

Parenting Tip

Mother and Child Are Linked At The Cellular Level

By Laura Grace Weldon

Today is my youngest child's birthday. As my mother used to tell me, we always carry our children in our hearts. I know this is true emotionally. Apparently it's also true on the physical level.

Sometimes science is filled with transcendent meaning more beautiful than any poem. To me, this new research shows the poetry packed in the people all around us.

It's now known that cells from a developing fetus cross the placenta, allowing the baby's DNA to become part of the mother's body. These fetal cells persist in a woman's body into her old age. (If she has been pregnant with a male child it's likely she'll have some Y-chromosomes drifting around for a few decades too). This is true even if the baby she carried didn't live to be born. The cells of that child stay with her, resonating in ways that mothers have known intuitively throughout time.

Fetal cells you contributed to your own mother may be found in her blood, bone marrow, skin, kidney, and liver. These fetal cells appear to "treat" her when she is ill or injured. Researchers have noticed the presence of these cells in women diagnosed with illnesses such as thyroid disease and hepatitis C. In one case, a woman stopped treatment against medical advice. A liver biopsy showed "thousands of male cells" determined to be from a pregnancy terminated nearly 20 years earlier. These cells helped her body recover just as fetal cells you gave your mother rush to help repair her from within when she's unwell.

Fetal cells may influence a woman's autoimmunity, although it's not yet known if they are always beneficial. According to fascinating accounts in [Do Chocolate Lovers Have Sweeter Babies?: The Surprising Science of Pregnancy](#), the more fetal cells there are in a woman's body, the less likely she is to have conditions such as multiple sclerosis and rheumatoid arthritis. That's not always the case. It's thought that a mother's body may battle those cells, thus promoting her own autoimmune disorders. (Apparently family dynamics are complicated even at the cellular level.)

There's evidence that fetal cells provide some protection against certain cancers. For example, they're much more prevalent in the breast tissue of healthy women than in those with breast cancer. And fetal cells can contribute stem cells, generate new neurons in the mother's brain, and even help to heal her heart. Her heart!

Look around at your family. Any woman who has ever been pregnant, even if she miscarried so early she never knew she was with child, is likely to be a microchimera (a person who carries the cells of another person). Fetal cells have the imprint of her child's father and his ancestry. Fetal cells can be shared from one pregnancy to another, meaning the cells of older siblings may float within younger siblings. These cells are another reminder of the ways we are connected in a holographic universe.

I'd like to think that my fetal cells helped my mother battle the congestive heart failure that eventually took her life. I like to imagine that I carry within me my older sister's fierce intelligence and that my talented younger brother benefits in some way from the cells of both his sisters. Knowing that I carry the cells of my four living children as well as babies I lost makes my heart ever more full on this special day.

We heal our mothers and our children heal us. Again poetry takes a back seat to nature's awesome secrets.

From: <http://lauragracedweldon.com/2012/06/12/mother-child-are-linked-at-the-cellular-level/>

Spiritual Tip

Acceptance Is Not Approval

By Rick Warren

Followers of Jesus ought to be the most accepting people in the world. John 6:37 says, "The Father gives me the people who are mine. Every one of them will come to me, and I will always accept them" (John 6:37 NCV).

You may have accepted Christ into your life, but do you understand that he's accepted you? He doesn't love you because of who you are or what you've done but because of who he is.

Titus 3:7 says, "Jesus treated us much better than we deserve. He made us acceptable to God and he gave us the hope of eternal life" (CEV). How does he make you acceptable? It's not that you changed or got any better. It's not that you never sin. It's by his grace alone.

God wants you to show grace and acceptance to other people, but the problem is most people don't know the difference between acceptance and approval. They are very, very different. Jesus Christ accepts you completely, but that doesn't mean he approves of everything you do.

One day Jesus was walking down the street when some religious leaders who were trying to trap him brought a woman to him who had been caught in adultery. Jesus looked at all of the accusers and said, "Anybody who has never sinned, you get to throw the first stone." And of course they all walked away.

What did Jesus do? He gave acceptance, not approval. He didn't approve of what she had done, but he accepted the woman and restored her dignity.

That's what you need to do with the people around you. You don't have to go around approving of everything everybody does. But you do have to accept them, because that is a mark of love.

The Bible says in Romans 15:7, "Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you" (NIV).

How do you do that? One of the ways you can show acceptance to other people is to listen to them. Love pays attention. Love listens to the fears and the doubts of others and treats them with respect. Love accepts others the way Jesus accepts you.

Talk It Over

- How does understanding God has accepted you change the way you view others and the choices they make?
- What is it about your past or personality that keeps you from fully embracing God's acceptance?
- How can you show love to others of whom you do not approve?

Marriage Tip

Differences in Hearing Between Men and Women

By Walt Larimore, MD & Barb Larimore from their book, [His Brain, Her Brain: How Divinely Designed Differences Can Strengthen Your Marriage.](#)

Researchers at McMaster University found that women possess a far greater density of nerves in an area of the brain associated with language processing and comprehension.

For example, one brain-imaging study showed that men listen with only one side of their brain but women use both. Another brain study showed that women can listen to, comprehend, and process as many as seven separate auditory inputs (such as conversations) at the same time, whereas men can barely follow one.

One reason for this is a woman's larger corpus callosum, which connects her brain's left and right hemispheres and enables her to use several highly connected hearing centers in both sides of her brain simultaneously.

Barb: *We women have an advantage over men when it*

comes to hearing. Simply put, women are better designed to receive and process multiple auditory inputs at the same time. When it comes to hearing, it appears that the hemispheres of a man's brain are connected by some very thin twine between two tin cans.

Walt: Hey, I resemble that remark! Anyway, I have to admit that Barb is better at both listening and hearing than I am.

And in the vast majority of women, this is not a learned ability but an inborn skill. The innate differences in hearing ability can be demonstrated when boys and girls are very young. At one week of age, girls can distinguish their mother's voice from the sounds made by another baby. Boys can't.

Scientists who do this work have found that young girls can hear much softer sounds than those audible to young boys. Girls have a sense of hearing that is two to four times better than boys (depending on the frequency tested). This difference is present as early as children can be reliably tested.

Barb: *This helps explain why I could talk to a friend on the telephone at the same time I listened to the radio, to Kate reading out loud at the kitchen*

table, and to Scott and what he was watching on TV in another room! But when the phone rings at our home, Walt needs to turn off the TV, turn down the music, and ask the kids to be quiet before he can answer it. I just answer the phone.

Walt: In our house, a dripping faucet at night will wake Barb. However, even if I was awake and standing in front of the dripping faucet, I probably wouldn't notice.

Women are not only better than men at hearing new sounds in their environment; they are also better at hearing higher-pitched sounds and are naturally more proficient in noticing small changes in volume and pitch. This helps explain why mothers intuitively sing lullabies to girls but talk to (or play with) boys. It may also be part of the reason that six times as many girls as boys can sing in tune.

Barb: *The minor changes in tone and pitch also enable us to "hear" the emotions of children and adults. I can remember telling our son, Scott, "Don't use that tone of voice with me, young man." He was clueless as to how I could discern this.*

Walt: Perhaps this is why Barb claims to be able to distinguish my tone of voice as well.

Imagine - she thinks she can tell when I'm irritated on the inside and trying to be sweet to her on the outside!

With me, like the average male, one auditory input at a time is all my brain can handle. Knowing this helps me honor Barb by listening more carefully to her. For example, on a recent trip to the airport, Barb and I were listening to a CD. When Barb began to talk to me, I turned off the CD player. Barb said, "You don't have to turn that off." I smiled and said, "Oh yes I do, because I want to hear every word you say."

Barb: *With all the inborn hearing advantages I have, plus the fact that my brain links sensory stimuli and memories, "it's no wonder I remember a lot of what Walt has said from the moment we met. But Walt has trouble remembering half the items I asked him to pick up at the store yesterday!*

(To be continued)

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