



# The Gift of an Ordinary Day: A Mother's Memoir

By Katrina Kenison

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*The Gift of an Ordinary Day* is an intimate memoir of a family in transition—boys becoming teenagers, careers ending and new ones opening up, an attempt to find a deeper sense of place, and a slower pace, in a small New England town. It is a story of mid-life longings and discoveries, of lessons learned in the search for home and a new sense of purpose, and the bittersweet intensity of life with teenagers—holding on, letting go.

Poised on the threshold between family life as she's always known it and her older son's departure for college, Kenison is surprised to find that the times she treasures most are the ordinary, unremarkable moments of everyday life, the very moments that she once took for granted, or rushed right through without noticing at all.

The relationships, hopes, and dreams that Kenison illuminates will touch women's hearts, and her words will inspire mothers everywhere as they try to make peace with the inevitable changes in store.

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## The Gift of an Ordinary Day: A Mother's Memoir By Katrina Kenison Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In her second affecting memoir about motherhood and nurturing (after *Mitten Strings for God*), Kenison, here at middle age with two sons in their teens, pursues with graceful serenity a time of enormous upheaval and transformation in her family's life. As her sons grew out of babyhood and into the new, unknown territory of adolescence, she no longer felt clear about what her life's purpose was supposed to be; their comfortable suburban Boston house of 13 years grew restraining, and Kenison longed for a simpler, more nature-connected lifestyle. Since neither she nor her husband, a publishing executive, was tied to a workplace (indeed, she was suddenly let go as the series editor of *The Best American Short Stories* after 16 years), they were content to be rootless for over three years, living mostly with Kenison's parents until the building of their new home on bucolic hilltop land purchased in New Hampshire was completed. Meanwhile, Kenison's youngest, Jack, began a new high school, while the older boy, Henry, a musician, applied to colleges, and the family had to adjust both to the move and to the startling, delightful pleasures of country life. (Sept.)

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### Review

This eloquent book is ...about longing and fulfillment, taking stock of failures and achievements, a search for the elusive "something more" of one's existence-and a reminder that life's seemingly mundane moments are often where we find beauty, grace and transformation. **Family Circle Magazine,**

"Kenison writes so beautifully and clearly about what is most important in family life." **Jane Hamilton, author of *A Map of the World* and *Laura Rider's Masterpiece***

An honest, graceful book that every parent will appreciate. In the thick of challenging changes, emotional troughs, and tender realizations the reader will find comfort and guidance. Here is a fine writer, a dedicated mother, and a spiritual seeker speaking intimately to parents in search of wisdom." **Thomas Moore, author of *Care of the Soul* and *Writing in the Sand***

How I admire this mid-life mom, who writes with strong contemplative spirit and a heart wide open to change. Her memoir is a courageous and generous contribution to deepening American family life. **Nancy Mellon, author of *Body Eloquence***

"*The Gift of an Ordinary Day* is much more than a memoir of motherhood; it is an inspired and inspiring meditation on midlife. What Katrina Kenison gives mothers-her *gift*-is the promise of reinventing ourselves as our kids grow up and we grow older, and the assurance of an invitingly abundant landscape on the far side of parenthood." **Lisa Garrigues, author of *Writing Motherhood***

### About the Author

Katrina Kenison is the author of *Mitten Strings for God: Reflections for Mothers in a Hurry* (Warner Books, 2000). She has appeared on Oprah and other shows. Her writing has appeared in *O, Real Simple*, *Family Circle*, *Redbook* and other publications. From 1990 until 2006, Kenison was the series editor of *The Best American Short Stories*, published annually by Houghton Mifflin. She co-edited, with John Updike, *The Best American Short Stories of the Century* (Houghton Mifflin, 2000). She wrote, with Rolf Gates, *Meditations from the Mat: Daily Reflections on the Path of Yoga* (Random House, 2002).

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