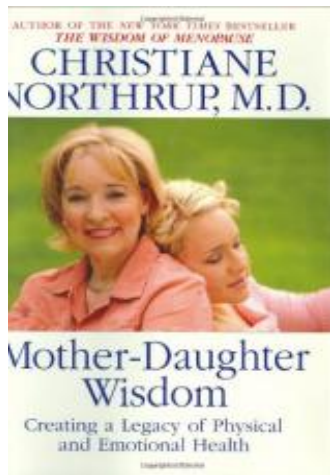


# Mother-Daughter Wisdom: Creating a Legacy of Physical and Emotional Health

by Christiane Northrup, M.D.



## About the Book

The mother-daughter relationship is at the core of every woman's physical and emotional health. Even before birth, mothers provide daughters with their first experience of nurturing. Mothers are our most powerful female role models. Every daughter, whether she grows up to be a parent or not, embodies her mother's blueprint and that of all the women in her ancestry. Now, in a revolutionary approach to well-being for women of all ages, renowned physician and bestselling author Dr. Christiane Northrup unlocks the profound wisdom and healing power of these maternal legacies.

Applying the unique holistic approach that made **Women's Bodies**, **Women's Wisdom** and **The Wisdom of Menopause** such transforming forces in the lives of millions of readers, Dr. Northrup has created an uplifting, enlightening, entirely new map of female development. **Mother-Daughter Wisdom** blends soulful truths with groundbreaking clinical discoveries to help us thoroughly rebuild our health. Whether coming to terms with a painful memory, letting go of harmful beliefs about themselves, or celebrating the love that is passed down from mother to daughter, generation after generation, readers of this book will come to see this intimate bond in a completely new light.

## Discussion Guide

The questions and discussion topics that follow are intended to enhance your reading of Dr. Christiane Northrup's **Mother-Daughter Wisdom**. We hope they will enrich your experience of this important and inspiring book.

1. **Mother-Daughter Wisdom** includes Dr. Northrup's candid recollections of her own journey to motherhood, and her realizations about her mother. What are the legacies of motherhood in your family? If you have limited information about this, what are your greatest obstacles in discovering that history?
2. What new insights regarding conception, pregnancy, labor, and birth did you take away from the book's initial

chapters? Why might Western medicine get in the way of the natural processes that ease childbearing?

**3.** Chapter 2 features "The Five Facets of Feminine Power," ranging from the basics of physical care to the discovery of passion and purpose in life. Which of these facets shines brightest in your life these days? Which facet would you most like to "polish"?

**4.** Using Dr. Northrup's analogy of life as a house, discuss the times when you moved from one "room" to another in your role as mother, daughter, or both.

**5.** In your opinion, is the mother-daughter legacy primarily a matter of nature or nurture? What medical legacies have been passed down to you by your ancestors? How much can genetic predispositions be modified by our own actions? Do you agree with Dr. Northrup's assessment of the role we can play in creating physical and emotional health for ourselves?

**6.** In Chapter 1, the author states "the only way to raise a healthy, proud daughter or heal our own relationship with our mothers, is to enter bear territory. If you are raising a daughter, you must be willing to open yourself to the place inside where you would willingly sacrifice your own life or that of someone or something else for your daughter. It also means that you must know when to stop the sacrifice for her sake as well as your own." When have you experienced Mother Bear energy, either as the bear or as her cub?

**7.** Chapter 7 discusses the "emotional" versus "executive" portions of the brain and the balance between self-love and empathy. In what ways have you experienced these tensions in your day-to-day experience? Does the distinction between "shame donors" and "shame recipients" resonate with you? What strategies, if any, have you adopted to reverse feelings of shame?

**8.** Chapter 8 defines nourishment not only in terms of sound nutrition but as a whole-life experience. How do the concepts featured in this chapter create a foundation for the subsequent chapters? What are the keys to a "well-nourished" life, even in financial terms?

**9.** How do gender lines factor into the creation of "love maps" (Chapter 10)? How does American culture encode seemingly contradictory expectations for boys and girls regarding relationships and sexuality?

**10.** Who were some of your earliest idols and heroes? Can you think of any experiences from your own life that reflect Dr. Northrup's statement, in Chapter 12, that "through her idols, [a school-age girl] explores ways of being in the world and experiments with her ideal self" and that "the qualities a girl admires in others are really inside herself?"

**11.** Chapter 12, "The Anatomy of Self-Esteem," eloquently describes ways to instill confidence and help your daughters develop an inner guidance system. Through what means were you taught how to navigate harmful situations? To what degree do you currently "feel safe on the earth"?

**12.** What contemporary knowledge, from nutrition to relationships, has had the greatest impact on your health? How proactive are you in your relationships with your health-care providers? Do you keep yourself informed about medical issues that concern you, ask questions of your doctors, get second opinions when you think they are appropriate?

**13.** In Chapter 15, the author states that during puberty a young woman's "unique, inborn gifts and talents are ripe for in-

depth recognition and development" and that "the degree to which [she] is supported to become who [she] really is by [her family] and social networks is the degree to which [she] will bloom [and] remain healthy." How did your family respond to or address puberty in your home? How did it affect the woman you became? Do you feel that our society would benefit from more positive coming-of-age rites, and have you personally participated in any?

**14.** How would you describe the relationships between women and men in your family? Did your mother defer to your father, or take on all the responsibility for the emotional well being of her family? How has your parents' relationship influenced your own feelings about what you can expect from men?

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**16.** What message would you most like to hear from your mother? From your daughter? What is the most healing message you could give to your mother? Your daughter?

## Author Bio

Christiane Northrup, M.D., is the bestselling author of **Women's Bodies, Women's Wisdom** and **The Wisdom of Menopause**, and host of four previous public television specials. A board-certified obstetrician/gynecologist with more than twenty-five years of clinical experience, she trained at Dartmouth Medical School and Tufts New England Medical Center. She is also past-president of the American Holistic Medical Association and has pioneered the partnership between conventional and complementary medicine. Her work has been featured on The Oprah Winfrey Show, The Today Show, and Good Morning America, among many other media appearances. She lives in Maine and is the mother of two adult daughters.

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