



Mother Matters: creating a happy new year





*The happiest new year awaits in the window of opportunity. COURTESY MICHAEL DAM ON UNSPLASH*

**By LOYLA LOUVIS**

*For Montclair Local*

|



LOYLA LOUVIS

*n “Mother Matters,” parenting and life coach Loyla Louvis, AACC, provides parenting tips. She is dedicated to eliminating frustration in the parenting journey by customizing solutions to fit the uniqueness of each family. A mother of four children, she is experienced with single parenting, remarriage, home education, mentoring and teaching. Louvis runs Mothers in Training, LLC, and is a certified professional parenting consultant/coach. More info can be found at [Mothersintraining.org](https://Mothersintraining.org).*

A streetlamp flickers on a cold winter’s night as the town glows with an aura of holiday cheer. A proud mother watches with delight as her little one plays with a brand new toy. Festivities carry on as the clock ticks towards the end of one season and the beginning of another.

It is here amid our holiday celebrations and the start of a new year that a weary mom will pause to catch her breath. In this quiet space, a window of opportunity opens which the wise mother will embrace. This reflective time offers her a chance to shake off unpleasantness of the past without shaking off the lessons learned. She can brush off mistakes of the past without brushing off the wisdom attained. She can take time to reflect, reconnect, and regroup for a better year ahead.

As we stand at this same open window of opportunity, let us consider doing the following:

**Choose positivity instead of anxiety:** When you make peace with yourself, you make peace with the world. Most kids feel pressure to do well in school, be good at sports, and popular with peers. All of this amplifies anxiety in a sensitive child. To guard against this pressure, help a child protect his thought life. A statement such as “Tommy, when your thoughts wander to negative places, examine those thoughts before letting them settle into your mind. Only good thoughts should get to stay.” Anxiety can be stopped in its tracks when we replace negative thoughts with positive ones, which produces peace.

---

READ: [MOTHER MATTERS; CREATING A PEACEFUL HOLIDAY HOME](#)

READ: [MOTHER MATTERS; TRICKS, TREATS AND TRAINING](#)

---

**Claim confidence instead of insecurity:** Comparison is the poison that kills confidence. Children begin comparing themselves to their peers as early as kindergarten. Without proper guidance, these comparisons frequently lead to feelings of insecurity. A comment such as, “My love, we are all good at some things and not so good at others. You are a beautiful human being regardless of your strengths or weaknesses,” has multiple benefits. The reality is that our strengths help us serve others better, and weakness helps us avoid being judgmental. A better understanding of the human condition levels the playing field. It allows for confidence without the comparison that leads to insecurity.

**Magnify wins instead of failures:** A lesson learned is never a fail. When a child refuses to do something he or she is not good at, the qualities of perseverance and endurance don’t develop properly. Failure is a necessary part of achieving success. A comment such as, “Isn’t it amazing how much you learned even though you didn’t hit your goal?” focuses on the positive instead of the negative. This statement sends a message that learning from failure is still a success. Genuine confidence is the result of determination and grit that develops in our failures as well as our wins.

**Focus on gratitude instead of disappointment:** Gratitude is the best remedy for a troubled mind. Children often struggle to accept conditions that don’t meet their expectations. Whether it’s hearing “No,” from a parent or an anticipated event that falls through, learning how to recover well is a win for everyone. “Sarah, how long do you want to be sad about this situation before you get back to enjoying the day?” sends a

message that we control what we choose to focus on, and feelings are the result of our focus. Gratitude feels better than disappointment and is only a decision away.

A new year offers a clean slate and a fresh start. As we stand at the threshold of 2020, may we, together with our children, experience positivity, confidence, more wins, and gratitude in all that life sends our way. We are not perfect and don't need to be. We need only embrace the journey and choose our responses for our happiest New Year ever.