

Dear Mom—

This may be the hardest card I've had to write you. I struggle to find words that I hope will help you through these difficult times. I wish there was some magic I could do to make things easier for you—both physically and emotionally. Mostly what I have to offer is awareness. And some pride. And some forgiveness... not my forgiving you (I have nothing to forgive you for), but, I hope, helping you to forgive yourself. Not for doing anything wrong, but for not being perfect. Encouraging you to allow yourself to not spend every moment anticipating, worrying, preparing—it's okay to be self-indulgent, restful, wasteful. It's okay just to BE. And I hope, perhaps, I can change your perspective ever so slightly. I think you conflate accomplishing with being—and this only adds pressure and detracts from the pleasure of accomplishing. Write when and as you can, not as a goal, but as a pleasure. And don't have it take away from your sense of being when you're not writing. My sense is that in many faiths and belief systems the ultimate goal is meditation—being present in whatever moment you're in, and even if a task isn't pleasant the focus of your thoughts can be. That may be the secret.

I realize so far this isn't a typical Mother's Day card. It's been about advice—and lord knows there's some chutzpah in me giving advice. But the other thing I want to impart is how proud I am of you. You've been miraculous through these difficult times. You've been forced into new universes of life and, as difficult as they are, you move forward—stretch, grow. Please feel the pride in yourself that I feel toward you.

WISHING YOU A TRULY

EXTRAORDINARY DAY

AND YEAR AHEAD

Mother's

Happy ~~Birthday~~

Despite the hard time I sometimes give you, you have actually been an inspiration to me. In many ways—as a parent should—you've been modelling for me what it means to be good. I am proud of you, in awe of you, and grateful for our connection. I hope you feel... no, scratch that, I don't have to hope, I know you know how important you are to me, how close we are, and how much I love you.

With even more love,

Mark

5/12/19