



Lisa
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Noticing the signs of true fulfillment

Okay, I'll just admit this right from the start — I'm categorically impaired. I'm not a soccer mom, working mom, at-home mom or super mom. I'm some of each and all of none. I'm a politically incorrect mother-person. Confused? How do you think I feel? I'm not sure if this means I'm unfulfilled or overfilled or just plain full of it?

Of course all moms are working mothers. (Is there any other kind?). I'm a working mom whose office is "at-home" with my kids, which allows me to be a soccer mom whenever they need it, or more specifically, a ballet mom and library mom. Although I've never seen this in writing, my job description usually includes those tasks that go unnoticed, like cleaning the crumbs out of the toaster, replacing the empty toilet paper roll with a new one, throwing away the inkless pens and scrubbing up that strange sludge oozing from under the vegetable drawer. I've had so much fulfillment lately that it has overflowed onto the floor and I haven't had time to clean it up.

The reason I've shared these things with you is not so you will suggest a good therapist, but to entice you into thinking that a column by me will be thoughtful, interesting and insightful. I want to make you laugh and make you cry, and most of all I want you to realize fulfillment when it hits you over the head with a rolled-up dish towel.

If you want to find out who the fulfilled one is in your home, just ask whom it was that put away the Christmas ornaments this year. And if they are still dangling from razor sharp branches, don't say a word.

Another sure sign of a fulfilled household member is that he or she is brave enough to open up that suspicious-looking Tupperware container found in the back of the refrigerator and smell it. And what's even braver is the act of throwing away the mold-ridden food. You see, anybody can quickly put the lid on and stick it back in the fridge and leave it "fulfilled" with penicillin. But only the brave one, the most fulfilled one, will finish the job.

What has being fulfilled taught me?

■ "Negotiating" — "If you watch your brother so mama can make these telephone calls you may have three cookies a piece. Okay four. Come now, five is more than you can even eat. All right, all right, 29 each and that's final."

■ "Time Management" — During one nap, I can do a load of laundry, change the cat litter, pay the bills, take a shower and compose at least one paragraph of this compelling, yet entertaining article. The only time this is a problem is when I need to use the spell checker on my computer. I have to be awake for that one.

■ "How to be a Self-Starter" — I can go from a seated position on the couch all the way into the kitchen in about two seconds flat, grab the fudge swirl, four bowls, four spoons (two big and two little) and not miss any dramatic, lifesaving medical procedures on "ER." Useful later I'm sure.

■ "Accounting Skills" — Everything is paid on time and budgeted to the penny.

■ "Being a Team Member" — I am honest enough to admit that the above statement is a lie and that another member of the team might manage the finances better than myself, like my 2 year old.

At this point, you're probably thinking, wow, this super mom can walk on water. In fact, I'm walking on orange juice and Legos. This may not have the same aura of mystery as walking on water, but I wouldn't even dare the unfulfilled to try it at home.

Lisa Finn-Grazak's column runs every Tuesday in the Lifestyle section. Address all correspondence to Lisa c/o The Daily Chronicle, 1586 Barber Greene Road, DeKalb.