



## Women's History Month: Empowering Women and Girls

We offer this list again in a time when many are practicing social distancing and sheltering-in-place due to COVID-19. It's important for us to maintain meaningful contact with one another. By "meaningful", we imply in a way that touches our hearts and minds. How can we do that from a distance?

- Use technology to connect including:
  - Text an uplifting message, an answer to one of the questions below, a photo you take during the day.
  - Facetime with smartphones – which supports connections between three people.
  - Skype or Zoom using computers and tablets. We are able to share computer screens, watch videos or movies and even see each other's actions – like a cooking class or playing "I Spy" in someone's home.
  - Zoom allows multiple people to be in the same "room" at the same time - perfect for "virtual birthday parties" or "book clubs."

### Discussion Questions

You might use these questions in a conversation with someone you love. Or you may want to write someone a letter with the question and your response – inviting the person to write back. Youngsters may use them to interview a grandparent or another elder in their circle of love. Adults, you may use these as prompts for writing your memoir.

- 1)** March is Women's History Month – or as some would say, "Her-story Month." Look at the word "his-story." What do you notice? How do you think women have been portrayed throughout "history"? Do you think it is good to have a month dedicated to women? Why or why not?
- 2)** What is the best part about being a woman or girl? The hardest part?
- 3)** Who is one of your female role models and what traits do they have that you admire? When you were younger, who was a role model that you had and what traits did the person have?

4) When in your life have you felt strong? Share about the circumstances. What do you do to garner strength when you need it? Do you know what “garner” means? If not, look it up or ask someone!

5) When in your life have you felt weak or vulnerable? What helped you to get through that period? Resilience means to come back – often stronger – after a difficult time. What has helped you to be resilient? Who do you know that is resilient? Share a little about the circumstances and what helped them to be resilient.



6) When have you had to stick up for someone or something you believed in? Please share about the circumstances and how things turned out. What motivated you?

7) Many men are very supportive of women. Have you had – or do you have – men in your life who support you now or when you were younger? Please share.

8) What career or volunteer activities have you had or do you hope to have? Remember that being homemaker or stay-at-home mom is a career! Share about what influenced your career. What choices did you have? What did you like or dislike about the path you took? What were highlights and challenging times? How were you empowered in this career? How did you empower others?

9) Many people have both mentors and sponsors – whether homemakers, volunteers, or executives. Mentors share wisdom and help teach. Sponsors assure that up-and-coming talent or leaders have the resources they need and the opportunities to begin sharing their talents. Who have been mentors and/or sponsors for you?



10) There is a proverb that says, “It takes a village to raise a child.” Margaret Mead said: “Nobody has ever before asked the nuclear family to live all by itself in a box the way we do – with no relatives, no support; we’ve put [nuclear families] in an impossible situation.” Which better describes your family growing up? What about now?

11) Do you think it is harder being a woman today or 50 years ago? Why? Looking ahead 50 years, how do you hope things will change for women? What do you think is needed to help bring about those changes?

12) Below are some quotes about women. Use them in your conversations. Text them to a friend. Write a letter to someone and include it. Do you agree or disagree? What do you know about the person who is quoted including when and where they lived?

"A woman is like a tea bag—you never know how strong she is until she gets in hot water." —Eleanor Roosevelt

"A woman with a voice is, by definition, a strong woman." —Melinda Gates  
"Feminism isn't about making women strong. Women are already strong. It's about changing the way the world perceives that strength." —G.D. Anderson

"I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own." —Audre Lorde

"I think the best role models for women are people who are fruitfully and confidently themselves, who bring light into the world." —Meryl Streep

"If you want something said, ask a man; if you want something done, ask a woman." —*Margaret Thatcher*

"In the future, there will be no female leaders. There will just be leaders."—  
Sheryl Sandberg

"It took me quite a long time to develop a voice, and now that I have it, I am not going to be silent." —Madeleine Albright

"Speak your mind even if your voice shakes." — Maggie Kuhn

"The best protection any woman can have... is courage." Elizabeth Cady Stanton

"The emerging woman ... will be strong-minded, strong-hearted, strong-souled, and strong-bodied...strength and beauty must go together." Louisa May Alcott

"The idea of being a feminist – so many women have come to this idea of it being anti-male and not able to connect with the opposite sex – but what feminism is about is equality and human rights." - Lena Dunham

"There is no limit to what we, as women, can accomplish." —Michelle Obama

"We need to reshape our own perception of how we view ourselves. We have to step up as women and take the lead."—Beyoncé

"When a man gives his opinion, he's a man. When a woman gives her opinion, she's a bitch."—Bette Davis

"When there are no ceilings, the sky's the limit. So let's keep going — let's keep going until every one of the 161 million women and girls across America has the opportunity she deserves to have." —Hillary Clinton

"Women are leaders everywhere you look—from the CEO who runs a Fortune 500 company to the housewife who raises her children and heads her household. Our country was built by strong women, and we will continue to break down walls and defy stereotypes." —Nancy Pelosi

"We all fight over what the label 'feminism' means, but for me it's about empowerment. It's not about being more powerful than men - it's about having equal rights with protection, support, justice. It's about very basic things. It's not a badge like a fashion item." —Annie Lenox

"Women are the real architects of society."—Harriet Beecher Stowe

"You don't have to be pretty. You don't owe prettiness to anyone. Not to your boyfriend/spouse/partner, not to your co-workers, especially not to random men on the street. You don't owe it to your mother, you don't owe it to your children, you don't owe it to civilization in general. Prettiness is not a rent you pay for occupying a space marked 'female.'" —Erin McKean

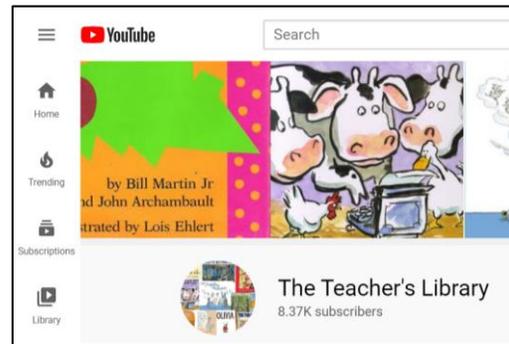
"You educate a man; you educate a man. You educate a woman; you educate a generation." Brigham Young

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## Activities

With these activities, you may want to facetime, skype or zoom. Consider sending one a book. Decide with someone you love that you will both do the same activity (read a book, research a woman, watch a movie) and then connect virtually to discuss it.

1) **Read a book about a woman.** Picture books provide a wonderful tool to share about a topic. The participants can talk about the characters in the book – sharing as much or as little personal information as they would like. The following three books are great choices that show that no matter what our circumstances are, we can persist, be strong, and make a difference. “[The Teacher’s Library](#),” a YouTube channel, posts videos of people reading these books aloud, so feel free to play a video of the story to the group.



- [Wangari’s Trees of Peace: A True Story from Africa](#), by Jeanette Winter
- [Malala’s Magic Pencil](#), by Malala Yousafzai
- [She Persisted: 13 American Women who Changed the World](#), by Chelsea Clinton
- [Turning Pages](#) by Sonia Sotomayor

Scholastic Books has a list of books to celebrate [Women’s History Month](#).

After reading the book, you may want to use these questions as jumping-off points:

- What do you have in common with the girl or woman in the book?
- What would you like to change in your community?
- What would you like to change in the world?
- How can *you* be an agent of change?

2) Watch a movie about a strong woman and discuss it together. Below find some movie suggestions, with recommended age guidelines according to Common Sense Media.



TIP: Common Sense Media rates books, movies, apps & games for families. Very informative!

- Mulan (ages 5+)
- Moana (ages 6+)
- Anne Franke (9+)
- Hidden Figures (10+)
- Ruby Bridges (ages 10+)
- Harriet (ages 12+)
- Bend it Like Beckham (ages 13+)
- Joy (ages 14+)
- RBG about Ruth Bader Ginsburg (ages 10+)
- Erin Brockovich (ages 15+)
- Mona Lisa Smile (ages 15+)
- Iron Jawed Angels

- 3) Take or “offer” an online class together such as yoga, or mindfulness. The Ivy League colleges have made classes available for free! This is the perfect time to teach someone you love a new skill – like cooking or knitting.
- 4) Take a virtual tour of a museum or zoo. Many are now online for free.
- 5) Pick a woman from her-story (or history) whom you admire or is one of the heroines of the books or movies above. Together, research this person’s life. Write a short biography or create a collage of the person’s life.
- 6) Use your political power! In this crisis, we are seeing our leaders true colors. We are also preparing for a presidential election. Make a list of ways that you can use your political power in our democratic country – including voting and writing to the President, senators, and representatives. Even the youngest child can write a letter to the President or accompany you to vote.
- 7) As a circle of love that spans different homes, share about different organizations that are helping to end the pandemic and address the needs of those whom are affected. What are ways that you might join together to assist? For example, if you decide on sewing fabric face masks – how many can your entire circle of love create? Which fabrics will you use – share them with one another and the stories behind the fabrics! Or maybe you decide to help with food. Could one part of the family pay for groceries to donate and another part purchases and delivers them? Who are some of the women and organizations that have helped you in other stressful times in your life? Send them a thank you!
- 8) Many people express themselves through artwork. Create a piece of art together where each person contributes one piece and sends it to the “art coordinator”. If you do a collage, each person could create an 5x7 picture and email it to the “art coordinator” who then could print them all and connect them. The same is true of a quilt where each person creates one square.
- 9) “A journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step.” Each family unit could take a hike or long walk and enjoy the beautiful world together. Together, track where you have been, how many steps you have taken or minutes you have walked. Plan a trip together, even if it’s just a virtual one!
- 10) Make a playlist with songs about empowerment and women. Together, can you find 10 songs? How about songs from different decades? Using spotify, you can share and edit a



playlist with multiple people. Are you able to find songs from different decades? Work on your own list – and then at the end of this guide, we have some suggestions!

- 11) Below are some songs about women from different decades. What is their message? How is that the same or different from what society tells us today and/or from what you believe?

The Smoothies – Rosie the Riveter 1943  
Lesley Gore - You Don't Own Me 1963  
Aretha Franklin - Respect 1967  
James Brown "It's a Man's Man's World – 1966  
Tammy Wynette - Stand by Your Man 1968 (Note: This was a popular women's anthem! What does it say about the times?)  
Bill Withers – Grandma's Hands – 1971  
Dianna Ross - I'm Coming Out – 1980  
Helen Reddy - I Am A Woman – 1972  
Gloria Gaynor - I will Survive –1978  
Dolly Parton - 9 to 5 –1980  
Madonna - Material Girl – 1984  
Bette Middler - Wind Beneath My Wings –1988  
Regina Belle – If I Could – 1993  
Mariah Carey - Hero – 1993  
Des'ree - You Gotta Be – 1994  
Shania Twain - Man I Feel Like a Woman – 1997  
*Reba McEntire –I'm a Survivor –2001*  
Martina McBride- This One's for the Girls – 2003  
Kelly Clarkson – Stronger 2011  
Sara Bareilles – Brave – 2011  
Alicia Keys - Girl on Fire – 2012  
Katy Perry – (Roar) Eye of the Tiger –2013  
Colbie Caillat - Try –2014  
Rachel Platten - Fight Song – 2015  
Alessia Cara – Scars to Your Beautiful 2016  
Meghan Trainor - No 2016  
Demi Lovato –Tell Me You Love Me 2017