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My Body Is Mine: Yet For A Time It Was Yours

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MY BODY IS MINE: YET FOR A TIME IT WAS YOURS

▶ My body is mine, yet for time it was yours. I was made for you - my form created to be your habitat, all aspects of my being working in unison to support your growth and development. You grew and grew, becoming your own person within the liminal space of my womb. On the shoreline of a new life, breathing in and out like the waves washed upon the sand. You are of me, of us, yet separate, your own unique being. I housed you, gave you food and warmth through my body. Flesh of my flesh, blood of my blood, body of my body; yet spirit of your spirit. My form grew, swelling and expanding as you grew. We were one body, and yet I could feel your distinct personality - your

wiggles, kicks, your preferences, and the way you would respond when I ate foods you liked. I felt your distinct spirit in the way you would respond with glee to your father's voice and his hands. I felt how you could feel music and energy - you knew when I was peaceful and your being responded, radiating a soothing energy. You loved it when I meditated! I could feel the synergy between us, as our being felt the calm energy resonating.

▶ Sometimes when I would sleep you would begin your own party: Exploring your space - wiggling, swimming, and kicking. I could feel you moving, doing backflips and front flips, sideways and this

way and that. You still love to wriggle and kick and are always on the move! It was a luxury to experience your being housed within mine during pregnancy. Sharing one body with two souls is an honor that I am so grateful to have shared with you for a brief time. My body was a house, a launching pad, a starting place, a foundation, a habitat for you to grow and develop.

▶ Pregnancy, pregnant, with child: Beautiful terms to describe a being within a being, a life within a life.



Photo Credit: Roger Reynolds

- ▶ The responsibility of motherhood starts with the flash of recognition, exquisitely vivid during pregnancy - how I take care of me matters. How I take care of me is how I take care of you during pregnancy. Taking care of you, with my words, my touch, your father's voice, and his touch.
- ▶ Through breast-feeding, we are still physically connected. And in so many other ways we are connected - through play, through exploring the world around us, through learning and through love. Yet the physical cord between us grows thinner and thinner as you move further from my center and become centered and grounded in your own physical being. The cord now is a cord of love, stronger and stronger as it becomes less and less physical. The privilege of serving as your mother is one that I can never repay. Through you I have learned to be myself. Through you I have learned to love another more than myself and therefore gain freedom. I still relish the moments when you sync back to me, nuzzle in my arms and breast-feed. Small reminders of the time when I rubbed my belly and I could feel you arching your back towards the warmth of my hand, wriggling your butt up towards the center of my palm. As if you felt the love and

knew that's what you wanted to be close to. A body made of love - that's what you are. My body, a vessel breaking open, making room for new life. My body, moving forward, transformed by love. Your body new and energetic, emerging into life.

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Isabel Thompson is a Assistant Professor in the Mental Health Counseling program at Nova Southeastern University and a licensed mental health counselor. Her areas of interest include: wellness, mindfulness, as well as counselor burnout and compassion fatigue. Integrating meditation and self-care into her life, she enjoys spending time with her family and being in nature. She is the mother of Theodore G. Thompson.