

Love It Forward

Written by Dayna Martin for NaturalChild.org.

As I prepare for our next family trip, I am remembering a flight that my family took back from England where I was the keynote speaker at the first ever unschooling conference in London.

On the flight home, there was a mother traveling alone with two kids who were sitting next to us. Being such a big family, we took up almost a whole row of seats on the plane. As we took off, I could see the mother getting impatient with her kids. She had a two-year-old and a child around six. The two-year-old was standing on the seat looking at the people behind us. The mother was so frustrated, and I saw her squeezing her daughter's leg really hard. She talked in a really low, angry voice, scolding her. My heart hurt seeing this, and Joe and I began talking about how cruel this mother was being to her kids.

As I judged this mother I began feeling bad, focusing such negativity toward her. I had a moment of realization that I could extend the unschooling philosophy of respect and kindness to her and see what happens. I could choose to focus on this mother's underlying needs rather than her behavior, and see how I could help her and her kids. Maybe I could make a difference and be guided by love and respect instead of judgment and feeling superior. This was a pivotal moment in my life as an unschooling parent and advocate. [Read the full thing »](#)