



# A Quantum Moment

## Messages from the Other Realm

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### A Mother's Son

Tough love be damned. What a boy needs to grow up to be a well-integrated person is an honest relationship, starting at birth, with the female of the household, his mother. What is a mother's job? To raise her children, male or female, to be caring, thoughtful, human beings, and that job should not end at puberty.

Society says, "don't coddle a son, don't make him into a baby," implying that showing affection, the instinct for normal, caring interaction should be withheld from boys so that they will not become *feminized*. Femininity in boys is not to be encouraged, and by femininity, I mean empathy, compassion, *compromise*. Boys must be encouraged to compete, winner take all, in order to withstand the rigors of adult life as a sports hero, a television anchor or capitalist.

Society says, "once a boy hits puberty, keep your distance, hide your sexuality," so there's no possibility of the boy seeing his mother as a sexual being. This rule must be strictly adhered to, as psychologists warn of harm to the boy if he looks at his mother as anything but asexual. This includes never sharing anything personal about one's life that would pinpoint the mother as a member of the opposite sex, and especially, one in relationship with a male, be it her husband, boyfriend (or another woman that looks male).

Society says, "let him separate from you, because it is healthy for him to do so," even if *separating* means the boy treats the mother like scum, putting his mother down with hurtful comments, disregard. As a mother, you are to stay silent and take it, for this is *distancing* in action. Let the boy be disrespectful and claim his superiority over you, because it has to be that way, that is the natural law of roles: men above, women below.

Society says, "once he is out of the house, leave him alone," so that there is no longer any influence of your motherly touch on the young man who now eagerly seeks out other females to conquer. Do not get involved in his life. Do not contact him during work hours, do not expect him to come home to visit very often—men who do are suspect, not real men, possibly unable to separate from their "mama."

Society says, "don't expect your adult son to care for you when you're sick, in a nursing home or on your death bed because his wife will do it—it's her job to be the caretaker."

None of these societal messages produces a framework for a boy, a young man, a father and husband to know how to be in relationship with a female, because they've never been in one where there is an even, unbiased exchange of ideas, thoughts and emotions—whether at home growing up, at school, in the workplace or in their marriage. We have been breeding a form of

male that is self-centered, female-phobic and dispassionate to a fault. No wonder there is so much misogyny in our society, and all around the world.

Somehow, from birth and in my relationships growing up, I decided that if I should have a male heir to the throne, I would do things differently. I would not see him through the lens of a “mother” but as someone who would provide caring *guidance* throughout his life. He was his own person as I was mine. He was not my possession to rule and then give away. I saw the guidance role as life-long, and loving no matter what the circumstances.

We played. I taught him how to pitch, execute a free throw facing backwards from half-court, boogie board. He taught me how to surf (although I did not excel at it and he laughed at me more than a few times). I taught him how to write and he took to poetry. He watched me go to work for the first eight years of his life and come home anxious, tired and bitchy. We wrangled at bath time, we struggled at night when he wouldn't sleep. He watched me struggle in my relationship with his father. I didn't yell at him when I caught him and his best friend watching porn at 2 AM, I just explained that what they were seeing wasn't real, wasn't about love and that they shouldn't have such stuff in their heads when approaching their first love relationship with a girl—to instead, experience loving in their own way—now get to bed!

Through the years I did fall victim to some of society's norms, but in balance, I erred on the side of compassion for the human being that was trying his best to understand himself and the world—not just as a boy. After all, he is in *this* life a male, a male this time, but he will come back after this life as perhaps a female, even a mother himself, and I hope he will bring with him some of the wisdom that God has woven through us in matters of love and foregoes what chatter may confront him.