



others make the world go round. They're the ones who made Nebo come to life — literally. They brought us into this world, made sacrifices we couldn't imagine and worked tirelessly to give us the things they never had. Without them, we wouldn't be the talented designers, writers, marketers and humans that we are today.

And truth be told, our moms are also some of our most devoted blog readers.

They like and share like it's their job. They leave lots of nice comments, and even fight off internet trolls (at least my mom did). And even though they're still using Internet Explorer, they read entire blog posts about analytics – whatever that is – because they love us that much.

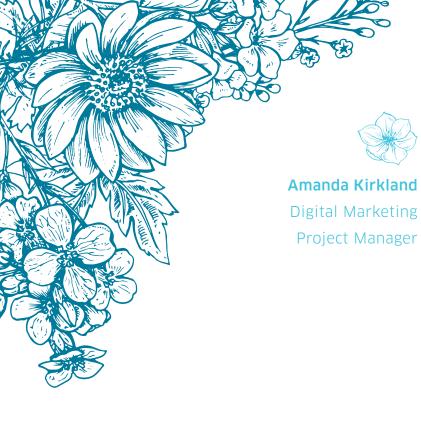
So this Mother's Day, we're honoring the moms of Nebo with a blog post all about them. We asked our employees to submit their favorite stories about their mothers. Some are touching, some are funny, and all of them remind us of why our moms are the best.



My mom and I are extremely close and talk on a regular basis. When I was in college, I would text her a lot when I was stressed out about a test or frustrated with a group project. But instead of responding with a supportive message, she would always send the "laughing with joy" emoji (). I never really understood why, until one day I just asked why

Apparently, she never realized the emoji was laughing, not crying. Needless to say, these days my mom sends the appropriate emojis – both and 6 / 2.

she was laughing when I was upset.



My mom grew up in the '60s and '70s – a time when women's competitive sports were not allowed at the high school level. Her middle school PE teacher disagreed with the law and coached the girls in every sport as though they were training to compete.

During my mom's freshman year of high school in 1972, Title IX passed, and she and her classmates started Hillcrest High's first women's competitive sports team. In their first year, their basketball team took home a regional trophy.

Bringing the trophy back to their school with pride, these young women were met with resistance. They were told the women's basketball trophy didn't belong in the same trophy case as the men's sports teams. She and her teammates stood their ground, fighting for their place, and eventually the trophy case was opened up for them as well.

It's incredibly inspiring to see that someone I perceive as being so kind, docile and selfless lead a mini revolution. Go Mom!



My mom is awesome. She's awesome because she laughs at my stupid jokes. She's awesome because she's the one person I can always count on to believe in me when others don't. And she's awesome because she kicks my ass (sorry for cursing, Mom) at Boggle no matter how hard I try.

At six people, my family is pretty big. And with four sons and my dad, who is probably more a "boy" than the rest of us, my mom is just a bit outnumbered. When I explain this to people I've just met, the first thing out of their mouths is usually a guip to tune of "Oh, your poor mother." But, as a tomboy at heart, she'll be the first to tell you she enjoyed every minute of raising four somewhat troublesome boys.

One of my favorite things she ever did was years ago on Mother's Day; that year one of our gifts was a whole day dedicated to whatever she wanted to do. And. She. Chose. Six Flags!

It was a beautiful, sunny weekend and schools had started to wrap up. Just the kind of day that you and every other family



in the Atlanta Metro area thought, "What a great day for Six Flags." But as we pulled into the startlingly empty parking lot, we realized just how unique our mom was. Turns out, not a whole lot of mothers were spending their special day at an amusement park! I remember sprinting from empty line to empty line, riding Batman, Mind Bender, Superman and more. A whole day of fun where our only limitation was how fast we could convince our parents to move from one attraction to the other. To put it simply, it was awesome.

It was also one of the many days when I've been struck by just how happy I am to have my mom over all the others.

Because, just as I excitedly told all my friends the next week,

"Your mom might be cool, but MY mom took us to Six Flags!"



10 things I love about my mom:

- 1. She butt dials me at work at least twice a week.
- 2. She's resilient AF. She had her hip replaced and was walking around an hour after surgery!
- 3. She is classy. I've only heard her curse one time, on her birthday, when she was insisting she pay for everyone's meal and no one wanted her to. She proclaimed, "I'm bleeping sixty, I get to do what I want!" It was hilarious.
- 4. She is the best alarm clock ever. When I was a kid, she sang good morning songs to get me out of bed.
- 5. She has the softest shoulder to lean on and the best hand to hold. My brother, sister and I used to fight over who got to sit next to her in church for these two reasons.

 Her shoulder is also great for tears.
- 6. She worked for Delta for over 35 years and made it through



the bankruptcy and layoffs. She was willing to take a 30 percent pay cut so she could work for a company that she believed in. She taught me the importance of commitment, to have drive, be passionate and that if you believe in what you're doing, it will all be worth it in the end.

- 7. She's worked hard her whole life for her family. When she was 16, she left California to take care of her mom in Miami. When I was growing up, she worked 60 hours a week and drove 35+ miles to work each way, and I never remember her missing dinner one time.
- **8.** She is always there when I need her, and she gives the best advice.
- 9. Her laugh makes me laugh. Her cry makes me cry.
- 10. She taught me about life and love and showed me everything I needed to know so I could do it on my own. I would never trade a single moment I've had with her she's the best mom I could have ever asked for.



My mom is one of the best caretakers ever. She has an amazing level of energy and a wicked sense of humor.

And she loves to send me things in the mail.

A few years ago, following a holiday visit, I received an envelope in the mail from Mom. She sent it to me at work, so clearly this was super important.

Enclosed was a green Tic-Tac, carefully wrapped in a tissue. There was also a note from Mom: "It was wonderful having you home for Christmas! I found this in your room and thought you might need it. Love, Mom"

Of course, I called her immediately.

Me: Hey, I got your note in the mail today.

Mom: Oh good. Are you going to be okay?

Me: Ummmm... yes. You mailed me a TIC-TAC.



Mom (laughing hysterically): Oh hell. I didn't have my glasses on and thought it was a birth control pill or something like that. Well, at least you'll be minty fresh at work.

This now a classic family story under the category of "stuff Mom did when she wasn't wearing her glasses."



A few years ago, my at-the-time-boyfriend came to visit me in Holland. Not a total pothead, but definitely interested in trying some legal weed, he set out to get some in my local city of Maastricht. Foreigners aren't legally allowed to buy pot outside of Amsterdam, so he needed someone to go with him as a proxy.

I, as the innocent rule follower I am, did not want to buy weed for someone. My mother, however, had no such qualms.

The marijuana store (?) was about a 15-minute walk from the center of the city where we were hanging out, and five minutes in, my mom's flip-flop spontaneously burst apart. Instead of calling it a day, she decided to hop the remainder of the walk with one shoe so she could get the weed.

Later that night, the two of them were going to smoke the weed at my house, but my ex was worried about what my dad would think. So, he forced my mom to smoke at the very back of our backyard, next to the rabbit, so my dad wouldn't risk smelling it and finding out.

TL;DR, my mom bought my ex-boyfriend weed and smoked it with him at the back of the yard with our rabbit, "like a convict."



Picture it: 2002. The age of TRL and low-slung jeans. I was 12 years old and desperately wanted to bedazzle my belly button like Britney Spears, so my mom took me to the local tattoo shop to inquire about belly button piercings. They told me I was too young and sent me home.

But my mom is not one to be stopped.

She went home, powered up AOL and placed an eBay bid on a professional piercing kit. She won the bid. A few days later she pulled on some latex gloves and pierced my belly button in my childhood bed. She did a better job than the tattoo parlor in Frankfort, Kentucky ever could.

All this to say: my mom always gave me the freedom to express myself, from belly button rings to JNCO jeans. She could have saved me from the jeans though. Thanks for nothing, Mom. Love you anyway.



Allan Redd Interactive Project Manager

In the 1980s sometime, my mom didn't want to pay extra to fly her dog on an airline. Her solution? Drug the dog, put it in an arm sling under a dark overcoat in July and smuggle it onto a commercial airline flight from Texas to Colorado. If anyone were to question her, the plan was to say she was pregnant and had a cold. Did this work? Yes.

She loved that dog too much.



In March of 1993 we had a huge blizzard. I was six years old and at a sleepover party, and in the morning, my mom came to get me. The house was maybe a mile away, but she came and got me because of the weather.

She was driving crazy slow on the way home, trying to navigate the heavy snow. As nervous as she was, she knew that if she showed it, I would have been twice as scared, so she told me jokes and had me tell her stories of the sleepover to keep me distracted.

We lived at the bottom of a hill, but to get there we had to go over the hill first. My mom's tires were skidding like crazy and couldn't get traction, so we had to stop and walk.

My mom had thought ahead and brought my snow gear just in case, so she got me ready and we started the half-mile trek.

Being six, I was exhausted and freezing. I remember my mom looking worried as she began to take off her heavy coat, scarf and mittens, leaving her in only her sweatshirt. She wrapped



me up in her gear and kept walking, telling me jokes to keep my mind off of things.

When we finally made it back to the house, she got me unbundled and warmed up, still soaking wet from the snow. Only after I was back to normal did my mom start to warm herself up. I remember seeing her hunched towards the fireplace in a blanket, still just laughing and telling me terrible mom jokes. She never let me see how cold she really was.

Her tactic of mom jokes persists to this day. Whenever she can tell I've had a bad day or something is off, she goes on to do her five-minute stand-up. Sometimes the jokes don't land, but there is always something medicinal there.



This is less of a story and more of an ode to mi madre.

My mom quite literally has the biggest heart ever. Like, dangerously large. About 10 years ago, she found a colony of feral cats in our neighborhood and started feeding them every day. The colony expanded and moved around over the years, and is now a collection of small groups of cats spread across an office park and apartment complex. She's fed those furry lil' creatures every day since then, rain or shine. She's trapped, fixed and released at least 15 cats and has taken in a similarly dangerous amount (usually under the guise of "fostering").

Her kindness doesn't just extend to cats, though! A couple of months ago, she ran into a homeless family at the gas station and proceeded to take them – a mother, three kids and two dogs – to Kroger for a mini shopping spree before driving them 30 minutes to a hotel in Norcross. The woman is seriously her own non-profit organization.



She's also one of the most unintentionally funny people ever.

She saw the movie Step Brothers and really latched onto

"Boats and Hoes." She came with my friends and me on spring
break in high school and stood on the balcony of our house
shouting "boats and hoes!" at anyone she vaguely recognized.



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I like to think my fondness for technology came from my parents. My dad was one of the first people selling IBM computers, and my mom was the computer technologist at my elementary school.

After one long day of working at the school, my mom came home and wanted to read and relax. In the process, she took off her wedding ring and set it on the living room end table. At some point later, she realized her ring was missing. Despite looking all over for it, it was nowhere to be found.

While innocent until proven guilty, the working theory is that the Roomba we owned at the time bumped into the table, knocking the ring on the ground before sucking it up. My brother then unknowingly proceeded to do his chores, emptying the Roomba's contents in the trash. Needless to say, this is still a sore subject in our family.



When I was younger, stray cats used to live in my neighborhood. Always the caregiver, my stepmom decided to feed the one who kept coming by our house. The cat stuck around long enough to receive a name, and my stepmom named her Maude.

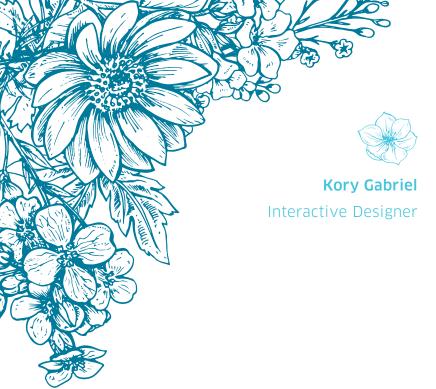
After a while, Maude moved on, and another cat came around in her place. Unable to deal with the heartbreak of another cat leaving, my stepmom named this one Two to stay detached.

Two also eventually moved on, and a *third* cat came around. At this point, my stepmom thought it was depressing to keep going down the line of numbers, so instead of naming the third one Three, she just decided this one was also going to be Two, or rather Two Too. And that's the story of how we had a pet cat named Two Too.



As a single mother, my mom was always scraping for cash. Every week, she would buy the Sunday paper and spend a dollar on a lotto ticket. One week, we dropped by the 7-Eleven to check our numbers and the clerk told her she'd won \$60. My mom jumped up and down and started crying. Everyone in the store was sure she'd won the big one.

That day we took our cash to the pet store, bought a fish tank and filled it with brightly colored tetras, a hatchet fish named Mac and a trusty sucker fish I called Oscar. There were probably a lot more important things we could have done with that money, but my mom wanted her "Punkin" and "Brian Bear" to have pets of their own. From then on, whenever a fish expired, my mom would run out and buy a new one so we didn't have to deal with the trauma of losing our fishy friends.



When I turned six, all I wanted to do was go see the monster trucks at the Georgia Dome, brainwashed by the hype of the TV commercials. It looked like loud, crazy fun, and I was becoming a much older, mature and adventurous boy. I asked if I could go for my birthday and my mom said yes.

When the big day finally came around, my mom decided we should go to the dollar movie down the street instead. My dad ended up taking my brother to see the monster trucks. This was my first taste of betrayal ... I still love you, Mom!!!



One time in the midst of my angsty youth, my mom and I were shopping for bras at Kohl's (the more you know, the more you Kohl's, am I right?). I was mad about something, obviously, and my mom was taking her sweet time making sure we made the most thorough bra-purchasing decision possible. She was rummaging in the back of a rack of bras to get the one she wanted when an avalanche of bras came cascading down on top of her. She yelled, "BOOBY TRAP!"

She snapped me out of my angst and made me laugh the hardest I've ever laughed as I took a second to appreciate how funny my mom is. She's goofy as hell, and I'm honored that that's one of the biggest things I get from her.

She's adorably appreciative of the little things in life. You should see the tiny, fists-in-the-air Mom dance (a la the SNL Target Lady- https://media.giphy.com/media/4T48716LEWUGA/giphy.gif) that she does when she smells toast.



My mom is a very enterprising person. Every year we go to the Barrier Islands of Virginia, where she spends hours walking along the beach, picking up garbage and looking for antiques and driftwood. She routinely collects two to three canoes full of massive pieces of driftwood (which she makes us carry for miles along the beach and paddle back to the mainland). She has set herself up as a vendor for all of the aquarium and terrarium stores within a 50-mile radius of our home and on Craigslist. Her business is called "Get My Drift."

In our family, driftwood money is fun money. For example, driftwood money has sent us to Disney World and sponsored a trampoline.

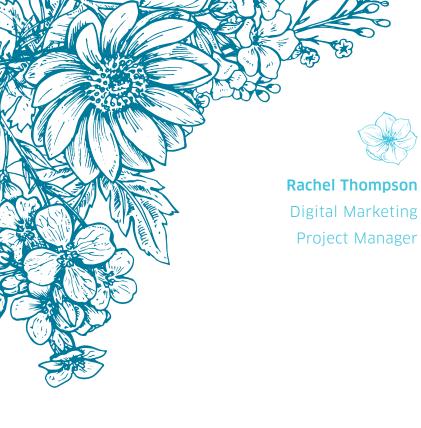


My first year of high school, I really wanted to get involved with the theater club. I was interested in the technical aspect, mainly lighting and sound design. I signed up with the drama club to help with whatever was needed, but the drama

director didn't take me seriously.

I heard through friends that the drama club was having a bake sale, and when I told my mother, she immediately went into insane baking mode. She spent all day and night making brownies, cookies, Rice Krispies treats and chocolate-covered pretzels. When I brought the two large grocery bags of treats already separated out for sale, the drama director was stunned, as no student had provided that much before. Minutes later, I was offered to help run and design sound for her upcoming show.

This work in theater helped land me jobs and acting roles throughout my high school and college years. If it hadn't been for my mother's speedy efforts to provide me with baked goods to bring in, I'm not sure I ever would have had some of the most important experiences in my school years. She was, and is, always willing to help me with whatever problem arises.



One time, my mother, sister and I were on a two-day road trip down to North Carolina. As a newly single mother, Mum was trying to keep her composure on what, I now recognize, must have been a grueling car ride.

Before we had even left the house, my sister and I had started fighting. This was likely due to something very important like "Who will pick the first audiobook?" or "Who gets the last Twizzler?" or "What is the weather like right now?" To be clear, we were 11 and 14 years old. My sister and I were constantly fighting as children and adolescents, but after three solid hours of being stuck with us fighting in the car. my mother had finally had enough. We pulled into a gas station and she turned around to us with fire in her eyes.

"HOLD HANDS!" screamed my mellow English mother. We did what well-trained children do, and pretended not to understand. "Hold hands, or I will TURN THIS CAR AROUND."

Worried about not getting to the beach, we ghost-touched, repulsed by each other. We asked how long we had to hold



hands, and our mother replied that it would be for the remainder of the trip. Assuming she'd forget, we bided our time by hardly touching and death squeezing at appropriate intervals.

She did not forget, and a few hours later, we found ourselves at a buffet, filled with every scrumptious item my gluttonous self could want. Our mother continued to eagle-eye us as we piled up our plates one-handed and throughout the entire meal. I can only imagine that passersby thought my sister and I were deathly codependent.

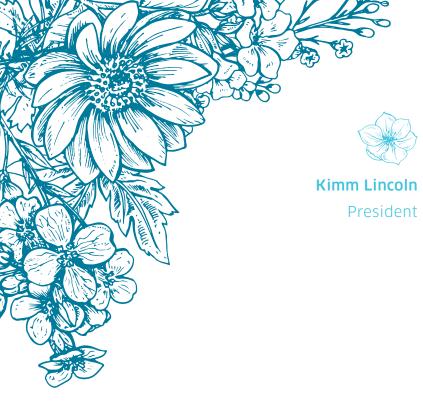
After the meal, our trek continued to a motel where, our mother informed us, we would continue to hold hands. As there were three of us and one bed, I opted to sleep on the floor. My mother is an adorable 100-pound WASP, but she snores like a 700-pound warthog, so it was always better to sleep further away from her. I spent a miserable night with my arm lifted up in order to to comply.



Eventually, I drifted into the oblivion and my hand fell away, but the next next morning, it was back to the business of continual hand-holding. After another eight grueling hours in the car, holding hands, we arrived at the beach. My sister and I unclamped our hands and never talked again.

Just kidding. My sister is my best friend and I love her, but I only came to that conclusion years after the scars of the hand-holding vacation had faded.

Bottom line: my mother raised demon-children, who grew into semi-passable adults. I salute her.



My mom is a true badass, although she would never say the word "badass", and if forced, might only whisper it to you.

First of all, her own mother (my grandmother) graduated high school at 16, got her teaching degree, and began teaching at 18. She used to ride a horse to her school, where she taught in a one-room schoolhouse. The town was small, so she taught kids of all ages, from elementary to high school. Imagine an 18-year-old girl in the 1930s teaching teenage boys. She learned how to be tough, and I think she passed that down to her kids.

When my mom was a kid, her parents told her that she could be a teacher or a nurse, since those were the only paths they knew of for a woman.

My mom was a high school gymnast and cheerleader, so she decided to go to college to be a gym teacher. She got her degree, but quickly realized that wasn't the right path for her.



At 23, she got a job as a foreman at GM. Her division had seven plants and only three female foremen (they were not called forewomen then!). Being the female boss of 40 male GM United Auto Workers in the '70s must have been ... interesting.

But she was successful, and after a few years there, she went back to school to get her MBA – WHILE SHE WAS PREGNANT with me. I, in turn, feel like I already have my MBA since I was in there learning by osmosis.

She has always been an example of what drive and hard work can deliver. Later in her career, she moved into a sales position in publishing. In 2005, she was recognized as the #1 national sales rep at McGraw Hill.

Over the years, she did lose some of her athletic skills. I'll never forget when I was a kid, out in the front yard with some neighborhood friends practicing my gymnastics routine, and she came out to watch. She was adamant that she could still do a back handspring. She was 40.



That badass busted her ass.

But, she handled it with humility. And I still think about her unbridled confidence that day, and throughout her life, when I'm in situations where I'm not totally confident.

What my mom has taught me is to just go. Who cares if people don't think you're ready? Who cares if you aren't 100 percent confident? Go for things that you want, expect that you will succeed and then work your butt off to be successful. I credit my success to her.

That said – doing that back handspring at 40 was pretty dumb.

I love you, Mom! Happy Mother's Day!

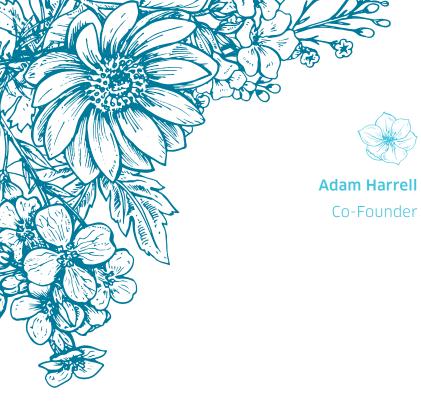


So this story is about my sister, Tracy (a new mom). I obviously love the crap out of MY mom, but watching your sibling do ... well, all that, is a crazy thing. My older, poofyhaired idol who used to wipe boogers on my pillow as a tiny human now has her own tiny human.

Scary, but also really fun. I see so much of her in her son. And whenever he bullies me, I have to double check that I haven't just entered a time warp back to 1980-something, when it was Tracy sticking her finger in my eyeball.

Not many people could manage being a partner at a law firm on top of having a kid under two – except for my overachieving MOAS (Mother of all Sisters). Like, just stop, Tracy. For real.

So cheers to you, Sis. Despite the incredibly flawless mom you are now, let's both hope your kid is only half of the hellion that we once were.



Growing up, my mom was the hardest worker I know. She worked the night shift, she worked overtime for extra pay, and she did that for her three kids. She did it so she could buy them the things she didn't have growing up. Even when not on the clock, she was washing dishes, vacuuming and even mowing the lawn (all in high heels, I might add). And more often than not, we weren't very appreciative.

When it comes to the innate challenge of motherhood, I often think of the following passage written by Kurt Vonnegut:

"She upset Billy simply by being his mother. She made him feel embarrassed and ungrateful and weak because she had gone to so much trouble to give him life, and to keep that life going, and Billy didn't really like life at all."

There is an inherent truth in that passage. Our moms become the focus of our frustration simply by the fact they exist, and that they brought us into this world. A baby is defenseless when born. For the first months of its life, a mom and dad



put their entire lives on hold simply to keep it alive. There is no way to ever pay back that essential debt that we are born into.

There is no handbook to being a mom. Parenthood is nothing more than a series of mistakes that you hope don't permanently damage your child. Each child is different, and the circumstances in which you raise them are often out of your control. But the beauty of parenthood is that it is often the setbacks, the challenges and the mistakes you make that help turn your child into a capable and remarkable adult.

No mom is perfect. My mom wasn't. I'm sure she looks back and has a list of things she wishes she could change about each and every one of the childhoods of her three children. But if she changed those things, we wouldn't be the people we are today.



When I think about my mom, I think about how hard she works, how clean her house is and will be, and how f'ing tough she is.

First, my mom works hard. And she has zero tolerance for people who don't. Including her kids. Regardless of age.

At three, our room had to be cleaned. By us. At five, we added vacuuming, dishes and some yard work to our skill set. By 10, we were proficient with a lawn mower, chopping wood and planning for our first legal jobs.

At 14 (the legal minimum in North Carolina at the time), we needed to have good grades, excel in extracurriculars, play our roles in a museum-clean house, maintain the yard AND have our first job bagging groceries.

At 16, we did all of this, but more of it, because thanks to NC labor laws, we could work longer hours and our hours per week weren't capped. Oh yeah – AND we had to prep for college.



Want to complain? Eff off. She's seen some shit. She's worked harder than all her kids combined. She's the product of high expectations, even higher work standards and a dose of German Catholic school nuns. There was no crying. There was no complaining. My mom is a lean, mean, multi-tasking machine, and no one can keep up.

In that same spirit, she's always had a high pain tolerance. This meant she also had a high tolerance for her children's pain. Sprain your ankle? Walk it off. Break your ankle? Walk it off for a few days to make sure. Have 10 stiches in your head and need to go to the doc to get them pulled? No need. She'd pop them out.

Which brings me to the one story I'll never forget. When I was 13, my mom parked her car in our driveway on a steep incline. Incredibly busy and distracted, she pulled up the emergency brake and ran into the house. When she came back out, the brake had failed, and the car was heading toward the house. And there was no way she was going to let that car hit her house.



And she succeeded. However, in "stopping" the car, it pinned her against the house and broke her leg.

She didn't panic. She called for me to come outside. Unlike my mom, I was panicking. I didn't even think – I just pushed the car off of her without a plan about what to do next.

Mom calmly asked the neighbor to come put the car in park. Then, we called the ambulance. They came. She was calm, but also firm. She wanted to go to the hospital 30 minutes away because it was better than the local one. She didn't care about the pain. She didn't care about the inconvenience. She just dealt with it.

Like I said, my mom has seen some shit in her lifetime. A broken leg is just a minor inconvenience.

She knew the only good reason to lose her calm was when the house was dirty. That's a real tragedy – and there is absolutely no excuse for that.