

Holistic Motherhood in the 21st Century

A holistic health consultant, diet and nutrition adviser, writer, author, and a mother in Bangkok shares practical insights into a fulfilling motherhood, which not only supports the natural growth of children, but ultimately the well-being and evolution of our planet.

The Essence of Motherhood – The Bigger Picture

In the modern urban society we are living in, it is quite common to come across women who say, “I gave up my job and career because I became a mother. Look at my friends, they are VPs and CFOs at hi-fi multinationals, and look at me, I am *just a mother.*”

“Just a mother”? Perhaps if these women had any idea what an important “career” they had embarked on, they would not patronize themselves so. Modern careers and jobs come with titles and pay cheques which announce the “value” of that person. However, in order to appreciate the value of a mother, it is imperative to understand the essence of motherhood. A true and fulfilling motherhood is truly achieved when a woman develops the right awareness of her contribution to her family and society, as a mother.

The essence of a thing is its most sublime purpose for existing. Just like the essence of the sun is to give us light and energy, the essence of a mother is to nurture, heal, and to move the human race forward. Perhaps the ancient seers of the Golden Age understood this perfectly well. There is an old Vedic saying, which roughly translates as, **“A woman (mother) is the pillar of her family, and ultimately of a society. She holds it together with her capacity for unconditional love, forgiveness, compassion and nurturing. She imparts values and prepares its members to be positive forces for the human race of tomorrow. Conversely, when a woman (mother) is lost, a family is lost. When a family is lost, a society is lost. When a society is lost, the world suffers.”**

Motherhood is an important step in the personal evolution of an individual, as well as in the evolution of the human race. Pristine qualities such as mindfulness (of words and behavior), the capacity for unconditional love and nurturing, and to take joy in the simple pleasures of life are some of the invaluable wealth which comes along with the glorious career called **“Motherhood”**. Maybe **“CEOs of the Human Race”** would convey it better on a modern mother’s name card!

Supporting Health and Well-being with Nature’s Healing Gifts

Nurturing and healing are the essence of motherhood. It is no coincidence that we choose to call nature “Mother Nature”, given her unlimited capacity to sustain humankind with her vast reserve of healing resources. If **food, water and air** are the three essentials humans need for survival, then we should acknowledge this fact that these are yielded by Mother Nature through **her Five Great Elements**, namely **Air, Ether (space), Water, Fire and Earth**. Healing substances are found abundantly in

nature, ranging from herbs, grains, fruits and vegetables, to the nectar and aroma of flowers.

Herbs are amongst the most potent of healing substances, rightly called **Nature's Pharmacy**. They were used by our enlightened ancestors in combating day-to-day ailments. Herbal wisdom is being revived today with fervor, after the modern world has witnessed unwanted side effects of chemical medications. With their higher concentrations of antibacterial, antioxidant and anticancer properties, the use of common herbs like ginger, turmeric, garlic, onions, basil leaves, mint leaves, aloe vera, to name a few, can be effectively used to treat common ailments like the occasional cold and cough, indigestion, fever, diarrhea, constipation, rashes and muscle soreness. Herbs are especially recommended for children since they are organic; they support the immune system and do not have harmful side effects, unlike modern medicines which suppress the body's immune system in the long run.

Here are a few examples of the miraculous healing potential of herbs. A fever can be kept under control by giving your child a cold infusion of **coriander seeds**. This is simply made by soaking a tablespoon of coriander seeds in filtered water for an hour or so, or even overnight. The child could drink this water all day, and he/she would have that fever in control. A tummy ache can be treated with a warm tea of **fennel and ginger** (sweetened with honey), which is also an antidote to cold and cough. A skin rash can be healed by rubbing some cool **aloe gel** onto the affected skin. A warm **honey-lemon-basil water tonic** can be given early morning, which would serve as a natural food supplement to boost the immune system of your growing baby.

A Mother and Mother Earth – An Inseparable and Eternal Bond

Since our health and immunity ultimately depends on the resources of Mother Nature, we should wake up to the ultimate reality that **the health and well-being of our children depends on the purity of our environment**. Given the fast rate of degeneration of our planet with carbon emissions and the never-ending load of convenient disposables, protecting our habitat has and should become the foremost priority of every human being.

As a mother, we can set the right example for our children with mindful living – reduce excesses, reduce dependence on disposables including batteries, reuse and recycle as much as possible, and above all, refuse anything that comes packed in polystyrene foam or plastic, which are the two main evils polluting the soil of planet earth. A little bit of creativity and plenty of guts are required – people at the supermarket may gawk at you as you empty the vegetables from the foam tray into your cloth shopping bag, or place the chicken fillet into your storage container (which you brought along from home) while duly returning the foam tray at the checkout counter. But you are doing something very sensible, so there is no need to cringe!

As parents, we have the **Inspiration** factor, our children. One look at them, and we are filled with an overwhelming urge to give them the best. We need to step up together and insist on a lifestyle which will save our planet for our children and grandchildren. No one else will do it for us. This would be the most sublime contribution to society, by enlightened mothers of the 21st century.

Dimple Duangthip Arora is the author of a pioneering book on integrated healthcare for Mother and Baby, titled “A New Age Manual for the New Mother, Postnatal and Beyond”. It presents the enduring wisdom of the holistic way, validated by modern medical findings, to suit the healthcare needs of the urban mother at every level: physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and environmental. Practical food recipes, herbal remedies, baby massage and self-massage illustrations, glossary of common herbs, nutrients chart, metabolic-type quiz and holistic dietary guidelines are some of the practical highlights of this book. It is available at leading branches of Asia Books/Bookazine, Books@53 and the Pilatestudio, at a special introductory price until the end of August 2009 in honor of Mothers’ Day.