



I am Mother, Hear me Roar

Izzy's Mumma Files By Izzy Buda

When silence drops over the household, every mother knows something is going down. You quickly scan every room to see where the illegal activity might be taking place. You enter the bathroom to see the new Barbie doll is now bald, with her once long shiny plastic locks adorning the tiled floor. A new barbie only remains clothed for a matter of minutes in this house. She will spend the rest of her days with her hard plastic body exposed to the elements with her clothes banished to the bottom of the toy box never to be seen again.

In the school holidays, my dad bought my daughter a packet of wash-out fabric pens because he knew Zico would soon be at the couch or carpet with his designs. I

love to promote creativity, but how exasperating is it when you have to repeat yourself 'put the lids on'. I spend hours of my life recapping my kids' markers. I gave up on matching the correct coloured lid with correct coloured marker a long time ago. Of course, I love to watch them drawing together. But if I dare leave the room for even a millisecond, odds are I'll return to my son violently stabbing the paper with the beautiful new markers crushing the felt tip into smithereens.

Hanging out the washing is also fun with kids in tow. My daughter somewhat helps now but my son follows behind me ripping all items from the line. He enjoys this immensely. I have to work at lightning speed to get all

items hung out before he rips them peg and all to the grass. Occasionally I throw a ball to him so he can go fetch while I scramble to get the clothes hung out before he returns. Good boy.

Just to get the kids to eat their breakfast and dressed for school is a momentous challenge. I request for shoes to be put on over and over again until I yell "Put your shoes on!" To which my daughter snaps back "I'm doing it! God, you don't need to yell!" Such attitude. Did she get that from me? Unfortunately, I've found yelling is the only thing that gets them to bloody do it.

I was at the beach recently, basking in the sun, watching the waves lapping the shore, only to be further comforted by the sound of irritation in another mother's voice, "Stop bloody grabbing your sister's Kayak! She's asked you not to do it and I've asked you 50 times!" Ah, the serenity. Here I am relaxing to the sound of another mother losing her s**t. I hear you sister.

Why don't kids listen? The girl paddled away momentarily only to return within minutes to grab her sister's kayak again. I couldn't help but laugh. These girls were around 10 and still pushing limits. Their mum had threatened no chicken nuggets for lunch, but that threat wasn't going to stop them.

When your child doesn't listen it's easy to question yourself as a parent. What have I done wrong to have you defy my every order? But I think it is in our nature to test limits, especially with those closest to us. They learn from the reactions they get from each situation.

How To: Know if They're "The One"

The Love Scout by Scout Smith-O'Leary, match maker & relationship educator



Is he or isn't he? Scout checks her love manual

From Disney to Hollywood, we've been force fed the romantic narrative of one true love. With just a dash of mathematical skepticism (I mean what are the statistical odds of finding "the one"?) and a quick trip down memory lane, I suspect you will quickly conclude that at different periods of our lives there have been different "ones". We say I do, and then one day we don't. Divorce stats are certainly indicative that many of us end up changing our minds. This is totally normal. We are ever growing and evolving humans, and to swear our continuity of thought, behaviour, affection and emotion is almost impossible. In saying that, should we forego love? Of course not! Where's the fun in that?

In knowing that change is the only constant, perhaps the more appropriate question is...how do I know if it's a good one? Stop looking for a figment of Hollywood's imagination. How about dating a real person? Here are my top tips for discerning whether someone is going to be a great life partner.

Core Values: What are the 5 most important values to them? You definitely want to look for some of these: trust, respect, honesty, loyalty, integrity and communication. If they aren't up there, keep swiping. Without these, you can guarantee drama and dilemmas. Also, don't take someone's word for it. Often people are keen to project a heightened self image to impress a potential mate. Be sure to ask how that person actually lives their values.

References: What do other people think of them? This one is a bit tricky because often people have some personal bias, but it is important someone is vetted and trusted by others close to them. Ask friends, community members and ex partners. (I always thought Tinder would be so much better if profiles required references. It would save us all a massive headache!)

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Self-awareness: Ask them about the worst parts of their personality. Ask them about their relationship to their parents. How do they behave when they get angry? What stress management mechanisms do they use? There must be some level of knowing oneself, otherwise you will end up like those bitter married couples who bicker and fight constantly over the same issues. A willingness to work towards a better self and relationship cannot be understated.

Down to earth: Not a requirement but such a breath of fresh air. You will fart, burp, exhale and exchange all kinds of gases, smells and fluids with this person. Get over it. Have a laugh about it. We're all on a non-stop train to getting old. Having someone to laugh with makes the ride all the more enjoyable.

Man in the mirror: Write a list of all the desired characteristics you want in a partner. Become that list. Make sure you have a lot to offer and are not just looking to take. Be such a high caliber of human that anyone would be lucky to be with you.

Remember: people are not products. They cannot be individually customized and there is no amount of money you can pay Jeff Bezos to drop off your dream partner with free delivery (at least not yet!).