

Healing Mother Hunger

Kelly McDaniel LPC

The following concepts adapted from Dr. Christiane Northrup's Mother Daughter Wisdom are helpful suggestions to guide your healing journey.

Know your inner spark: Every girl is born with a unique gift. Your job is to know your inner spark, fan it, discipline it, and develop it. Your inner moral compass can be your guide in doing this. A mother helps you get clear about what you really want in the world, and what you have to offer. She allows your unique gift to flourish, as well as her own. A therapist can also do this for you. So can a good sponsor or a healthy friend who desires the best for you.

Who assists you in developing your inner spark? Who else could help?

Be true to your inner voice: In order to develop your inner wisdom and voice of authority, you need role models who do this. If your mother teaches you, either in words or behavior, that your primary job in life is to serve others, be nice so that others aren't uncomfortable around you, and stay small, then your inner wisdom will be compromised for the sake of protecting others. In recovery, search for women who manage power with grace and integrity.

List women who come to mind:

Be your own moral compass: Your life is your own and you have the right to your feelings and choices. They reflect your personal values or morality, your inner sense of what is right or wrong for you. Mothers encourage this inner knowing in their daughters while also guiding them through learning the rights and rule of others. If your mother wasn't able to do this for you, part of your work in recovery is to find new guides. New mothers. Pick a sponsor whose values you admire. Spend time around women who have qualities you want. Find a therapist you feel safe and comfortable with. As a woman, your life, your health, and your happiness is your responsibility as no one can create these things for you, but you can pick your guides.

What obstacles prevent you from living a life you admire and enjoy?

Avoid exploitive relationships: Easier said than done! When relationships begin to cause more pain than joy, and drain your energy rather than replenish it, it may be time to leave. This applies in the fourth grade as much as it does in adult friendships and romantic relationships. If your mother manipulated you or others to get what she wanted, your moral compass is “off” course. If she told you that it was your fault when things went sour in a relationship, you may find it difficult to know when a relationship is unacceptable.

Are there any relationships in your life that feel unacceptable to you?

Learn to relate to others with integrity and mutuality:

Healthy relationships replenish us and give us energy, focus, self awareness, and a desire for more relationships. When we relate to ourselves with integrity, (knowing our inner spark), we do the same for others and anticipate the same in return. We celebrate the success and joy of others. And join our friends with compassion in times of pain and grief.

Jealousy and envy are part of relating to others. If your mother didn’t know how to handle her jealousy (of you or others), you will have difficulty measuring yourself against others. Try using envy as part of your moral compass. Use it as a guide. Trust that if good things happen for others, they are coming your way. Managing envy is a psychological/ emotional milestone that comes with time in the healing journey.

Who do you envy?

What does this say about what you want/need in your life?
