



The Clarion

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We strengthen families worldwide by inspiring women to seek truth, harmony, and education and to develop their unique gifts as they claim the fullness of their inherent roles.

Art of womanhood

We are All Gifted: How I Opened My Presence

by Stephanie Francom

Buddha said, "Our purpose in life is to find our purpose in life and then to give our whole heart and soul to it."

Six years ago I attended a Hebrew seminar, and I met a gentleman and his wife that I hadn't seen for a few years. She approached me and welcomed me by the wrong name. I corrected her with my real name, and her jaw literally dropped to the floor. She said, "I never would have recognized you." I replied, "Oh. My hair is much longer than before, and I've lost some weight." She said, "No. That's not it. You aren't wearing any makeup." I was dumbfounded. This happened during a very difficult time in my life, where I had chosen to neglect my personal appearance. I have learned the hard way that my appearance can help or hinder my life's purpose.

I began to glimpse my life's purpose when I was in the sixth grade. I remember feeling a connection and concern for a friend whose family life was much less fulfilling than was mine. I knew that her life's circumstance didn't have to dictate what she could become, but my heart yearned to take away her pain. I could see her potential, and it was indeed grand. I was but 12 years old.

When I was fourteen I went weekly to the nursing home with a beautiful single mother of three. I thought that spending so much time with her was a privilege, and I enjoyed the relationships we developed at the nursing home. In later years she expressed to me that a personal experience we had shared during that season of our lives had a long term effect on her and had given her hope in her situation.

I had stumbled upon my purpose in life in these early experiences of connecting with and serving others, but I did not yet recognize it.

In high school I remember spending some time (I would currently term this as "wasting some time") cruising in the little town of Maryville, Tennessee. Some local teenagers hollered out their car window, "Hey Stephanie!!

Isn't it past your bedtime?" Well, that was about the most mortifying moment of my life up until then, and I am sad to say that it affected some of the choices I made during my last year of high school. However, making wrong choices for my life's path and seeing the consequences of such actions changed me. I didn't like the way I felt inside. I still had those feelings in my heart that connected me with other women, but I didn't pursue them because I was on the wrong path. Following the dictates of my heart is what brings me happiness, yet I had allowed the opinions of others to distract me. As I engaged in my college education, I made the necessary changes in my life.

I noticed the same threads that were woven in my earlier relationships continued through my college experiences. I felt a deep seated connection to other women and I realized that my mission is to recognize the greatness in others and then to help them see it in themselves.

My somewhat extroverted nature seemed to be a natural fit for my work. For the majority of my life I have been very outgoing and have talked a lot. (Perhaps too much.) If ever I wasn't smiling, people would ask me if something was wrong. After I was married, I still had people make comments about how happy I was. I was asked to teach a workshop called "Lighten Up", and we laughed the whole time.



When I was in my late twenties, all of that changed. My husband accepted a new job, and we moved. When we arrived in a new town, there was no welcome. To those in our new area, my enthusiasm was annoying. My dedication to causes was threatening. I quickly closed my heart. I immersed myself into my family and shut and locked the door.

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Becoming a Real Woman

By Tiffany Earl

My great grandmother had it. Her daughter, my grandmother, learned it. Her daughter, my mother, saw traces of it but didn't rely on it, and her daughter, me, doesn't even know the value of it because it appears to be obsolete.

Women in general have a sense of being unfulfilled. The feminist movement has taken its toll. Even my compatriots who don't call themselves feminists pride themselves on the fact that the burden of the family is shared equally in the home. Two incomes come in; both mother and father rotate diaper changing, dish duty, and laundry washing. And yet, the woman is still unfulfilled. Rousseau persuaded women freely to be different from men and to take on the burden of entering a positive contract with the family, as opposed to a negative, individual, self-protective contract with the state. Tocqueville picked up this theme, described the absolute differentiation of husbands' and wives' functions and ways of life in the American family, and attributed the success of American democracy to its women, who freely choose their lot.

Allan Bloom goes on to say, "Modernity promised that all human beings would be treated equally. Women took that promise seriously and rebelled against the old order. But as they have succeeded, men have also been liberated from their old constraints." He continues, "And women, now liberated and with equal careers, nevertheless find they still desire to have children, but have no basis for claiming that men should share their desire for children or assume a responsibility for them." Here's the truth, "The promise of modernity is not really fulfilled for women."

A career outside the home didn't solve it. But are the homemakers any happier than their counterpart careerists? Rarely.

Where is the answer? I think there are two of them: one is technology, the other, ideology.

Technology has inadvertently caused a change in motherhood and homemaking. It used to be a necessity to set aside one day a week for washing, one day for mending, one day for baking, and one day for cleaning—besides the daily rigors of gardening, cleaning, cooking, and preserving food.

It was a necessity to the function of the home that mother and multiple children reside, work, and play therein. Because of technology, we no longer have to spend as much time on food, clothing, and shelter. We have much more leisure time. Because of the sudden onset of technology since the 1930's, something has been gained (time), but something has been lost (mom feeling and knowing that she is needed in the home). Furthermore, that "missing something" is tied to "systems." With the loss of systems in the home, the new homemaker, four generations later, feels lost.

We must create and find new systems that bring fulfillment.

There are myriads of books on organization and home management for women, all because we have lost our organization, our management, and our vision of what motherhood is. Where are our gardens? Where are our seasons? Where are our preserves?

That's an interesting word, "preserves." Do we preserve anything anymore, or just live and pass like the daily newspaper—important for a few moments and then forgotten forever?

Is there a way to find fulfillment, to rediscover our lost sense that things are right, to reinstate the old systems, using today's technology? All of the old systems are tied to self-reliance, the reliance that says we are a community, we are in charge of our own: our education, our homes, our food, our animals, our land, etc.

Are we unhappy partially because something deep inside of us knows that the cycles of history do repeat, that challenges will come again, and we realize we don't know how to make



Rousseau persuaded women freely to be different from men and to take on the burden of entering a positive contract with the family, as opposed to a negative, individual, self-protective contract with the state.



bread? Are we unhappy because in losing some of our systems we have lost some of our liberties? One well-known form of government in America is our commercial focus. Jefferson recommended widespread private ownership with an agrarian bent, and we adopted it in his time and up to the early 1900s. Then we shifted to Hamilton's industrial commercialism, with central ownership in a few hands along with a nation of employees. In the 1960s we heard of a new program, a focus on pleasure which we have been adopting more and more. Is it the shift to the commercial then to the pleasurable that has caused the uneasiness of women, even in the "homemakers"?

We don't know how to grow food and store enough to see us through to the next growing season. We don't know how to care for our animals, provide our own milk, butter, cheese, and eggs. We don't know how to knit, sew, or mend. And most of my colleagues would laugh if they read this!

No wonder we have a sense of anxiety. Like Roosevelt said, "We believe in the equality of right, not in the identity of functions." Is it part of our function to know these things?

Over and over in the literature I read—Potok, Hugo, Stratton-Porter, Wilder, Virgil, Plutarch, Herodotus, Thucydides, Toynbee, Durant, and others—the women of all ages and times have known how to produce and store food, how to create clothing, how to exist in hard times, how to truly care for their families. My generation knows no such thing.

The industrialization and urbanization of America has all but banished these abilities in women. I find myself looking more and more to those who came before me for knowledge of these systems. I want to purge out my slothfulness, my laziness, my ease of living, and wake up to the reality that there is work to be done, and I better be doing it! I wonder if the problem of modern women, and men for that matter, is just that we don't sweat enough. Maybe really small things make all the difference, and we've lost sight and knowledge of a few really

simple, small things.

Another difference that makes or breaks a happy woman in the home is ideology, the power of ideas. When Roosevelt went looking for the source of declining fertility, he found the ideas of Malthus, Mill, and Nietzsche. Malthus taught the dangers of overpopulation, Mill the need for government to become utilitarian (do what is best for the most people, not for the individual), and Nietzsche started making the focus on pleasure credible (it had always been popular). Amazingly, Gibbon records similar forces creating the fall of Rome, and Edith Hamilton mentions the same for Greece. History repeats itself, as Santayana warned, and may be doomed to do so unless we get past ideology.

We haven't yet. Unhappy and unfulfilled womanhood can be traced to the power of "wrong ideas." Ideas, which are spread through words, are more powerful than the sword.

Hitler spent ample time influencing the ideology of Germany, publishing *Mein Kampf*, and training up the next generation of youth to destroy any books and ideas which didn't fit his own.

The idea has reached the point that most young women actually believe that being a homemaker is more unfulfilling and personally damaging than an army at the door.

My realization is that I am coming upon a new idea which I think will make home life more fulfilling to me. I want to embrace motherhood, with all its duties intact, even that of finding the simple systems that generations of women through time have known. I should learn the systems inherent in the georgic, or agrarian, tradition and in the entrepreneurial focus of widespread private ownership.

Well, it's laundry day and my lunch break is over. Time to be "farmerlike." I used to hate this, but now...it seems like this is who I really am.



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 The Clarion are graciously accepted at
www.artofwomanhood.org



THE CLARION invites you to share your message with our readers. Articles, essays, and poetry related to the Art of Womanhood mission statement, program, and readings may be submitted by email to:

stacyanne31@yahoo.ca We respectfully ask you to complete the following prior to sending us your writing:

*have your piece read, proofread, and peer edited by five people

*have your piece read, proofread, and peer edited by one other member of Art of Womanhood.

Although all submissions will be read and considered for publication, we may not be able to reply regarding each submission individually. At this time, there is no remuneration for your published article, just heartfelt appreciation.

Please ensure that you keep a copy of your writing in the event that a submission is lost in cyberspace. Thank you to all those who have contributed thus far.

In the midst of this total shutdown, I faced much more difficult trials, and the most challenging and painful five years of my life commenced. I became even further withdrawn. In such a place of pain, I wanted to disappear. It happened one step at a time. In looking back, it seems bizarre, but this is how it began. I stopped wearing earrings because I was afraid I was too vain. (Not anyone else who wore them – just me.) I stopped wearing makeup for the same reason. This was all subconscious. Next, I changed the color of clothing I wore. Browns, creams, and greens were my new colors of choice. They were all natural hues, and they felt safe. And so, I disappeared.

A turning point came when a dear friend of mine told me that I had ceased to have a positive influence on others. As I analyzed my life, I found that it was true. It was then that I was able to identify my life's work. Again stated, my purpose in life is to recognize the greatness in others and then to help them see it in themselves. One of my gifts began to unfold to my understanding. My higher source of truth reveals people's hearts to me. When an individual is angry, jealous, insecure or proud, I can see past all the "stuff" and sense who they really are.

Once I saw this, I was painfully aware that I had neglected this talent for more than five years. It was a rude awakening to remember that in the past I had been called upon to speak on happiness because I was always happy. I mourned this part of me that I had lost. So, I began to practice. I tried to smile more, and I found that God was willing to graciously grant me this gift again.

Soon thereafter, Art of Womanhood was born. About six weeks into the beginnings of our organization, a frightening reality smacked me in the face. I was scheduled to attend Liber League where I would have to introduce my organization to a room full of people whom I didn't know. I thought, "What am I thinking? The organization is called 'Art of Womanhood'!! Even if those in attendance don't mean to, surely they will judge my representation of womanhood. They may think that I am trying to set myself up as a standard of womanhood!" I was mortified by the thought, and I was sincerely afraid to attend.

My wheels began turning, as I reviewed and re-assessed how I felt about my appearance. Should I wear makeup? Earrings? PINK?? (This was abhorrent to me at this point.) One friend taught me some new ways to wear my hair. Another lectured me on color, while her daughter told me that she could recognize a woman over thirty because she tucks in and blouses out her

shirt. I inadvertently looked down at my bloused shirt, and I felt like a deer caught in the headlights.

Well, I think no one was offended by my appearance at Liber League, but through this process I realized that I had neglected it, and this had hindered my ability to inspire women to realize their potential. I learned that in disregarding the reaction of others to my appearance I had limited my impact, just as I had limited my effectiveness by being overly concerned by the opinions of others as a teenager.

It had never occurred to me before that appearance could limit or enhance my life's work. I don't feel that cultivating my appearance is my life's work. It is simply a tool to strengthen credibility. I never would have guessed that as I experimented with more flattering hairstyles, learned some tips on how to properly apply my makeup, and discovered the colors that are best suited to me personally, my influence would begin to expand. Even this little town, upon which I had blamed many of my heartaches, has brought me much joy and happiness and connection that was not previously there. Many of my current friends had been threatened in the past by my choice to go without makeup and had assumed I was somehow judging them. They didn't know about the pain that was occurring inside my heart.

Rediscovering and pursuing my purpose in life has been the most powerful catalyst for personal change. It has transformed me. Rather than wrapping myself up in self-pity and tying my closed heart on top, I choose to use and develop my innate and unique gifts to serve others. There is no time to be absorbed in my own selfish thoughts or to play the blame game any longer. Because I want others to experience the happiness and purpose in their own lives that I feel in mine, I have chosen to reveal every tool that has helped me on my journey – even those as seemingly small as choosing to wear flattering colors or hairstyles. These tools were a gift to me, and they were precisely what I needed to gain confidence and become more effective. However, my desire is that each woman look for her own answers to become the most effective in her individual life. The answers I have been given are not necessarily the same ones she will be given. We have unique talents, gifts, and purposes, and our higher sources of truth will reveal the specific tools necessary to succeed. I hope what I have shared is helpful to you as you discover and fulfill your own purpose in life.

And what is my next step now that I have found my purpose? To give my whole heart and soul to it for the rest of my life.

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and our higher sources of truth will reveal the
specific tools necessary to succeed.

Far above Rubies

By Stefany Pike

“Who can find a virtuous woman for her price is far above rubies.”

Proverbs 31: 10

Have you ever read Proverbs 31: 10- 31 and wondered to yourself, how any one woman could be all of those amazing qualities? After years of searching for a mentor of this passage, I have found her! She is Mame (or Mother) in the book, *Little Britches* by Ralph Moody. She has truly put the breath of life into that passage. Her worth to me is truly far above rubies! It is as almost as if Ralph Moody read this last verse of Proverbs and then set out to mold and form a character who could “be” all that those verses speak of.

“We need you, oh we need you Charlie.” were the words that Mame chose to convey to her husband not only her concern but her love. Her femininity, strength, kindness, courage, and soft words can be found again and again throughout the pages of *Little Britches*. Mame quietly mentors the reader through example, the paramount importance of woman’s work.

Mame’s character shows us that we, as women, are so often that first line of defense in teaching, comforting, nurturing and loving our children. We also learn through example how she harmonizes her role as wife with her husband. She works with him in parenting. She offers her input and then steps aside and allows him to be the Father. She lovingly affirms him when speaking to the children in his absence. The children are very well aware of their Mothers deep respect and adoration for her husband through both her words and actions.

We grow to deeply love and respect Mame as we watch her strength and triumph through the face of tragedy. We know that in these times she is leaning upon her own core book. As we see her time and time again pulling down her Bible from the shelf.

Her actions seem to emulate James E. Faust’s words regarding the unique roles of husband and wife, “Both fathers and mothers do many intrinsically different things for their children. Both are equipped to nurture children, but their approaches are different. Mothers seem to take a dominant role in preparing children to live within their families, present and future. Fathers seem best equipped to prepare children to function in the environment outside the family.” It is through both parents fulfilling these roles that the children were able to step up and fulfill adult duties when the time came.

When encouraging the mothers of young children, Marjorie Pay Hinckley counseled “remember... that you are now doing the work that God intended you to do. Be grateful for the opportunity”. How glorious a thought... that I am doing the work that Heavenly Father sent me here to do. We are the mothers of Zion – raising the Hero generation. I can not think of a more important calling. We must be willing to rise to the challenge and go forth with the assurity of knowing this is where we are meant to be!

Like our own roles, Mame’s role can not be emphasized enough as “Mother”. She can be our own personal mentor in teaching us the importance of woman’s work. Mame demonstrates through actions, that motherhood truly is the noblest and greatest of all callings and that our worth is far above Rubies.



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The New Feminine Story

In Margaret Wheatley's article *The New Story*, she brings to surface the zeitgeist of 2006, the idea of a new story, a feeling of going back to traditional values and priorities but calling them by new names. But can a society go back to traditional values unscathed by progress?

Feminism is the Old Story of Femininity as retold in Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique* and Ayn Rand's Dagny in *Atlas Shrugged*. The feminist movement progressed the society of women from Stepford Wives to Ms. President. Women were being liberated from social restraints and set free to join this progression. Throughout the 60's and 70's the rise of women in the workforce doubled. But a stir of resistance began to gain momentum towards the end of the twentieth century. Women were waking up to empty cribs and microwave dinners for one. Entering the mask of masculinity left their mothering soul empty. They could no longer suppress their desire to marry and have children. Working all day left them no time for the domestic arts or personal cultivation.



Sarah Breathnach's Mrs. Sharp and Miriam Lukken's Mrs. Dunwoody called women back home through the domestic arts. Home was not just a structure it was a canvas, a place of self-discovery, fulfillment, beauty, peace and relaxation. They believed the fulfillment women were seeking in the work force but did not find could be found by coming home.

Is the call to come home bringing back traditional femininity or is it taking Feminism out of the workforce and bringing it home?

In Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women*, Marmee doesn't stay at home to discover her authentic self or develop her inner "domestic goddess". Instead she stayed home for her traditional feminine values of creating a safe, loving and spiritual environment for her husband and daughters.



Today the Mrs. Sharps' who are creating the new feminine story believe they are tapping into a woman's nature by calling her home. Yet they do not realize that she, like most of us, is a product of her social environment where feminism has a strong hold. The new feminine story is calling for traditional values for modern reasons—women shouldn't stay at home for their husband or children but for themselves.

If we come home for ourselves we will feel the emptiness we found in the work place. Why? Because a woman has never received fulfillment through self-centeredness; it is against her nature. Therefore, selfish motives will always bring us back to the drawing board in search of happiness. Our motherly nature finds happiness through service - it is who we are. Once we lose sight and stray from that unique ability we will never find fulfillment. Society may say that fulfilled women pursued their careers, children or education for their betterment and in pursuit bettered society. However, great women are fulfilled because they seek out the happiness, peace and joy of others—Mother Teresa, Abigail Adams, my own grandmother and mother to name a few. All of these women came home for their husbands, children, community and humanity.



As players in the new feminine story we see a movement towards women leaving the workforce to cook dinner, clean their house and raise their children. However, our problems have not been solved because our feminine hearts are still feminist at heart.



By Meghan Schulthies



Our
motherly
nature finds
happiness
through
service - it
is who we
are. Once
we lose
sight and
stray from
that unique
ability
we will
never find
fulfillment.

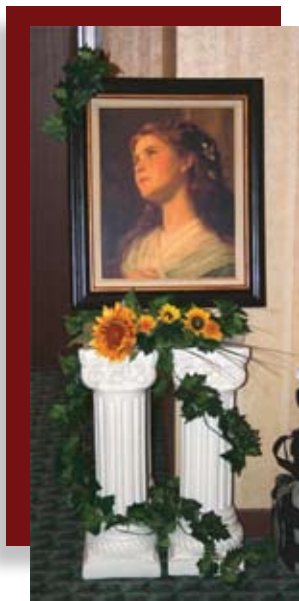


Thomas Jefferson Family Forum

by Kelly Hansen



“The Energy Revolving
around the Art of
Womanhood table
was Exhilarating.”



“SECURE, not stressed” was the 8th Key of Great Teaching which Dr. Oliver DeMille presented in his keynote address at the Thomas Jefferson Family Forum in Salt Lake City, Utah, on March 17, 2007. The Art of Womanhood program directly addresses the implementation of this key by providing an excellent avenue for women to apply this key in their lives. We had intriguing and inspiring conversations at our forum booth as we introduced our philosophies to many women and created interest for our Annual Convention in November. Our experiences there were a real confirmation to the leadership that Art of Womanhood is being blessed for answering the call to action for women.

According to Dr. DeMille, the four levels or “mentalities” of education are Genius, Pioneer, Warrior and Secure. He discussed all of the mentalities first before launching into the final level, also the 8th Key. “Stress blocks us from adopting all of the other mentalities. Additionally, Security vs. Stress changes all of the levels and phases of education,” declared Dr. DeMille. He outlined two methods for implementing this key. First, you can do it for a LONG time or secondly, let those who have been doing it a long time help you over the hurdles. Get fully trained. He stated, “You need to know you are doing the right thing and to get the training to know how to do it effectively. This is what brings security and eliminates the stress.”

Leaving the large conference hall after the keynote address, attendees found themselves in front of the beautiful and professional Art of Womanhood table where they discovered just such a program. Stephanie Francom, Sandy Stapley and Kelly Hansen discussed with many new faces the beauty of women mentoring women and how powerful it is for cultivating growth. The program takes a woman from where she is to where she needs to be through the aid of someone traveling a little further down the same path.

The energy revolving around the Art of Womanhood table was exhilarating. Many women were looking for “something” that would help them. When they learned about our program they were interested in attending the convention and many were thrilled about the prospects of certification. The experience confirmed the need for our program. We are so grateful to all of you who are the frontrunners of the organization and your sacrifices to develop yourselves and the program to prepare for the army of women who are coming to join us in our mission to heal families and strengthen women in their roles. Thank you for answering the call.

We also offer our thanks to the presenters who represented our organization well at the forum. Our founder and president, Stephanie Francom, spoke twice at the forum on “Seasons of a Woman’s Education.” Stacy Harmer, the Youth Program Chairperson and Changed Hearts Mentor, spoke on “Minds, Hearts, and Lives.” Debi Watson, Director of Admissions and Mentor, originally scheduled to speak only once, answered the call for help (on VERY short notice) and spoke twice to cover for someone who was ill on “Windmill Jousting: Scholar Moms.” Each presenter was inspiring, articulate, entertaining and knowledgeable. What was most pronounced in each session was their own unique ability to sense the needs of those in the room and to modify their topic to reach them with the messages to meet those needs.