

THE BEAN PRESS



Hello, Friends! We're sending out Our next Newsletter. We have the Good News, and It keeps getting BETTER! This time We really have something to say, so thanks to Our Friends who've waited 'til May. If Anyone else has the Good News to share, just send Me the email (AngelBean8888@gmail.com) – and type It in There!

Mom wants to tell You the BEST parts again. I'll be back soon, but She didn't say WHEN.

MOM'S TALKS



Hi, All. May's a big month for us! As most of you know, we're EXPECTING (can you believe it?!) Thanks to our AMAZING friends for the swift matchmaking and the more than generous gift giving. We're beyond grateful for your encouragement and support. And our Little Sprout found us – just like we knew she would.

Pia "Sprout" will be joining our family in June and we can't wait to meet her! Like her big sister Mia "Bean," she's a Southern Belle from the Bluegrass State, so we'll be holding space for a whole lot of style and sass. We even have a new website to track our adventures! We'll be blogging and sharing and posting past newsletters, so you can visit us at www.lahna8.com.

May is also Mental Health Awareness Month. It's a subject close to my heart, and if you follow me, you've probably seen that in my blogs, poems, posts, and book recommendations. Authentic connection is so important to who we are and how we grow, and I want our Community to be a place where everyone feels seen and heard; a place where we can show up, speak our minds, and ask for help without fear of judgement or reprieve. So, when you see people outside - new to the AHT site, or otherwise – and you think they would benefit from our positive energy, please invite them to join us. We can never have too many friends.

Just like physical health, mental health requires awareness, commitment, service. We're so often our own biggest critics and we can't afford to spend even one minute in an environment that tears us down. All things considered, how we nurture ourselves tills the soil around us and becomes the deciding factor between surviving and thriving. Be gentle with yourselves, be kind. Because let's face it, we could ALL be better about self-care.

I read a lot of memoirs, and I thought of all of you when I read Jenny Lawson's new book, *Broken (in the best possible way)*. In it, she writes:

"I think many of us struggle with the thought that it's ok to take care of ourselves and it's strange that it's a struggle to treat ourselves as kindly as we treat the dog. The dog needs walks and healthy choices and water and play and sleep and naps and bacon and more naps. And love. I need that too. And so do you. It's not just a gift we give to ourselves.... it's a duty.

I'll remind you if you remind me."

These past few months, our little Community has been growing and caring for each other, celebrating together, grieving together. Maybe we've been rooted here to remind each other.

Sunday is Mother's Day. I'm still clearing the weeds and it's vastly bittersweet for me. For many, it's bittersweet every year. Every mother is different, and every mother is somewhat the same. And you may not share my beliefs, but I don't think motherhood is purely biological or physical or logistical; motherhood is a state of being, and – a state of DOING. A state of giving. A state of loving. Motherhood is largely intangible, but the fear can be crushing when a bond that sacred is threatened or taken away. We ache for those who can't conceive, and we mourn for those who grieve. But still, the concept of love and the miracle of birth isn't lost on us.

I don't have human children. Many of us don't, either by choice or by circumstance. What I know about mothering, I learned from a little naked dog we found on a farm in Kentucky. And I don't compare it to another mother's experience or let it take away from my own. What I know about mothering, is only what it means to me. It can only BE what it means to me. And it can still be what it means to you, and you, and you. Adopted children, foster children, grown children, lost children - they all teach us something about mothering. They gift us what we need to know, for our own personal journeys, for our own precious spirits. And that can be bitter. And that can be sweet.

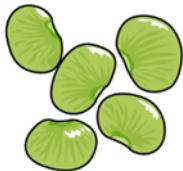
I wouldn't brand myself a "mother," in the purest sense of the word, but I believe dog lovers have a unique flair of parental presence all their own. Just as every woman with a child isn't fit to be a mother, or every man equipped to be a father – every dog owner isn't born innately worthy of a parenting role. Mothering, fathering, leading, loving, are actions, experiences, ways of giving and becoming. Parenting is a state of being and far from a one size fits all characterization. But mothering a dog and mothering a child are different. And yet, mothering a dog and mothering a child are in some ways the same.

Consider a mother with both human and canine offspring. Does she have within her a greater capacity to love the human, than she has for the dog? No – she has an infinite source of love for each, and she mothers each in her own way. They're not comparable standards. At the same time, a mother without human children doesn't love her dogs any differently than she would have loved them otherwise. And for those of us who can't or don't have human children in our lives, please don't treat pet parenting as some sort of consolation prize. We all strive to be the best parents we can be – in our own right, in our own experience, without comparison. We aren't settling for less, even if it's not entirely by choice.

So, this Mother's Day, I hope you show appreciation for each other, for the mothers in your hearts, and for the magnitude of love this time represents. And every day, give yourselves the freedom to create your own worlds, breathe life into your spirits, and welcome in the grace to make mistakes. Take a minute to remind each other.

I'll remind you if you remind me.

B-E-A-N'S TALKS



Ok, Friends. You heard the BEST Part, but here's the REST of the Good News to Us:

- ❖ We have 265 BeanStalkers on the Bean's Talks Facebook page and 46 readers joined Bean's BARns & No-BULL Book Bar! There's plenty of room for new BeanStalkers and Book Club Members, so invite ALL your friends!
- ❖ We STILL have the GREAT Ideas for the MERCHANDISE, but Mom put the POLL on hold until the Baby Sprout comes. Then We can send out Our Favorites and You can do the Vote!
- ❖ We didn't find the BUSINESS PARTNER yet, but Mom's looking for someone to help Us with the "SlumberBean" package. She's keeping it the SECRET until We get the CONTRACT!
- ❖ Mom did the NEW Website for Us called "Stand Up & SPROUT!" It's for the BLOG POSTS, the Newsletters, the Book sharing, and the POETRY. We love the Reading and Writing, don't You? You can find it at www.lahna8.com. Mom will put it on the Bean's Talks Facebook Page too.

Well, that's It for now. Don't forget to do the RELAXATION and Have the HAPPY Day for MOMS! See You soon!

XOXO – LOVE, BEAN (AND MOM)