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I always enjoyed the first day of school with the new crayons, clean notebooks, and new lunch box.

The start of the new year does the same thing for me. I renew my commitment to exercise. I start a new Bible study. I usually evaluate my schedule and commit to better boundaries.

At Hearts at Home, the new year means a new theme for our conferences and our resources. For 2012, that theme is simply, "In The MOMent."

Have you ever found yourself saying something like this:

- I wish she would sleep through the night!
- I can't wait until he walks.
- I'll be glad when she can go to school.
- I wish he could drive!

Every mom does it. We focus on what's next instead of what's now. We get caught up in the chaos, instead of the beauty. We long for what we don't have, instead of seeing all that we do have. "In the MOMent" is all about being fully present in the motherhood season that you are in.

So rather than "wishing she would sleep through the night,"

thank God for the precious moments of quiet you have as you feed her each night. Pray for her future spouse. Notice her little nose. Moments like this won't last forever.

Rather than wishing he can walk, be thankful for the opportunity you have to touch your child lovingly throughout the day. One day, when he becomes a teenager, you will easily go weeks without touching him.

Instead of waiting impatiently for her to go to school, be thankful for her innocence and excitement about the world around her. All too soon you'll be battling the attitudes of a pre-teen.

And instead of wishing he could drive, be thankful for the time you have to talk in the car as you shuttle him from one place to another. Before you know it, those conversations will be few and far between.

I used to use the phrase "this too shall pass" to get me through the tough times of motherhood. Now I use that phrase to give me the perspective to not wish away the MOMents I'm in.

Want to join me?

Jill

Wife of Mark
Mom to Anne, Evan, Erica, Kolya, and Austin
Nana to 21-month-old Rilyn

Grab some friends and join us for the
2012 Hearts at Home conferences
where we will learn to delight in an ordinary day.

*Slow down.
Be refreshed.*

Live fully...in the beauty of the MOMent you are in.



The 2012 events feature Michelle Duggar, Dr. Julianna Slattery, the Fly Lady, and dozens of workshops that will enrich, encourage, and equip you to be the best mom you can be!

REGISTER NOW!

New Year's Resolutions

By Patty Maier

We're into the second week of the new year. So how are you coming along with those things you want to fix or change about yourself? If you're trying to break old habits or establishing new ones, here are some strategies that might help:

-Keep realistic expectations. Don't expect to change overnight. Change takes time, energy, and commitment.

-Focus on one goal at a time, so it's not so overwhelming. Sometimes it helps to break down each goal into steps. If you want to lose weight, it might be easier to begin exercising regularly before starting a diet. Once you're in the habit of exercising, changing your eating habits may not seem as overwhelming--especially if you do it in steps. First, cut out eating after your evening meal. Once that's a part of your routine, eliminate unhealthy snacks. Accomplishing smaller changes can encourage you toward your bigger goal.

-Take it one day (or less) at a time. Try to change in appropriate increments. For instance, when you first attempt to change negative thinking, you're probably not going to make it 24 hours without negativity. Instead, focus on making it five minutes without a negative thought. Celebrate each small victory.

-Replace an old, unwanted habit with a new, healthier habit. For instance, when you start thinking negatively, pray instead. Or attach the old habit's prompt to a different habit. For example, when you start thinking about junk food, instead of reaching for a donut, say, "I'm strong and keeping my body healthy."

-Seek help. When we share our struggles with friends and family, they can help hold us accountable, offer encouragement, pray for us, and walk beside us. We can also ask God for wisdom and strength.

-Encourage yourself. Say things like, "I like myself better when I don't do that." Post positive reminders where you'll see them.

-Remember it's your choice. For instance, I can eat whatever I want or I can choose not to eat whatever I want.

-Try to progress, not to perfect. Have you made progress since you decided you wanted to change? Focus on that progression, not on how far you are from perfection.

-Offer yourself grace. Don't beat yourself up when you stumble. We all make mistakes! Forgive yourself for being imperfect, then try again.

As it's often said, today's the first day of the rest of our lives. One step at a time, one day at a time, let's begin some healthy changes today that we can build on tomorrow.

A MOMent With God

Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

Joshua 1:9

Do you need some encouragement to get through the "arsenic hours?"

The hours from 4 p.m. - 9 p.m. can be some of the most stressful hours for a mother. Find out they're called the "arsenic hours" this Friday, January 13, on the Focus on the Family radio broadcast.

Hearts at Home Founder and CEO, Jill Savage, and Focus on the Family psychologist, Dr. Julianna Slattery will be talking about strategies for managing the most stressful part of every mom's day.



Listen [HERE](#) on Friday!

Hearts at Home helps you...

- ***Empower your children to make good choices.***
- ***Learn to accept help in raising your family.***
- ***Celebrate the uniqueness of your children.***



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