

A Great Gift For All You Power Moms

By Rita Lussier

You know how when you're starting a big project at work, there's usually a meeting to kick things off and you gather around a table with your colleagues to brainstorm ideas. Occasionally you might get stuck on something, so you poke your head into your boss's office to ask a question or stop by a coworker's desk to talk it over.

Best of all, when you're done — and let's assume everything went well — there's that sense of completion. And if you did a great job there might be something more than satisfaction in it for you. A word or two of praise. A public acknowledgement. A raise. A promotion. That sort of thing.

Becoming a mother is, in some ways, like starting the most extensive and demanding project you'll ever encounter. But here's one huge difference: you're not likely to have the kind of support you get in the workplace. There are no brainstorming meetings. Day-to-day camaraderie with your peers is difficult and often impossible. If you're lucky, there might be times when you know you've done a good job — until the next moment with the next challenge and your child just keeps on growing, changing, demanding all you have and more.

That's why, for all the moms out there, I'd like to recommend what I think is a perfect gift for Mother's Day.

One of the latest of the popular Chicken Soup for the Soul books, *Power Moms* features 101 stories from stay-at-home and work-from-home mothers who are grappling with the choices, adjustments, sacrifices and changes that are inevitable when a family grows.

What's a Power Mom?

That's what I asked four of them who live right here in Rhode Island and contributed their stories to the book.

Robin Kall, an East Greenwich mother who hosts Reading with Robin Saturday mornings on WHJJ tells me: "We've always had Power Moms — they just weren't celebrated as such. Being in the moment with your children — leaving memories of spending time together — these are Power Mom moments."

"Power Moms," according to Erin Goodman of Charlestown, "recognize that there's no one 'right way' to be a mom and that it is possible to nurture yourself and pursue your dreams while nurturing your family." In the book, she shares the soul-searching that accompanied her decision to go back to work.

Dr. Kimberly Beauchamp from North Kingstown, who's working on a book about kids' nutrition, adds "our power as mothers comes from discovering what works for us and our families, and is constantly evolving as we grow together."

Lisa Tener, author and book coach who's also from North Kingstown, agrees that "being a Power Mom is not what a woman does but that she is empowered to make choices that work for both her and her family."

In the writing of these women and others in the book, mothers will find empathy, compassion, wisdom and reassurance. They'll read about situations and feelings and choices that illustrate that, although they might often feel like they are, they're definitely not in this alone.

Think of the book as a gift containing the comforting voices of colleagues who share the same profession working in houses and playgrounds and minivans and beaches and offices and soccer fields all over the world. And if that's not the kind of chicken soup that can make any mom feel better, I don't know what is.

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