

Her Shoes, MY TURN

Suman Agarwal, nutritionist and fitness expert; **Surbhi Pansari**, founder of menswear label Surbhi Pansari; **Pooja Singhal**, entrepreneur and cultural revivalist; **Bharti Bangur** of Bharti Bangur — Fine Jewels; and **Gunjan Poddar**, founder of Amala Earth, reflect on the unexpected wisdom of motherhood.

Text * **Neha Kirpal & Sonakshi Kurbah**

They say motherhood changes everything—your priorities, your perspective, and yes, your patience (or lack thereof). Its most profound gift, however, is the deep, unexpected clarity it brings about your own mother. The rules that once seemed a bit too strict, or the advice that felt like a lecture, all start to make perfect sense. Now, you're the one juggling meals, meltdowns and milestones.

This Mother's Day, these incredible women reflect on the things they only truly understood once they stepped into the journey of motherhood themselves.





Pooja Singhal

"Growing up in a large joint family, I never fully grasped the quiet power my mother held. She moved through our bustling home with grace, making sure all of us—my siblings, my cousins and I—were immersed in the richness of Indian art and culture, music, textiles and stories passed down through generations. She wove tradition into our daily lives so seamlessly, it never felt like a lesson.

Now, as a mother myself, I understand what she was doing. She wasn't just exposing us to art, but shaping our way of viewing the world. She would invite artists into our home, make space for their creativity and include us in those conversations. At the time, we didn't quite understand the point. In hindsight, I realise she was teaching us patience, empathy and the value of nurturing talent. She was, what we may perhaps call, a cultural steward, gently preserving and promoting Indian art.

It is her influence that guides my own work today, where I try to bring traditional art to life for the next generation, but in their language. Just as she made the complex seem simple, explaining art forms in a way we could understand, I try to do the same for my two children. Recently, I showed them a few antique miniature chairs and invited them to ask questions and pick one each. Their curiosity led to appreciation – and that brought a smile to my face. I realised I was doing for them what my mother once did for me. In her quiet way, she curated not just a household, but created a living tradition. And now, so do I."

Gunjan Poddar

"I truly believe that parenting is the key to raising children who will go out into the world tomorrow as changemakers, thought leaders and conscious human beings. The person I am today is a result of the values, strength and sense of awareness instilled in me by my parents, especially my mother.

She has always been a forward-thinking woman who carved her own niche while embracing her many roles — mother, wife, daughter and sister — with utmost grace and strength. Watching her live with such conviction and propriety taught me the importance of staying true to oneself while caring for others.

I feel incredibly fortunate for the upbringing I've had, and I see it as a legacy I wish to carry forward with my own children. I want to raise them to be strong, thoughtful, independent individuals — confident in who they are and unafraid to stand up for what's right.

In my parents' generation, these values were passed down as part of the family's heritage and culture. As a mother, I believe these values are integral to shaping our children's personalities in a holistic manner, and I continue to draw inspiration from my own upbringing, which shaped the individual I am today. If we raise our children well, we shape a better future."

