

Dear Mama,

As I look back on my childhood, one of my mom's favorite sayings was, "If it ain't one thing, it's another!". I finally get that now and as a mom, I'm almost certain you do too! It seems like every time things seem to be going well, every time we get a chance to breathe a little, something slows us down, and we have to go back to the drawing board. But that's all part of Mamahood, right? It's funny because, growing up, my mom made that look so easy.

Growing up with just my mom and my brother in the household was pretty cool! We always had the latest shoes and clothes, the fridge was always full, and we always had corner store money for ourselves and even our friends too. Summer trips were a regular thing, and our Christmas gifts covered the entire living room. Looking back on that time, I can't think of one thing my brother and I wanted that we didn't already have. Not one thing! But also thinking back... was that really what childhood was all about?

I remember waking up while it was still dark outside, having to catch a bus to the train station and that hour-long train ride to get to school each morning. I remember my mom having a car, too, at one point in time. There were also times that we would walk, it just depended on where we lived that year. My mom worked a lot and took a few college classes, so we spent a lot of our time at the recreation center near our school until she came to pick us up. When it came to having conversations with her, that looked more like letters I would write to her and leave on her bed. Not only because she was hardly around but also because my mom was the kind of mom you didn't question, whatever she said, "goes."



Most times, she wouldn't respond to my letters. I only knew she'd seen them because I would later find them in her top drawer with all my others. My mom never really had to say much, she just had this certain demeanor about her that let my brother and I know she was nobody to "play with." It made things a little challenging when it came to expressing ourselves, but it also worked in her favor because whenever people she knew would see us in public, they would always give good compliments about us.

Having three kids of my own now, I reflect a lot on my childhood. I take the good from my mom's parenting style, but I also take the parts that didn't make me feel so good and threw them out the window. My number one goal for my kids is to be "Good Human Beings." These days, so many people lack that simple trait. I also allow my kids to ask, "Why?" I think by me expressing myself and giving the reasoning behind certain things will make them feel comfortable with doing the same. My kids are showered with necessities, love, and extras all year round, so Christmas looks more like a regular day in my household.

Thinking back on my childhood, moving around a lot didn't bother me, but looking back as a mom myself now, we were actually unstable. My mom just did a great job of never making us have to feel it. I strive for stability more than anything now. I strive for consistency, being an active listener, and helping my kids manage their negative emotions. I try my best to communicate with my children, whether it's a good or bad day for me. Being a "Good Mom" doesn't come with a manual; every mom doesn't always have it all figured out. My only advice is to be present for your children. But also, remember to do that, don't forget to be present for yourself!

Moet

