

MOMS' NIGHT OUT

DADS' DISCUSSION GUIDE

(featuring scenes from **MOMS' NIGHT OUT**)



SCENE: Mother's Day Mess

TOPIC: Moms Get Frustrated

QUOTE: "Work! Work! Why won't you work? Come on!" *Allyson*

QUESTIONS:

- What do you think causes the most frustration for your wife these days?
- In **MOMS' NIGHT OUT**, Allyson calls what happens in this scene as "having a moment." Have you ever seen your wife experience Allyson's level of frustration?
- How can you better support your wife when she has "a moment"?

Being a mom is, at the very least, stressful. When everything goes south during the daily "routine," moms can feel overwhelmed and frustrated. Being a mom is a 24/7 job—both for stay-at-home moms and those who work outside the home. Dressing hyper toddlers, playing dress up, taxiing kids to sports, wiping tear-stained cheeks, cleaning filthy bottoms—the day-to-day grind can leave a mom breathless and exasperated.

When stress levels grow high, patience runs thin, common annoyances become mountainous and normal coping skills fly out the window. The ongoing stress can cause moms to move from being "super woman" to "frazzled mom" at lightning speed. That's when they need a listening (and hearing) ear or a good old-fashioned break.

As husbands, we need to recognize the stress and frustration and step up to help. How? Listen without offering solutions. Simply acknowledge she's having a tough day. Genuinely offer to lighten the load: "Let me take over for a while" ... "Come on kids, let's go to the park and let mom rest" ... "Friday night is your night to go out. I've got the kids." Stepping inside your wife's world during stressful times can go a long way in showing her that you have her back and that you're there to help when she needs it the most. As we read in Ephesians 5:25, "Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting." (The Message)

SCENE: The Chase Is On

TOPIC: Be Her Knight in Shining Armor

QUOTE: "I know ... but my wife's in trouble!" Sean

QUESTIONS:

- In this scene, Sean is willing to endure "searing pain" in order to help his wife. Have you ever forsaken your wellbeing to help your wife in a time of need?
- What is the most heroic thing you've ever done?
- What could you do this week to dust off your armor and do something heroic, something that honors your wife this week?

God hard wired us to be heroes. It really doesn't take a lot of thought for courage to kick in and for men to step in front of fear. It's who we are. It happens every day: a kid is bullying our child at school; a coworker questions the integrity of a friend; our wife calls for help because she had a fender bender and needs her man beside her.

When David heard the enemy's taunts echoing across the valley, it pushed his "man button." Courage rose up and said, "That's enough. Bring it on, Goliath!" While kings, soldiers, and peers cowered in fear around him, he stepped up and put his life on the line.

You should feel good about the moments in life when you are called to face fear, when you are willing to deal with discomfort and even pain to protect those you love. This is especially true in our role as husbands; it's the essence of biblical love: "...It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres." (1 Corinthians 13:7, NIV)

- In what way can you "protect" your wife today? What "knight-in-shining-armor" moment is just a decision away? How can you prove your love for her today?

Maybe it's not "taking a bullet" for her, but maybe it's stepping on her side when friends and coworkers discredit her. Maybe it's just reminding her that you promise to always be there, to care for and stand by her when she needs you. That's the kind of bravery that will go a long way in providing security and trust for the wife God gave you. And that only comes when we embrace the protector role God created each of us with. As 1 Peter 3:7 puts it: "Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers." (NIV)



SCENE: We're in the Jailhouse Now

TOPIC: Help your wife embrace her role as a mom ... and help take some of the pressure off.

QUOTE: "I don't think the good Lord made a mistake in giving your kiddos the momma he did." *Bones*

QUESTIONS:

- Do you think the average mom today feels confident in her role? Do most dads feel confident in their role?
- How about your wife as a mom and you as a dad?
- What can you do to encourage your wife to feel confident that she is doing a great job as a mom? What can you do to help her "catch her breath?"

If you listen to conversations young moms have through social media or just at the corner coffee shop, you're likely to hear something like this: "I'm just not sure I'm doing a good job." ... "I don't feel like I know what I am doing as a mom." ... or the classic: "I'm not good enough." A recent survey showed that 63% of moms don't feel in control, 62% don't think they're doing a great job as mom, and 50% aren't confident in their skills as mom.*

Mother's guilt can be overwhelming. Many moms are worn out as they speed through their days at 100 miles per hour, solving problems, being the disciplinarian, keeping an eye on the kids. And that's before you add her role as a wife, friend, employee, church volunteer, caregiver for elderly parents ... the list is endless. Then there's "the chatter"—voices heard on TV, social media, and wherever else moms are. These voices would have moms believing they can have it all ... that mothering can be done in 3 Simple Steps ... that everyone else has it all together. False chatter like this can leave a mom grasping to find meaning, confidence, and hope. Many wind up feeling like a failure, that they're simply not good enough.

Of course, the truth is there are no perfect moms (or perfect dads!). Without God's grace and guidance, we are frail, frayed, and floundering creatures at best. James put it this way: "We all stumble in many ways ..." No matter how hard we try to be the perfect parent, we simply can't. God doesn't expect us to be perfect; but He does want us to do our best job to raise our kids with the tools He gave us: compassion, wisdom, courage, empathy, discipline and unconditional love.

Mothers constantly put their children's needs above their own. They give so much that often they forget who they are and how well they are doing. Sometimes the external or internal "chatter" becomes so loud they can't "hear" how you, the kids, and even God really see them.

That's where dads come in. You can be the one who cheers on your wife when the chatter becomes overwhelming. You can equip and encourage your kids to show mom how much she means to them. It can be as simple as writing a short note or giving her a card. Remind your kids they can honor their mom by doing things asked of them like cleaning rooms or taking dirty plates to the sink.

Men, you can help soften the "chatter" by putting your arm around your wife and telling her, "You are doing an awesome job!" Enhance your encouragement with handwritten notes or a moms' night out. Be her biggest fan, and let her know it regularly.

Remind her and show her she is a Proverbs 31 mom: "Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: 'Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.'" (Proverbs 31:28-29, NIV)

*According to a tracking study conducted by Inspiring Moms, which offers professional development to moms online and in person. Read more: <http://www.mommyish.com/2011/05/03/balance-yeah-right/#ixzz2yEKkYioW>