

A Moment for Mom
by Elisabeth K. Corcoran

I did it again! I just can't seem to get this mothering thing down. Sara, my 4-year-old, was simply in my way as I was trying to walk across the kitchen -- this wasn't deliberate disobedience on her part, by any means. And I yelled at her. The feeling in the pit of my stomach when I do that just makes me sick.

Okay, so I had a few options right at that moment. Pretend I didn't just snap at her for no reason and move on with life.

Start beating myself up for being a lousy mother.

Or fix it.

Well, if I did the pretending game, then I would have taught my daughter a couple things. One, you can be mean to someone and not have to apologize for it. And I would have been basically saying to her that she wasn't a very important person. Neither of those lessons were ones I wanted to pass on.

I could have gone the guilt route. Heaping a weight on my shoulders that left me feeling unfit to mother Sara. Carrying around blame much longer than necessary and therefore turning my day into a waste of time.

Or I could have taken care of the situation. And, thankfully, at that moment, I chose this high road. (Unfortunately, I don't always!) I went to Sara, knelt down, looked her in the eyes, and said, "I am sorry for yelling at you and hurting your feelings. Mommy was wrong." She said, "I forgive you, Mommy. I was frustrated with you, too." (Ahh, the honesty of a child) Then I took it a step farther. I then asked God for his forgiveness and asked him for patience and help the next time I was about to lose it.

I felt better almost instantly after taking care of it that way. Confess, repent, move on. The lesson I taught my daughter in that moment was that yes, mommy is human and will mess up a lot; however, it can be made right when you choose to, and you can be granted forgiveness and a clean slate.

And I was reminded that my daughter, and my God are very forgiving.

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