

Home Is Where Your Mother Is: A Holiday Letter From Chris Hingle

By Chris Hingle

No one could inspire quite like my mother. Her kindness was so broad and her love was so deep, she seemed to treat everyone as she would a member of her family. It didn't matter who you were, what you looked like, or where you came from. To her, everyone was worthy of the warmth and concern I treasured so dearly as her son.

As the holidays approach – including our first Christmas since she passed on this year – it reminds me of just how formative mothers are in our development as business leaders and as people. Her passion for life inspired me to pursue the things I care most deeply about at home and in my career. I credit the direction my life has taken, in large part, to the integrity and respect my mother showed me throughout my life. That influence was also fundamental to developing my confidence as an individual and my desire to enrich the lives of my own family, the YMCA youth I volunteer to help and the professionals who turn to me for advancement in their careers.



Joan Marie Bernissant Hingle
1935-2011

With the year drawing to a close, I find it's enlightening to reflect on the way we treat those around us and the ways our parents have shaped our character. Just about everyone can relate a poignant story about a parent's sacrifice or guidance. Some of the greatest lessons in leadership come from family pushing us to discover our best and go the extra mile to achieve it. In my life, my mother was a constant source of encouragement and emotional support as I founded my business and strived to treat others as well as she treated me.

Soon my family will prepare for a much-loved Christmas party back in New Orleans that's become a 60-year tradition. As I think about the elegant, loving woman who helped start it and who brought joy into the lives of those around her in so many ways, it gives me pause. Family and love are the essence of the holidays, and I can't think of a better way to mark the season than by sharing my appreciation for my mother. In remembering her, I'm reminded just how much strength and purpose a mother can bring to our lives. By sharing a small piece of her story, I hope it inspires you to take comfort in the people around you and the inspiration they've imparted during this time of celebration.

I sincerely wish you and your family a happy, joy-filled holiday and a prosperous New Year.

Chris