

To the Mothers Hurting On Mother's Day

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I know how hard this day must be for you. How painful it is to be one of the forgotten ones. The ones who hurt so deeply because there is an ever so present absence, a void that cannot be filled. I know what it's like to face Mother's Day with a smile and a brave face while deep down your soul is crying to be seen. Longing for someone to say their name or acknowledge the kind of mother you are. Longing for someone to say, "You are a beautiful mother to the one who left this world too soon. I see how deeply you love and how fiercely you honor them. They have not been forgotten and you are a wonderful mother."

This should be a day of joy.

This should be a day where we are appreciated and acknowledged.

This should be a day that our arms and our hearts feel full.

This should be a day where we can be in the company of those who honor us with the title – Mother.

But this is not the case. Instead, it is tinged with sadness and a longing for what should be. I know Mother's Day will never be the same – just like every other day spent living life after loss. We often are not seen as we should be. Often we are acknowledged for mothering our living children and not for how we mother our children who have

passed. And sadly, those who have lost and have no living children – typically aren't acknowledged at all. Yet, all of us carry so much love in our hearts for our precious children. And we all deserve to be acknowledged for the special kind of mothers that we are.

There is no stronger, braver, or more courageous mother than a mother that has experienced the death of a child. A mother who has endured the unthinkable and yet she still loves with every ounce of her being. A mother who has endured the worst pain and still she is brave enough to face another day.

I think the rest of the world has lost sight of the difference between being a mother and being a parent. Our children may not be here for us to parent – but we are still mothers. The world around you may not acknowledge you the way you deserve or the way you would like. They may not say your child's name or see just how you continue to mother them despite their absence. They may be blind to it all or perhaps they just don't know what to say.

But this Mother's Day, I want you to carry this in your heart – You are an amazing mother! Because you are a survivor. The most beautiful of mothers. You have a heart of gold and soul filled with grace and purest love. I can see what a wonderful mother you are to the child you can no longer hold. I can see how hard this has been on your heart. And I can see right through the cracks in your soul. I can see that you have been through the darkest hour. But I can also see how you survived it and what has carried you this far – your love. The love you carry in your heart every single day. You are a beautiful mother and your love shines for your precious child.

A bereaved mother is living, breathing proof of the power of love. So take a deep breath, Mama. Your love will continue to carry you through the moments. Today, I want you to know that you are far from alone. Because I see you so very clearly.

You are a beautiful mother.

Reflection #1 Response: Take some time to reflect on the words of Jessi Snapp. Our children may not be physically here--but we are still mothers and fathers. We are their parents forever. But what does this new relationship look like? How can we make it better?