

What Makes a Mother?

Once there was a child. A child not born from parents, and who had no siblings or other family to speak of, though their connections to everyone were profound and deep. This child's name was Curiosity.

As Curiosity moved among the people, they observed many wonderful and terrible things. They saw babies take their first steps, and older people take last steps. They saw peaceful resolutions to arguments and they saw wars break out over what seemed like nothing. Curiosity saw one person fight with all their strength to bring health and safety to all, and another person who threatened that very same health and safety with the stroke of a pen.

Curiosity was confused. People seemed to be capable of so many incredible things, and at the same time, they were capable of many other unspeakable things. Curiosity decided to get to the bottom of this conundrum. They decided to consult the wisest, smartest people they could find: A group of kindergarteners on a school playground.

Curiosity joined in their game of hiding and seeking, and as the opportunity arose, they asked "How do people get to be the way they are?"

The nearest child, who was wholeheartedly trying to blend into the pole of the swing set said "I think we're just born the way we are". Another child, crouched into the shade of the slide said "It's our parents. They make us the way we are". Still another child said "I think everyone grows up to be like their mother. But not just their mom. I mean, they grow up to be like mom, mother Earth, mother goose. You know, all the mothers."

"All the mothers?" repeated Curiosity. How many mothers are there?

I think there are, like 700 bajillion, give or take a hundred, said a fourth child dressed in green, lying still in the grass.

This led Curiosity to yet another question. "With that many mothers out there, how do you know who to be like? and how do you know when a mother is a good mother?"

The kids fell silent – not because they had nothing to say, but because they were still playing hide and seek and the seeker was coming near.

When the seeker moved on to the see saws, they all began to talk at once

“My mom is the best mom. She teaches by example” said the swing set kid

“I never knew my mom” said slide shadow child “but my dads are awesome, and they are really good moms too!”

“My mom and I fight a lot, but I know she means well. She definitely knows all the things I shouldn’t do” said green grass child, adding “Still, I love her a lot and that’s the most important thing.”

Curiosity opened their mouth to speak, but right at that moment the seeker found and tagged them and they had to go running back to base. The others laughed and giggled their way back to base too. Once there, they all decided they were going to draw pictures of their moms in the dirt. Soon there were all kinds of portraits around them. Some smiling with arms open wide. Some that looked like dads in aprons holding plates of cookies. Other moms were crying, while some were frowning, with speech bubbles saying things like “eat your vegetables!” One mom looked suspiciously like the whole planet, round and diverse.

Curiosity went away from that playground with even more questions, but despite these questions, a clear picture was forming. We are who we are. AND we are who our mothers shape us to be. AND we are who our lack of mothers shape us to be. AND we are who other friends and care givers shape us to be. AND if we don’t want to be people of war, people of hurt, people who take away health and safety from others, we need to connect to loving mother spirit, whether it comes from ourselves, our mothers our fathers, our communities or from Earth itself, and we need to listen to what mother is telling us. Amen, and blessed be.