**[.](http://www.oprah.com/community/message/1074137%22%20%5Cl%20%221074137) Re: Abandoning A Child...**
Jun 8, 2009 8:15 PM   |   In response to: [icedwater](http://www.oprah.com/community/message/1005208#1005208)

Hi, thank you so much for writing. Yes I buy it, as I was there. This story is hard for me on 2 levels. I was a child of a Broken Mom and I left my 18 month old son because I was mentally ill. Its too much for me to read. But it is reality in my heart everyday of leaving my son. Through the years we tried to connect but its very difficult to do. You asked, the woman is looking for her daughter to apologize. But in the back of her mind she is hopeful for more. But forgiveness is what both need. Forgiveness is most times about forgiving yourself. I had to forgive my mom for being a Broken Mom, I had to because it ate away at me like a cancer, the hate and the inability to understand her. I forgave her when I became her and saw that she wasn't giving us a line when she said she was ill. She wasn't selfish, she was ill. And then it was like well now what do I do? I spent years hating her for her not being there for me, and my son spends years hating me for not being there for him.

As the daughter, and as my son.... they have the choice and for me, in my own seeking forgiveness I wanted to forgive her, because all I ever wanted was to understand her. You know why are my friends moms so loving and you are so absent? Not to judge her or dismiss her like everyone eles did, but I wanted to sit down with her and look in her eyes and put my own pain aside, and just look at this woman and ask her, "how could you" and then key was to listen to her and HEAR her. Not wait for her to stop talking so I could talk, but to really listen to her.... and what I heard and who I saw made me so sad. I just realized in that moment that she had no clue how to be a mom on top of being ill, no one helped her. My mind shifted in that moment from, how could she do that to me? Why was she so selfish? How can a mom do that? All that left me, I wrapped my arms around her and I knew that the healing was about to begin because all the pain and all the love I never got, she never got either, and she didn't know how to give it. She was amazed at how excepting I was of her. I was too. But I found that forgiveness is for ourselves.

Regardless of this childs up bringing, if I were this daughter, I would do everything in my power to let this mom apologize. That doesn't mean the hurt ends, or that you even have to be in each others lives... but it means so much more than I could write here. When I finally apologized to my son he was 11. He cried and I cried and he just said nothing. I didn't get validation or its ok or what we think we need. Instead I knew then in my heart that I told him he did not spend his life without a mom in vain or that I just didn't want him, but that I was so sick in my head that I feared harming him. I felt that he saw it differently when I told him, it is a reality that some mothers who suffer from untreated postpartum depression abuse and even kill their children. The only strength I had was to walk away.Many people don't understand that, but I knew I was doing what was right.

We don't have all the answers, but as a Ministry we push past the judgment to put our stories out there so that another child abandoned may not happen. We have hundreds of mothers write us saying they think they are crazy and should leave. We get them into therapy and on a plan and it is remarkable how quickly it turns around.

Please feel free to contact Be well, with love Liana

One of the worst things a women and mother could do is abandon her child. Statistics show the unthinkable decision to leave is being thought over and through until a women's plan is executed. This is a silent epidemic and decision that mothers throughout time have embraced, but have not been able to openly discuss.

There is no politically correct way for an American mother to admit she has abandoned her child without experiencing extreme judgment. There is no face to a mother who abandons her child. If she exposes her secrets she will more than likely face a life of negative criticism and judgment from society and especially other woman.

In our country we must bring awareness to this issue by addressing the women who have abandoned their children and understand what was going on prior and during the time they left.

We must try to understand women who leave their children and explore what younger women can learn in order to prevent making decisions that will negatively impact their lives and the lives of their children.

It is difficult for devoted or chemically balanced mothers to understand a mother who has abandoned her child or children. But we must overlook that not all mothers and women will be supportive of exposing this quiet zone.

What happens when they do leave and where are the mothers who have left? What makes one mother devoted to her children and the other mother abandon hers? What happens when you are not adapting in your role as a mother and where are the women who have not adapted?

We should give a voice to the millions of women in hopes that they can be free of their secrets and can learn from their mistakes.

It is thought that deadbeat fathers who do not pay their child support are the leading "bad" parent. Interestingly statewide statistics show that there are more deadbeat mothers than deadbeat fathers when it comes to not paying child support in America. That means there are more women in our country leaving their children and not paying for them.

To fail at being a mother is a heart wrenching duty to carry around with you, especially if the failures could have been prevented medically or financially. Due to untreated postpartum depression, poor decisions based on desperate circumstances and an unplanned child, I felt abandoning my child with his father's family was my only option.
Drugs, another man or woman, money, family resentment, whatever the demon, it allows women to leave their children as if they never had them.

So is this an illness, a nationwide epidemic, a psychiatric disease that can be cured through drugs or modem therapy? Are millions of women sick in the head for abusing, thinking of or leaving their children? Maybe, but you and society may never know because it has been kept a secret life of shame.

There are mothers who are genuinely wonderful caregivers and are devoted to their children in a way mothers who abandon their children have more than likely tried to emulate, myself included.

Having a baby, caring for your child and raising them into adulthood is considered to be a woman's greatest achievement. Maternal instinct, motherly love and the incredible bond you experience with your baby are all natural occurrences once you are pregnant and give birth. But what happens when the natural maternal instincts do not come with the baby?

How Abandoning a Child May Occur

I believe that Abandoning a Child stems from three major factors in a woman's life.

1. The mother has suffered from an undetected, untreated Postpartum Depression.

2. The mother's lack of a support system, meaning, little if any interactions with the child's father, the mother's parents, grandparents, friends, other mothers who suffer from Postpartum Depression or activities outside of the home.

3. The mother has a history of untreated lifelong depression, drug addiction or untreated Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome caused by excessive physical, mental or verbal abuse prior to having the baby.

Most females are capable of becoming pregnant after beginning their menstrual cycle. A female can be fourteen, thirteen, I've even known of a pregnant nine year old. Reproduction and motherhood are thought to be something every woman should experience. I believe that given the three circumstances for developing Abandoning a Child, not every female is capable of raising another human being without proper recovery and preparation.

Being a mother and having to care for yourself are two very different worlds with extremely different personal expectations. If you cannot care for yourself before bringing another human being into this world, how can you expect to succeed?

Don't lie to yourself like I did. For many women, especially one who has suffered a lifetime of abuse and depression, having children should be treated as a therapeutic journey prior to becoming pregnant.