

# Motherhood a place of great danger and

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Motherhood is a hard voyage many women face in life as it is something that comes with many challenges and obstacles that women need to overcome to be successful. In *The Joy Luck Club*, there are a variety of distinct and complex mother-daughter relationships that are very delicate. *The Joy Luck Club* has many lessons that are taught from mother to daughter, and there are lessons that are taught to the mothers from the daughters through their different life experiences.

In the Beginning scenes of the mother-daughter relation of Suyuan Woo and Jing-mei Woo, Suyuan was living in a place of great danger and was forced to leave with few of her things and her two daughters, eventually abandoning everything. Coming from the mother's perspective she believed that her daughter had a high potential and was capable of being whatever she wanted, if she tried. Suyuan's immense pressure over her daughter to become a prodigy ultimately lead to conflict between them. " Why don't you like me the way I am? I'm not a genius! I can't play the piano. And even if i could, I wouldn't go on TV if you paid me a million dollars!" (136). " Only two kind of daughters. Those who are obedient and those who follow their own mind! Only one kind of daughter can live in this house.

Obedient daughter!" (142) Suyuan's pressure has lead Jing-mei to develop frustration with her mother's high expectations a hatred towards playing the piano, Furthering the lack of communication between them making the conflict bigger. Although Suyuan has always seen Jing-mei's life as more prized than her own and only wanted the best for her, there is a constant misunderstanding by both parts of the relationship. As we progress in the book we come across the Lindo Jong and Waverly Jong relationship.

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As a young girl, Lindo was destined to have a husband, as her parents had already decided who it was going to be, being the obedient girl she was she did not argue with her parents because of the chosen spouse. Waverly, on the other hand, is a very free character, with her being a prodigy in chess, she is portrayed as a model of success in the book. Throughout her entire life, she has felt as if she has never been good enough and is constantly being judged by her mother. This is perfectly acted out when she was in doubt of telling her mom that she had a fiance. Waverly feels that it is quite hard to tell her, especially considering the fact that her mom is very harsh with how she expresses her feelings toward something, giving cruel perception on how she sees things could ruin Waverly and Rich's love like it had ruined her previous marriage and that is something Waverly is afraid of. " But I worried for Rich. Because I knew my feelings for him were vulnerable to being felled by my mother's suspicions, passing remarks, and innuendos." (175).

Although her mother has tried to teach her the ' invisible art of strength', Waverly is a malleable character based on her manipulative mother's opinions. Moving on to a different kind of relationship we have the An-mei Hsu and Rose Hsu relationship. An-mei has learned through experiences that certain things in life do not matter. As a child An-mei was faced with the decision to leave with her mother to a new life away from her grandparents and brother, sacrificing time with her brother she chose to leave in search for freedom and knowledge. Being taught more traditional values she tries to teach her daughter, Rose, to not be afraid to speak up and do what she needs to do in the moment and not let anyone manipulate her decisions, in

contrast to Lindo and Waverly, An-mei is a more strong and motivational type parent.

Although she teaches her daughter the basics, An-mei believes that the message has not gone completely through, because of the death of her brother she becomes more indecisive and susceptible. Rose has trouble understanding her mother and the messages that she wants her to learn. Rose is on the brink of losing her marriage and she is hopeless about the entire situation. “ I’m afraid if I tell her that she’ll still persuade me to try” (117) An-mei being old fashioned is persistent on the fact that Rose should fight for the marriage to continue, but it is no use.

In *The Joy Luck Club* there are many lessons that are being taught from mother to daughter and from daughter to mother. Most if not all the conflicts in the book have come from misunderstanding and miscommunication. Much like how Lindo and An-mei are similar Rose and Waverly are easily manipulated by others words and decisions.

In conclusion for the most part *The Joy Luck Club* is about how the daughters learn the values from their mother’s past experiences, and shows the contrast that happens from each generation and the passing of morals and values.