

Who am I?



*“What I am
looking for is not out
there, it is in me.”*

— *Helen Keller*

I was lying on the examination table in the doctor’s office when my epiphany for this book hit me full force. Six weeks earlier I had given birth to my second daughter and was in for my postpartum check-up. My oldest had just turned two years old and was along for the ride. Of course, we had quite a wait while out in the lobby for “our” appointment, and by the time we got back to the exam room, all of us were ready to go home. My baby was tired and crying while my two-year-old was dancing around the room with exuberant energy, wanting mommy to play. The doctor began probing for my pelvic exam, and there I was, flat on my back exposed for all to see, holding my newborn on my chest while my toddler bounced at my feet next to the doctor. She peered in amazement as the doctor worked, and then, pointing to the area of activity, asked, “What’s dat?” At that moment, I knew that I needed to find a way

to put the “I” back in my identity and regain some sense of my self as an individual.

Somewhere along our journey to motherhood, we mothers have lost the ‘me’ in mommy, so for the remainder of this book, it will be “MomMe” to remind us. Without realizing it, we’ve encouraged the loss of “me”. We’ve all seen it. We’ve all done it. At the soccer field or the grocery store we bump into someone and say, “Oh, you’re David’s mom. Hi, I’m McKenzie’s mom.” And there you go. We no longer have personal identities. Oh, we may go on to give our names later in the conversation, but we will be remembered as David’s mom and McKenzie’s mom. In those brief encounters, we lose our individual identities and replace them with our MomMe-hood identities. It may seem harmless, but the more we do it the easier it becomes and the more we erode our individuality. We don’t realize that we have injured the other mom – or ourselves, for that matter – but in reality, both moms come away from that interaction with bruises. Our identities and self worth are a little more scarred each time one of these interactions occurs, though we don’t even notice at the time. The full repercussions creep up on us slowly until we find ourselves asking, “What happened to me?”

Before I was a mom, I had never been puked on, peed on, pooped on or bit on the boob. I had never considered if a plant was poisonous or whether babies slept on their tummies or their backs. Before I was a mom, I had never changed a diaper in the back of car, held a screaming child down so a nurse could give shots or had applesauce spit in my face with laughter. I also had never known that something so small in size could change my life so vastly and I had never known the depths of love that I have felt as a mother.