

Bay Area Author's Inappropriate Mother's Day Celebration to Benefit Mothers in Prison

Local Sandwich Generation Author's Book-Signing Event Offers Asylum For The Parentally-Incorrect

OAKLAND, Calif. – (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) – Mother's Day... Perhaps more appropriately titled Ambivalence Day. "For me, it's when the annual Pon Farr of resentment boils in my veins and I need to be locked up in a room with barred windows," explains East Bay writer, Joan Bechtel, co-author of the new anti-advice book, MOTHERHOOD CONFIDENTIAL. Now that this homeschooling mom has moved back to her tiny hometown of Alamo to care for her own aging mother, the holiday packs a double wallop.



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Caption: Author Joan Bechtel

BOOK SIGNING:

MAY 2, 5-7 PM at Tackers Coffeehouse, 215 Alamo Plaza in Alamo 925 837-1234
Live Music, raffle, book-signing, speaker from Legal Services for Prisoners with Children

"Mother's Day is a day that stirs up all those emotions we'd rather not admit

to: mixed feelings toward our own mothers, being pulled in too many directions, or just plain feeling unappreciated. For parents separated from their children by death, divorce or incarceration it can be a day of grieving. The Inappropriate Mother's Day Celebration offers a safe haven for all those feelings "we're not supposed to have about motherhood."

"Like All Hallows Eve when the veil between the living and the dead is thin enough to cross," explains Bechtel, a former stand-up comedienne and veteran of 37 continuous years of guilt-ridden parenting, "Mother's Day weakens the membrane between how we think we're supposed to feel as mothers and how we really feel."

Motherhood-The-Romanticized-Notion still stands on its time-honored pedestal. But in the Real World, Motherhood—the back-breaking, mind-bending multi-tasking of a psycho-social-bio-engineer—ranks a little below dog trainer. "After all, we wouldn't expect anyone to become a dog trainer without proper education," says Bechtel. "But raising a human being is supposed to come naturally. Not only is it "easy," it's sacred too! To verbalize or even acknowledge your ambivalence or inner conflicts about mothering can feel like blasphemy."

Bechtel describes the pressures to conform to an external standard of motherhood as "trying to squeeze yourself into a tiny Perfection Suit." It's fashionable and gets a lot of outside approval, but you can't breathe. What do you do with all the parts of yourself that don't fit? How do you shed all those 'ugly' pounds of wisdom and self-awareness you've gained over the years? Well, unfortunately, that's where psychological liposuction comes in: repression, displacement, denial, projection. The old stand-bys for coping with undesirable psychological elements. It works for awhile – like a crash diet—but eventually you blow.

"We're conditioned to externalize our unacceptable feelings. It's easy, gives us a shaky sense of superiority and keeps the prison industry booming. But when we accept our less attractive feelings, our parenting choices fit us better, and the less threatened we feel about someone else's parenting style, ideology or lifestyle. But before we can get to self-acceptance, we have to have a look at those darker feelings. There's an unspoken code of maternal martyrdom that begins with the Commandment: Thou Shalt Not Complain, and we're going to break that taboo."

So...if you're not sure you can choke back the bile long enough to survive that guilt-inspired brunch, consider a no-attitude-too poor alternative: a book-signing event and kvetch-fest to benefit Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, whose work for the rights of inmates and their families includes helping incarcerated mothers keep their children with them at a specially-designed facility. For an antidote to the Queen for-a-Day Charade, take your kids and all your inappropriate feelings down to Tackers May 2.

Award-winning comedy duo authors, Joan Bechtel and Linda Cohen, crusade against the dogmas and doublespeak of Big Mother in "Motherhood Confidential: The Strange Disappearance of My Best Friend," available in bookstores Friendship Day August 7, 2005 from SocioPathways, ISBN.0-9760930-0-6, soft

cover, 304 pp, 13.95. www.MotherhoodConfidential.com.

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