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Interview with Elisa Morgan, President of MOPS International and Author of NAKED FRUIT

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As a busy wife responsible for the care and nurturing of so many lives outside my own, it's nice to be reminded that it's "God's job" to hand the "fruit production" in my life – to bestow upon me the fruit of the Spirit. Most days I'm just busy ensuring that four sets of teeth get brushed after every meal – the thought of being loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle and exercising self control can be daunting. Thank goodness for encouraging authors like Elisa Morgan, who not only inspire the heart, but also offer the tools to keep me aiming at and running towards my spiritual goals.

NAKED FRUIT: GETTING HONEST ABOUT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT (Revell, August 2004, hardcover, 168 pages) gives moms the tools they need to open their hearts and souls to accepting the Spirit's gift, and equips them to grow in their relationship with God and with those whose lives they touch. Author and MOPS International President Elisa Morgan's concept that the "Naked Fruit" of a relationship with God is simply becoming (as best we can) like Jesus is as refreshingly satisfying as the first bite into a luscious orange on a hot summer afternoon!

The book's brief, yet insightful chapters end in thought provoking (but manageable) "Fruit for Thought" exercises designed to help busy mothers see a clear path to growing more fruitful in their own circles of relation. Although the book is aimed at mothers, any Christian looking to honestly make the world a better place and wanting to grow in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control will doubtless benefit from the experience of reading, savoring and digesting NAKED FRUIT.

LH: I am pleased to share the following Book Spotlight interview with Elisa Morgan, president of MOPS International and author of the new book NAKED FRUIT: GETTING HONEST ABOUT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT. Elisa, could you start off by telling our readers about your background with MOPS and

your own
family?

EM: MOPS International began in 1973 with a group of women in a Denver, Colorado suburb. I was hired as the first president in 1989. For the last fifteen plus years, it has been my pleasure and honor to lead this ministry to moms in a unique and challenging season of life. Initially, I felt very ill-equipped to lead this organization but after much soul-searching I realized that God wasn't asking me to be a perfect mother, but rather to lead as a "Mother Inferior", one mom helping another.

When I began at MOPS, my children were three and five. Today my family includes my husband of twenty-five years, Evan, my eighteen-year-old son, Ethan, my twenty-year-old daughter, Eva, and her new baby, Marcus – all living with us at home right now!

LH: NAKED FRUIT is such a refreshing book, especially for busy mothers who may be struggling with their vocation to motherhood. What message do you hope that readers will take away from the experience of reading this book?

EM: That the fruit of the Spirit is attainable through God's help. And that if we really want to grow a life that matters, these characteristics should be our goal. One more thing: early motherhood is a very humbling and challenging season. God can grow fruit even in days that are filled with frustrations...i.e.: compost is necessary for fruit production!

LH: In NAKED FRUIT, you emphasize the importance of the concept of stripping away the idea that Christianity is simply "being nice". What do you mean by this and how do so many moms fall into the trap?

EM: We tend to think that the fruit of the Spirit is all about putting a sweet smile on our faces and being nice, nice, nice all the time, even when we don't feel like smiling or being nice. It's a misconception of Christianity. The fruit of the Spirit is really about being like Jesus. Jesus was always fruit-filled in his interactions with others but he wasn't always "nice". He was loving to the prostitute but told her clearly to stop sinning. He was loving to the Pharisees but told them not to make faith harder than God says it is. He was peaceful but expressed this quality by napping in the bottom of a boat in the midst of a storm on the Sea of Galilee while his disciples freaked out. Jesus was always loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle and self-controlled but he didn't always look "nice" according to the definitions of his culture.

LH: What can I do as a mom to "make a difference" in the lives of my own children and other loved ones?

EM: Focus on the big picture: are you and your children growing to look more like Jesus each day, each month, each year? Again, it's not about being nice but rather about possessing the characteristics of his personality in your own unique personality. Joy will look different in you than in your child. That's okay. But are you still growing joy?

LH: Elisa Morgan, thank you so much for your time and for this wonderful book, NAKED FRUIT. Are

there any additional thoughts or comments you'd like to share with our readers?

EM: One other thing – Another reason we shy away from fruit production in our lives is that we believe that the responsibility for growing love, joy etc. is all up to us. We know we can't produce these qualities in and of ourselves. We've tried. And failed. And so we figure – forget it. The fruit of the Spirit is up to God to produce in us. Our job is to cooperate with him by connecting ourselves to him in a relationship with Jesus Christ. God's job is to grow the fruit.

For more information or to order NAKED FRUIT: GETTING HONEST ABOUT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT visit <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0800718739/digitalcropper-20>

Lisa M. Hendey is a mother of two sons, webmaster of numerous web sites, including <http://www.digitalcropper.com>, <http://www.christincoloring.com>, and <http://www.catholicmom.com> and an avid reader.

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Dr

By S. M. Akerkar

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Diagnosis of HIV DISEASE—

What is ELISA test for HIV ?—

Whenever any organism enters the body, the immune system produces antibodies to it. Hence presence of these antibodies is an indirect evidence of the infection.

ELISA test for HIV is a test that detects the antibodies to HIV. A positive ELISA test is therefore an indirect evidence of HIV infection.

However the body takes 6 weeks to 3 months to produce antibodies. Thus even after infection the test becomes positive only after 6 weeks to 3 months. This period is called as the window period. During this period the patient is infective but the test is negative.

Should a single ELISA test positive report be taken as an evidence of HIV infection ?—

In case of ELISA positive; either the test is repeated or a more specific test like Western Blot is done to confirm the diagnosis.

What is Western Blot test?

This is a more specific test for diagnosis of HIV infection. It is generally used to confirm a positive ELISA report.

What is PCR test for HIV ?—

PCR stands for Polymerase Chain reaction. It is an advanced test that detects HIV even if it is present in the blood in very small quantity. Hence it can detect the presence of HIV much earlier as compared to ELISA, thus decreasing the window period considerably.

Similarly testing for p24 antigen is also a test that can decrease the window period.

If a p24 test becomes negative after being positive earlier, does it mean that the person has been cured of HIV infection ?--

NO. p24 is an antigen of HIV. Once HIV enters the body it is found in the blood in high quantity. The test is thus found to be positive at this time. After about 2 to six months the virus goes into hiding in the lymph nodes. At this time the p24 is likely to become negative. However this is the normal progression of HIV infection & does not mean that the patient has been cured of HIV infection

for further details log onto <http://doctoronline.s5.com/hiv4.html>

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