and grace, just like everyone else.

Even my dear friend who so beautifully embraces her role as a mother. Even the blogger whose life appears to be pristine. Even the mother on the playground who always looks pulled together.

In this bowed posture, suddenly the draw to compare myself with others – known or distant, real or hypothetical – doesn't tug as hard.

Once again, I'm reminded that the value of others doesn't minimize my own.

Chapter 7, "Avoid Comparison"

Reflect

How will you remind yourself that no other mom is better than you at raising *your* kids?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your favorite part from Chapter 7.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment you realized your importance as a mother that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by reminding them of their great value.

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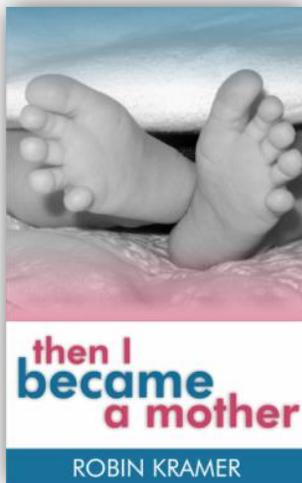
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Week 24: World's Best Mom

Robin meditates on how she was selected be the mother of her children:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



I'm theirs. They're mine. This isn't a mistake. Even in my imperfection, I'm the best mother for my children. Without a doubt, you're the best mother for your children, too.

You were hand-selected for your kids, just as they were selected for you. Discover your own identity and purpose, and avoid comparing yourself with others.

Chapter 7, "Avoid Comparison"

Reflect

What is the thing you do best as a mom?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your "take-away" from Chapter 7.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment your child made you feel loved that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by reassuring them that they are the best mothers for their children.

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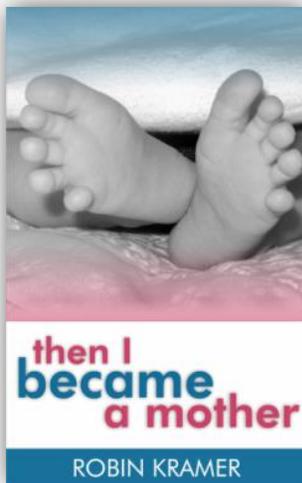
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Moment 25: Valuable Messes

Motherhood is messy. But Robin reminds us:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Children learn by making messes. They explore, they sate their curiosity, they better understand cause and effect, and they gain responsibility when they're instructed and expected to clean up.

I want to learn from messes, too. I know how to be at ease when my environment is undisturbed and my life is in order. Most everyone does. The challenge is being at ease when the world around you isn't perfect.

Chapter 8, "Partially Dirty is the New Clean"

Reflect

How do you deal with the day-to-day messes of mothering young children?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share what you like so far in Chapter 8.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one particular mess that your child made that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by sharing your "messiness" and your desire to learn from it.

Motherhood lasts a lifetime
but you're only ...

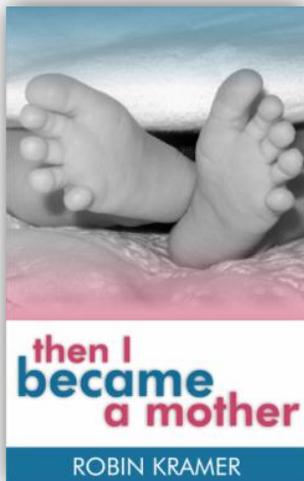
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Moment 26: One Day...

Robin talks about the kinds of reminders mommies need when they're surrounded by messiness:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



When I see hand prints, I need reminders that it's normal for a house to churn with noise and brim with stuff when young children live there. That it's understandable to get tired of it. That it's natural to long for peace and quiet. That it's possible to love your kids while also wanting to take a break from them.

This knowledge shouldn't cast guilt on us now, as if it were selfish to wish for a moment's peace or self-seeking to desire an afternoon without little hands undoing all the work that we've just done. It's not selfish to feel these ways. It's human. Knowing that a stage is temporary doesn't make it less crazy. Hopefully, though, it does give us some stamina when we're weary.

Chapter 8, "Partially Dirty is the New Clean"

Reflect

Do you find yourself longing for the days when your house will be clean again? How can you turn that longing into savoring these brief moments that kids live there?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your favorite part from Chapter 8.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one chaotic--yet joyful--moment from the past week that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by reminding them that their houses will one day be cleaner and (sadly) quieter.

Motherhood lasts a lifetime
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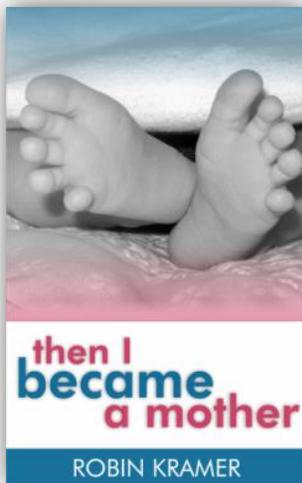
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Moment 27: Mutating Messes

Robin describes the changing nature of our children's messes:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Our children's messes won't always be as tangible as they are now. Eventually, they'll face messes that can't be vacuumed, dusted, or wiped away. They'll have a friendship that fades. They'll get cut from a team or snubbed in the school hallway. They'll experience their first broken heart.

Messes don't stop; they just change form.

We'll adapt so that it's not just our hands that help our children through their messes, but also our listening ears, careful advice, and deepest prayers.

Chapter 8, "Partially Dirty is the New Clean"

Reflect

How do you think you'll handle your children's future "messes?"

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your "take-away" from Chapter 8.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is time you healed a hurting child that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them with listening ears when they share they own messes with you.

Motherhood lasts a lifetime
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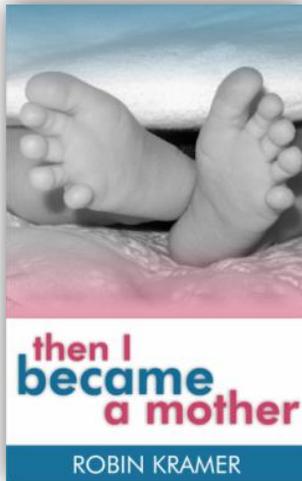
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Moment 28: When They're Unlikeable

Robin comments that loving our kids is a given:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



From the first moment you lay eyes on them, you know you always will. Without even saying it, you know that you'd die for them.

At some point, though, you'll look at this same child and be confronted with the unsettling realization that you don't like them very much. At least, not at that particular moment.

Not when they're throwing a tantrum and you're carrying their full weight as their feet kick the air in angry protest and refuse to touch the ground. Not when they're hitting a sibling, defying your instructions, refusing to eat dinner, or rolling their eyes. During those moments, the emotions of love – so powerful and heartrending during infancy – are gone.

Chapter 9, "Just Love Them"

Reflect

How do we go about loving our kids even when they are unlikeable?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share what you like so far in Chapter 9.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one heartrending moment from your child's infancy that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mommies

Encourage them by admitting that you sometimes find your children unlikeable.

Motherhood lasts a lifetime
but you're only ...

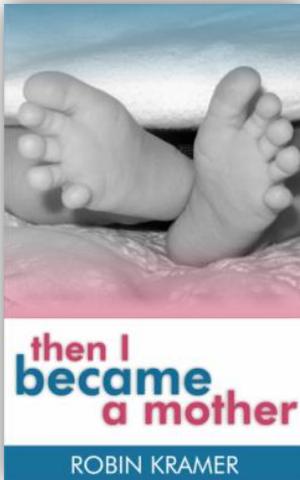
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Moment 29: Loving Them to Death

Being a mother essentially means putting our kids' interests ahead of our own:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



We love them enough that on many days we do die for them – unnoticed and miniscule deaths-to-self when we place their needs and interests before our own, when we bite our tongues, when we give them the last bite of the chocolate cake that we wanted to eat, when we drag our weary body out of our warm beds to comfort them when they're frightened in the middle of the night.

Because this is what mothers do. We love our kids, even in our imperfection. Even in their imperfection. We always will.

Chapter 9, "Just Love Them"

Reflect

What is one notable "death-to-self" that you've experienced as a mother?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your favorite part from Chapter 9.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment you put your child's interests before your own that you want to cherish forever?

Support other mummies

Encourage them by pointing out what a great job they are doing serving their kids.

Motherhood lasts a lifetime
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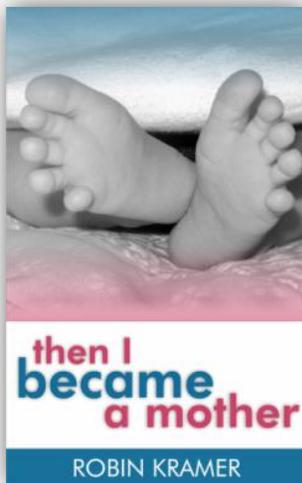
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Moment 30: The Magic of Today

After visiting a new mom, Robin looks back on her own early days of motherhood:

Free Excerpt From *Then I Became A Mother*



Our routines are so familiar to us as we live them. Nothing seems inherently magical about a typical day when I'm in the midst of it...The one thing that's constant is time.

It passes equally for each of us. No matter how hard we may try, we can't stretch it out or hurry it along. But we can live it fully, ride out the highs and lows, and let ourselves feel the aching beauty of it all.

Chapter 9, "Just Love Them"

Reflect

How can you remind yourself to live your present moment of motherhood to the fullest?

Share

What else struck you in this excerpt? If you have a copy of the book, share your "take-away" from Chapter 9.

Celebrate being Mommy

What is one moment with your child where time seemed to stand still?

Support other mommies

Encourage them to fully enjoy this present--and brief-- moment that they get to be "Mommy."



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www.mommyforamoment.com