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Facing the Homeschool Super Mom

By Laura Bankston

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by: **Laura Bankston**

I know this Mom. She homeschools her 5 children, plus she tutors several other children that are dropped off at her house. AND she's a Pastor's wife. AND she's working on fixing up the fixer-upper they just moved into. Whenever I've been in her house, it's been immaculate. Her children all have perfect manners. They all seem to be way ahead of their grade level. She's definitely gotta be a Homeschool Super Mom.

You're probably thinking of someone like this too, right? Someone that made you think, "Man, my son isn't reading as well as hers." or "My house isn't as clean as hers." Or a million other things.

And you probably discovered her when you were new to homeschooling. When you were already feeling uncertain in your new endeavors. You were already putting high expectations on yourself. You were constantly analyzing to be sure you were doing everything right. And as a result, you tend to be a little over-sensitive about what other's are accomplishing around you without giving enough credit to yourself.

So, it's really important that you remember (as a new homeschooler or a seasoned one) these basic principles that we all so easily forget:

"The 4 Basic Principles That Conquer the 'Super-Moms' Syndrome"

Principle #1: We always see other's through glasses that make them larger than life. When I was a teenager, there was this lady in our church. Her hair and makeup was always perfect. She lived in a big, expensive home. She was very stylish and her kids were so cool. I always wanted to grow up and have that.

But I don't anymore.

Facing the Homeschool Super Mom

I'd rather have my house that gets messy 5 minutes after it gets picked up, my hair that falls down into my eyes as I pick up my children, and my face that only gets makeup on Sunday. Why you may ask? Well, here's why. I'm happy. I love my family, and I wouldn't trade them for anything.

The lady I had idolized as a teen? She still has her perfect home and impeccable style. But, she has a marriage without love and children who are stuck up adults who ignore her totally.

I had seen her through glasses that made her larger than life. In the end, she's not any bigger or greater than me. In fact, she probably wishes that she had my life!

So, if you start to think about someone else who seems to have the life you want, STOP LOOKING! Instead, sit down and make a list of 100 good things in your life—from the air you breathe, to the heat in your home, to the kisses from your child. I guarantee that you'll feel better about yourself that you ever have before.

Principle #2: Everyone has their own unique gift. Everyone has their own unique ability and we tend to notice in other's the abilities that might be our "weak" ones.

For instance, if you think you're house is always messy, you'll seem to know all these people who have perfectly neat homes.

For an example from my life, I have a son who struggles with speech and it seems like every other parent within a 100 mile radius have children with perfect diction. But you know that's not the way it is. My son might not pronounce every phonic sound correctly—yet!—but he has so many other gifts that hardly make that one seem important.

For instance, no one notices his speech. They always comment, though, how loving he is. Just running up to people and giving them hugs. And he has fun no matter what he does. Can you believe one day I actually heard myself saying, "Ryan. Stop that. Not everything is supposed to be fun." I had to step back and slap myself. Then I said, "Never mind. Mommy was wrong. Have as much fun as you can." And I learned a lesson from that.

So, forget about what the homeschooled Jones' are doing. Discover your child's unique ability and relish in it and develop it and learn from it.

Right now, at the end of your list of 100 things that you're grateful for, list 10 wonderful qualities or abilities for yourself and each of your children. Work on acknowledging, praising, and being thankful for all of your gifts. And don't forget to thank God that you got the greatest kids ever born on this earth.

Principle #3: It doesn't matter what others think. I know, it seems easier said than done. But I guarantee that if you've actually taken the time to write down your list of 100 things that you're grateful for and 10 wonderful qualities of your child, that you won't care what other people think because you will know and appreciate what you have.

And, see, it really doesn't matter what other people think.

What matters is what's important to you. Your core values. Your beliefs. Your ethics. How do you want your children to be as adults? Hey, write it down right now. 5 things you want your child to be as an adult.

Okay, I'll do it right now too for Ryan who is 6 years old—but do yours before you read mine: A loving husband and father An honest, ethical entrepreneur Faithful in service to God Kind, thoughtful, and helpful to those less fortunate Thankful and content for what he can do and what he has Now, I'll bet that you had similar types of things. Not, "makes \$1,000,000 by age 30" or "wins he Miss America contest".

Focus on developing and rearing your child to have those 5 qualities, and I'll guarantee that the fact that Mrs. Smith's daughter who is 2 years younger than yours is reading book three times as difficult. Geez, that's a real life skill. You see what I'm getting at?

Principle #4: When you say "yes" to one thing, you are always saying "no" to something else. Have you ever heard that before? I heard that from an owner of a successful multi-million dollar business. That was the simple rule that he used to prioritize his life. When he sat at his desk with phone

messages to return, he would literally think, "If I say 'yes' to calling this person, what will I be saying 'no' to?" When someone would asked to do something, he was able to say "no", knowing that if he said "yes" to that project, that he would be saying "no" to extra time with his family.

This principle applies to everyone whether they are conscious of it or not.

Mrs. Smith who is working so hard to have her child advanced in reading is saying "no" to some other educational area. Or, Suzie Homeschool Super Mom up the street who has her immaculate home is saying "no" to time with her kids or family or something else.

The same applies to me. I've said "yes" to this homeschool site, so I've had to say "no" to things like having a perfectly neat house, laundry always done and put away, and a 5 course home-cooked meal on the table by 5:00 every night.

Only say "yes" to the things that are important to you. (See, you don't know it, but I've been gone for 20 minutes. My daughter came downstairs crying, and I stopped to take care of her. And I've also acquired a set of ear muffs made from pipecleaners and pom-poms.) So, as I was saying, say "yes" ONLY to the things that are most important to you. And know ahead of time what you'll be saying "no" to before you say "yes"!

Principle #5: Take advantage of every possible tool. That's right. I don't lift a finger (well, hardly a finger) to clean my home as I have cleaner's come twice a week to take care of that responsibility for me. And to solve my meal preparation dilemma? I purchase items that can be thrown in the oven and get side dishes that are quick and easy.

Facing the Homeschool Super Mom

You can do similar things. I have a homeschooling friend who takes one day a month and cooks all day to make meals for 30 days that she freezes and uses one at a time. And I thought she cooked from scratch every night!

Having difficulties organizing? Don't fight it. Buy something that organizes your stuff or forget it. It really isn't that important to waste time stressing over!

Use all the tools you can, and leave everything else to collect dust.

So whatever happened to that super mom?

Hopefully by now you've done the exercises or at least skimmed enough here and there to know that there is no super mom except the unrealistic giant you've created in your mind. Instead, you should have a full, realistic view of the gifts and treasures that you possess and a new appreciation for all you get done and how you can enjoy doing what you do a little more! If you've done that, then I wasn't wrong in saying "yes" to this project!

Release your worries and enjoy life!

Laura Bankston is author of Internationally selling *Cooking with Kids Curriculum: Homeschool Cooking*

in a Box and the *Homeschool Cookbook*. She currently home schools her three children, maintains home school support websites, and manages their family-owned service business. For information on her curriculum and free home school support services, please visit

Grandparents --- Homeschool Your Grandchildren And Feel Younger

By Joel Turtel

Grandparents, what better way to stay close to your grown children than to advise them about important issues like the dangers of public schools for your grandchildren? What better way to feel younger if you offer to help homeschool your grandchildren?

When your children grow up and get careers of their own, that doesn't mean you have to be lonely in a big, empty house and lose contact with your kids. Helping to homeschool your grandchildren can be a wonderful way for you to stay in close and loving contact with your grown children and grandchildren. You can be a loving part of the family again.

If you read "Public Schools, Public Menace," tell your grown children about how your grandkids are in real danger by going to public schools. Don't let your grandchildren's mind's, self-confidence, and love of learning go to waste in public schools. Give your grown children the book to read.

Even better, then offer to help watch the grandkids and homeschool them if your grown children and their spouses work. Who better to help your children and adorable grandchildren than you? Doing so

could make your retirement years the happiest years of your life.

You have so much wisdom and knowledge that you have accumulated over the years. You have so much love you still have to give. How your children would appreciate your love and help with your grandchildren! If you helped homeschool your grandchildren, what a wonderful gift that would be for your children, your grandkids, and most of all, yourself. Think about it.

Joel Turtel is the author of "Public Schools, Public Menace: How Public Schools Lie To Parents and Betray Our Children." Website:

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