

December 2005

Mom Appreciation Gift Idea

Flexible Format:

- 1) Identify the top 2 things you like most about mom and why they're meaningful to you. Add up to 3 more areas that you admire or like about her, (optional)
- 2) When you think of mom, you think of (from 2 words to 2 sentences)
- 3) Two important things that mom has taught you. (Can be more) This can be by her example as well, etc.
- 4) Most important gift mom has given you.
- 5) Favorite day, moment or memories with her (this is not limited but can expand as far as you'd like- beyond just one moment, day, experience too)
- 6) Funniest or silliest memory of her (laughable moment/s).
- 7) Your hopes, prayers or dreams for her now-what you would hope she will have/experience, related to her fulfillment.
- 8) (Optional) One thing she doesn't know about you that you'd like to her to know (it can be anything, silly or serious-the point is sharing something here with her that she doesn't know yet know about you or your life, that you'd like her to know).
- 9) Thanking her for ... {Personal thanks for whatever comes to mind} (Some of these things may overlap but that's fine).

Marcy Emmer

December 2005

Mom/Mary is always kind and available. Even when late or behind schedule with too much going on at once, she takes the time. Or better, she HAS the time, and gladly shares it, always genuinely interested in how & what we are doing.

She exhibits a kind of humbleness that allows kindness and patience with everyone, even those less fortunate or popular. She is outgoing and engaging, while still knowing how to cultivate and value solitude, peace and serenity.

And how she conducted herself as we all converged, in dad's unforgettable last week how detached from her own personal concerns she was, as always devoting fullest attention to each of us and our needs to share with *him*, one last time. I shared dad's last rites with her and Father Tim-a very special and deeply moving event. Her strength, independence and high spiritedness after dad's death are truly an inspiration.

What comes next? We hope she'll travel, carefree and confident, without worries and concerns. To use and perfect her healing gifts-in fact, to achieve her highest creative potential. And to do more art.

Something she doesn't know (but maybe suspects) that I'd like her to know (or maybe not...) about me is that we share so many qualities. While she was a great example and role model while I was young, I find as I age how strikingly similar we are becoming!

Jamie Emmer

December 2005

I'd like to talk about the less obvious virtues of Mom that I have appreciated all of my life.

Mom never seemed to buy into the fear that most moms have of letting her children try new and potentially dangerous activities. I'll never forget her reaction to Dr. Siefert's comment that he would never let his kids be on a motorcycle or a trampoline. She asked him "Wouldn't you rather have them develop the skills for those types of things now while they are less breakable?" You could come in for the day and she would ask where we had been and we could tell her. I watched a lot of friends sugar coat things so as not to upset their moms. Mom was pretty upset-proof. "Hi, what did you do today?" she would ask. "Me and some friends were trying 'one and a halfs' off the Grays Bay Bridge" or what ever the current adventure was. "Oh my!" was about as freaked out as she would get. Its not easy to scare a woman who has ten children.

The word "nurture" comes immediately to mind when I think of Mom. There was always plenty of herself to go around, and she had plenty of extra for the less fortunate and suffering.

She was very fun loving and athletic, which was less common in her day. She loved the water and was quite at home in it. I'll never forget sitting around the dinner table at the old house before Christmas Lake when she and Dad announced that they were going to get us all on skis. They had just returned from a Beddor trip, their first time skiing, and her excitement was bubbling over. I'll never forget the questions all the kids had as the excitement escalated. "How do you keep from running into people?" someone asked. She answered "It seems like you are going to run into someone and then at the last second you just magically miss them! "

My funniest memory would have to be of when they were moving to Idaho and she climbed up on the trailer that was carrying her Montero at a truck stop somewhere in the Dakotas or Montana to look for something (probably a camera). Since it was a caravan of U-Hauls and chase vehicles everyone had been playing musical cars, mixing up who they rode with, and everyone assumed as they pulled out of the station that she was in someone else's car, since they knew she was no longer in the building. The thought of her rummaging around in the car with the door open as the truck and trailer jerked into motion and pulled out of the station is mildly funny compared to the thought of her trying to communicate with passing motorists at 75MPH, that she needed to speak to the driver.

I don't remember how many hours went by or how it ended, but knowing mom I'm thinking it was a written note on the window that finally bought things to a halt.

Again, unlike most moms who would have been put out or terrorized or both, she was entertained and totally amused by the whole thing. Get her to retell you the story and she'll be laughing to tears and have you rolling on the floor laughing! When you finally catch your breath, she'll tell you that she really enjoyed how well she could see up high like that, and you will be back on the floor laughing. These and countless other stories only begin to paint the picture of who she was and is. Whose mom do you know that had the survival skills to endure some of the adventures of getting in and out of the cabin at Wisconsin by herself in blind blizzards at 50 below zero? You would hear her talk about such things and she would describe all the beautiful things about her adventures and she'd always leave out the part about the danger. You knew she was aware of it but she never let the fear of it take over. That's how she approached raising ten of her own and many others.

Who of us has not gotten the look of terror from other moms when mentioning the fact that you come from a family of twelve? I got to the point that I found it recreational to mention it just to watch other mom's hair stand straight up! It is no coincidence that all ten kids are basically self-employed.

If there are certain words or phrases you would use to describe her they would include Love, peace, gentleness, kindness, Fear Not, and 'Maybe we could do that together **someday**'.

My last memory that I will share is when I was 18 or 19 and I was back from college in Colorado. She and I were in the canoe way out on the other side of Christmas Lake and I remember having this new appreciation of who she really was. I told her that when all the kids were gone that I had first dibs on her and dad coming to live by me. I remember how moved we both were by the closeness of that moment. I remember the stillness of the water and the quiet that followed as I tried to imagine what that would look like. Now I just walk over the creek and through the woods to grandmothers house. What a privilege and honor.

It is early and I need to close since I am going skiing today with my daughters, two of whom are just home from college. In family life, things happen in circles. We live on a lake next to a ski area. When I see her ski tracks coming out the driveway, or at the beach I ask myself, "Would I love these things as much if she had not?" I doubt it. Mom has given us much; some things are more obvious than others. The richness of our lives lies in the blessings of those who love us.

I love my Mom. Jamie

Christopher Emmer

December 2005

*Identify the top 2 things you like most about mom and why they're meaningful to you.
Add up to 3 more areas that you admire or like about her, (optional)*

I love Mom's willingness to try new things, especially those things that are health related. She is quite the researcher too!

I also love her ability to accept unconventional forms of thinking, being and the spiritual manifestations that surround us.

When you think of mom, you think of _____ (from 2 words to 2 sentences)
Strength and Fortitude.

Most important gift mom has given you.

Through her love of music, Mom first introduced me to the language of the angels.

Favorite day, moment or memories with her (this is not limited but can expand as far as you'd like- beyond just one moment, day, experience too)

I always knew that when I quit a job that she would most likely be overjoyed at my freedom.

Funniest or silliest memory of her (laughable moment/s).

I can't exactly remember why, but I remember many times of uncontrollable, gut splitting laughter when recalling some past scenarios.

Thanking her for ... (Personal thanks for whatever comes to mind) (Some of these things may overlap but that's fine).

I thank Mom for her love of play and laughter.

Mike Emmer

December 2005

*Identify the top 2 things you like most about mom and why they're meaningful to you.
Add up to 3 more areas that you admire or like about her, (optional)*

Always positive about anything you put in front of her - Even if it is totally unknown - this is meaningful because you can always get her feeling/look on it.

Always feel lots of unconditional love emanating from her - Keeps you feeling special

3 more: Always in touch with nature around her - never goes unnoticed

Always prefers one on one interaction/time with each instead of multiple interaction
Keeps you connected to her

Always ready for hugs - makes you feel loved

When you think of mom, you think of: My nurtured existence

Two important things that mom has taught you. (Can be more) This can be by her example as well, etc.

To find the best there is in every person

To always think positive

Most important gift mom has given you. My creativity

Favorite day, moment or memories with her (this is not limited but can expand as far as you'd like- beyond just one moment, day, experience too) Every day spent with her is fond - I can't really rule out just one - maybe the time she was in Bozeman when I was in college - her and dad came to visit and there were 6 foot walls of snow around and she was in awe and could see why I am such a snow lover.

Thanking her for ... (Personal thanks for whatever comes to mind) (Some of these things may overlap but that's fine). Always feeling that you're special - never feeling lost in the pack of ten siblings - this is a real gift she has!

Katy Emmer

December 2005

Identify the top 2 things you like most about mom and why they're meaningful to you. Add up to 3 more areas that you admire or like about her; (optional)

First this would be your kindness/generosity/caring and your openness & broad spirituality; your approach to seeing life as spiritual, God in all and our connection to God as real and natural. Your ability to 'listen' to God, to angels, to Mary and to others. What a gift these things are and remains to this day, so incredibly important and cherished. (I'll never forget how naturally you spoke about Grampy 'coming to visit you' in your room shortly after he died. It was with some amazement and awe but also how natural it all was to you, for him to come like this & how real. You were of course delighted but never shocked about it.)

Your interest in helping others, your love of gardens, beauty and the natural kingdom is also something that strongly impacted me and infused me growing up and still does.

Other areas I love and admire about you: your love and special way with children, your ability to laugh and play, not take things/yourself too seriously (most of the time, we can all forget sometimes), your open mindedness, your ability to explore the truth and learn something new.

When you think of mom, you think of:

A person who lives her life by and with grace, caring/giving, devotion, independence, honesty, love, patience, smart, wise via experiences, highly intuitive, can adapt when needed, allows, steps back, watches, soul-full.

Two important things that mom has taught you. (Can be more) This can be by her example as well, etc.
To be open, to love the spiritual and God, to see it is easy to communicate with God and the spiritual world directly. To be kind to strangers and all people and all life, to explore, to be oneself regardless of what other people think, it's positive to try new things if you're interested, women aren't weak or crazy-(a bit different/unique only), and it will be okay, it will work out somehow. Life is a community of souls.

Most important gift mom has given you.

Besides Life (which is huge) a broad spiritual orientation to life (including her love of God and others) and her warm unending love. (Oops... I guess that's 3 things)

Favorite day, moment or memories with her (this is not limited but can expand as far as you'd like- beyond just one moment, day, experience too)

Our bike ride around the lake when I came home one summer, stopping in the Excelsior park overlooking the lake, sitting on those steps to relax and hang out together, just you and I and one on one time together, like old girlfriends, such a quality of presence I'll never forget and I soaked in every minute. Other wonderful memories are in the gardens at Christmas lake house, you showing me the patch of Lily of the Valleys (now my favorite flower too) by the garbage cans (fairies all around us). And another would be times sailing with you on the blue Sailfish on Christmas lake. That was your boat truly and your time to be free. You let everything go, dropped about 20 years as soon as you climbed on the boat, got silly and loved every minute of sailing (including tipping over the most fun)...for a time, forgot time. My love of water first came from you, (though I'd much rather be 'in it' than on top of it).

Funniest or silliest memory of her (laughable moments).

We kids were armed with a bottle of spray of whipped creme and began playfully chasing you around the Christmas Lake house, (quick as a fox you were, and as evasive) finally cornering you in the blue master bathtub where we (Jeff and perhaps Kevin also as I remember did the honors) sprayed you all over with whipped creme while others restrained you, while you giggled and laughed hysterically. We were all laughing hysterically, unstoppable, gut wrenching glee; I saw the kid in you shining bright, joyful; it was great fun.

Your hopes, prayers or dreams for her now-what you would hope she will have/experience, related to her fulfillment.

To listen to and follow your heart and God's whispers within you, to learn that you are also important and God wants you to be happy and fulfilled, at peace. To learn to love, embrace and appreciate yourself more and more and allow yourself to explore and examine what is *truly meaningful* and important to you, as it is God's expression in you too and there for a purpose.

Tha11killg her for (Personal thanks for whatever comes to mind) (Some of these things may overlap but that's fine). You are like a beautiful rose in abundant full bloom, always giving off an aura of sweet love and support, but a rose that continues and never fades or dies but is eternal and patient in its giving/sharing of love. Thank you for being that pure love example to me and to others who know you and all of us who continue to know and feel your essence and the goodness and richness of the greater enduring love and support. Quite precious.

I love you very much, always. Katy

Kevin Emmer

December 2005

Hi Mom!

2 of my favorite things about you:

Your nurturing spirit and the way you always accepted my friends without any judgments, no matter their background.

When I think of you, I think of hugs, smiles, and you waving from the doorway.

You taught me how to be me; how to grow into an individual from my own being, instead of a personality dictated by others.

Your most important gift to me was your love for me and the family.

Thank you for raising such an amazing family! I feel like we were truly blessed in our upbringing. Many, many fond memories.

I love you Mom! Love, Kev

Jeff Emmer

December 2005

Mom

When I think of Mom I'm amazed at what that word encompasses and, at the same time, how much I take it all for granted. After all she has always been Mom to me.

The first words that come to mind are "unconditional love". Having a husband and ten kids going many different directions has not kept her from being always interested and

supportive of what each one is up to. And if by chance there is a need that she could possibly meet for any one of them she delights in trying to meet it. Although family has always been her focus, many friends throughout the country have also experienced this love.

Perhaps this unconditional love is the fruit of her faith relationship to the Author of unconditional love Himself, as we tend to love best when we feel loved ourselves. Mom's faith in Christ has blessed her and us who know her in so many ways, and it is a great comfort to me to know that this faith will serve her for eternity just as it has for Dad.

How very appropriate to have the opportunity to express these thoughts at Christmas time!

Jeffrey

Molly Emmer

December 20, 2005

Hello Mom,

Merry Christmas to you.

So readily I take for granted that you know the depth of my love and admiration of you, especially since (fortunately for me) our lives interact on a daily level "whose going to town?"... "How's the road?" etc... "oh excuse me....gotta go!"

Without being too wordy I want to let you know what an impression you have had on me, and my perception of the world we live in.

On a mothering level... the most primary part of simply caring for, feeding, clothing, and keeping track of us...well this alone blows me away to consider the giving you have doneand on to a further level> That you did it (largely) with so much love and cheerfulness. This gift of your positive outlook, along with Dad's is a gift that shines ten fold. On and on it goes.

Now to mother 10 children is one thing. But to do it with grace and joy while also furthering your passions and civic duties and well, your own kind of activism leaves me wondering. In my small world of 2 children I selfishly wonder occasionally, "Hey! Where did go?" But as I reflect on your life and see you shining as you, oh lets say start a Montessori school, host CCD classes, take up macrobiotics and organic gardening, educate all you meet with nutritional epiphanies, ETC ETC ... I wonder if this parallels the concept of giving up self to attain a higher relationship.

I'm switching to listing, as I think of a handful of random and impressive memories, all carrying warmth:

Your arm to lean on in church, especially bare in summer was the very coziest place in the world.

Any road trip (once begun!) is always wrapped in your contagious enthusiasm.

Carver Park tenting with just you and for a birthday.

Your pride in your children/grandchildren.

You with your feet in the water ... any water ... and the bliss, (or shrieking reactions) that you basked in.

Your bike. How fun it was to watch you on it. How fun it was to ride myself ... I felt so big!

Your ability to always be the last to leave church.

Your presence at your afterbirth visits, always so tender, tuning into your new grandbaby.

Inner tubing the Apple River with the Regans. If I could just be near you I'd be OK (when it got scary).

Lily of the Valley or Horse chestnut tiny purple flowers.

When I was born you shared your milk with the leche league for other babies.

The jingly loafers on the foyer floor letting us know you were home (so we could 1. run - overwhelm you with questions or 2. stop doing whatever it was we weren't supposed to be doing).

The respect and love and humanness you showed at Grammy and Grampy's gravesites.

Your fun loving joyful side let loose during a game or memory and the mischievous laughter.

Your constant openness to new life...be it a bird or baby muskrat or...us!

The way my children light up in your presence.

The way you light up in most all children's presence.

The tender and tireless way you cared for Dad. The grace and love for him as you let him go.

The first wren of spring.

And a million more. Thank you for being my mom and for giving me the siblings that I have. Thank you for who you are in this world. Thank you for teaching me to tie my shoes and pray and swim and dream and garden and question.

Much love,

Moll Doll

Lissa Emmer

December 2005

Going through the format given: (see introduction page for format)

- 1- a. Mom's consistent nurturing energy and respect for all living things.
b. Her ability to engage with people and nature.
- 2- When I think of Mom, I think of her nurturing energy and her unconditional love and interest in me.
- 3-a. To slow down and enjoy the simplest of things.
Example; one of her regrets she told me when raising us all, was that she wished she would have taken more time to hold us longer when we were sleeping. I love this and think of her often as I rock my little ones to sleep at night and gaze at their sweet angelic faces. It is such a special time. Thanks Mom for reminding me of how special this is and also how it's so fleeting.
- 4- The ability to enjoy and observe all living things.
- 5-a. When we caught the big fish together in the boundary waters.
 - b. Her being apart of Coopers birth and spending time with us the days leading up to it. Playing outside with the boys and the day before, blowing up the boat, painting bellies, going to church on Mother's day and sharing breakfast together.
 - c. Swimming in Christmas lake and getting out chilled and warming myself up on Moms "moley and moungey" arms. The smell of her sun warmed and soft arms. There was nothing like it!
 - d. Falling asleep on her when she would wear her soft fur coat during Midnight mass and the smell of her perfume.
 - e. Hearing her heeled shoes clicking along the front hall stone floor from downstairs.
 - f. Her ability to nurse me back to health when I was ill. She knew just what to do and catered to my every wish, without even having to ask her. A natural healer indeed.

An example of this: I remember having horrible headaches and she would rub tiger balm on my temples until I was able to drift off to sleep. She made me feel like I was the only thing that mattered.

6-Driving around the Ox lake fields in the white Jeep pick-up with us kids in the back, shouting in glee as she would rev it up to mimic a roller coaster ride up and down the hills.

7-I'd love for her to pursue her passions and talents. Painting, travel, pottery etc....

She selflessly sacrificed these things to raise children. Now is your time Mom to do whatever your heart desires. I remember you saying how you would love to see Australia. I would love to make this happen for you if it is still a dream of yours. Lets go together!!

8-I wish she could hear me when I speak of her to friends, clients, whomever when I start bragging about her ability and grace in raising 10 children. I am in constant awe of you as I raise three.

9-Mom I thank you for your consistent and unconditional love, which has enabled me to be the person I am today. I love you very much!

Mary Mary Christmas. Love Sa

Clayton Emmer

December 2005

The two things I most appreciate about Mom: her generosity and her receptivity. She defines what it means to be recklessly large-hearted, and fearless of the pain that might come from making herself so vulnerable. And by receptive I mean welcoming, not in any kind of formal, dutiful way ... but genuinely ready to open herself to whoever would present themselves to her. And then there's her sense of humor, generally self-deprecating but always alive to the incongruities of life and all that is inherently silly... without caving in to the temptation of being ironic or sarcastic in any form.

Like last Christmas Eve, when she and I spent a good hour traversing back and forth across Clark Fork looking for the Holy Grail of plumbing: a toilet plunger for the overflowing facility at Sacred Heart.

When I think of Mom, I think of lilies of the valley and sailboats, two things she's fond of. Mom is like those delicate, fragrant flowers that change the whole aroma of the place without drawing attention to themselves, and like a sail open to wherever the Spirit might blow, and constantly tacking to see where the Wind might want to lead next. I think that's how she taught me the value of discernment: testing everything, and keeping what is good.

A favorite memory is the lunches we shared together at the Burger King at Vine Hill and Highway 7, when I was in junior high school. I was just attending junior high on a part time basis, and generally a bus would come to pick me up midday to take me to East Junior High. But from time to time Mom would offer to drive me, so that we could have lunch together. It was just as the era of Home Covenant School ended, and during these undivided times shared with Mom I felt I was getting to know her all over again.

My hope and prayer is that in this particular chapter in her life, she can look back with satisfaction for all the artistry she has co-created – not the least the family she raised and nurtured with Dad – and look forward to all of the new expressions of creative love that she has within her to be expressed in the days to come... She's an artist of the human heart, with a canvas that has stretched as far as the eye can see... and a lot farther, I'm sure. There are realms of that canvas for her to return to, and others to explore for the first time.

So I hope she'll hop on her pontoon sailboat, so to speak, find the Wind like the expert sailor that she is, and set the course anew each day... touring that whole canvas, that whole work of art that is her life. It's going to be a joy to watch.

Merry Christmas and Happy 2006

We love you!!!