

## A Biker with Amazing Relational Skills

*Mom's Night Out* (not to be confused with *Bad Moms*) provides some superb examples of relational wisdom ... especially by a big, tattooed biker.

The movie involves three mothers who decide they need a night away from their kids. In order to enjoy high heels, adult conversation and food not served in a bag, they ask their husbands to take over for a few hours. As you might expect, everything goes wrong.

The moms eventually end up at the local jail, where one of them pours out her feelings of inadequacy and guilt to a biker named Bones (played by Trace Adkins). His three-minute response illustrates all of the key skills of relational wisdom.

[https://youtu.be/K\\_aY2M5hxyw](https://youtu.be/K_aY2M5hxyw)

### **Debrief**

After listening to Allyson lament that she's "not enough" for her husband, her kids, her mother or even God, Bones models other-awareness by gently zeroing in on her real problem: she's not enough *for herself*.

Like many other mothers, Allyson is constantly judging and condemning herself for not doing all the things that she thinks a perfect mother should do.

Instead of lecturing her about her self-condemning attitude, which would only make her defensive or magnify her feelings of guilt, Bones connects with her at an emotional level by telling a personal story from his own childhood (wisely touching her mother's heart).

Speaking in a slow, gentle voice, he draws on his own difficult past and tells Allyson how hard his own momma worked (probably driven by the same maternal instincts driving Allyson). He then shares these incredibly tender words:

*"I'd wait up for her comin' home from the diner. I'd wait up every night, cuz she'd come home and she'd put me to bed and she'd tell me somethin'. She'd tell me the same thing every night. 'He loves you, Charles. No matter who you are, no matter what you do or how far you run. Jesus will always be loving you with his arms open wide, just for being you.' And I'd smile and go off to sleep."*

To gently reinforce his reminder of God's role in her life, Bones goes on to tell Allyson about something he saw on Pinterest (a clever way to surprise her and get her undivided attention):

*"It was an eagle just caring for its young. It's a beautiful thing to watch one of God's creations just doing what he made it to do ... just being an eagle and that's enough."*

Allyson's tears indicate that her walls are down and Bones' message is getting through. So he finally circles back to the original issue: that Allyson is "not enough" for herself:

*"You all spend so much time beating yourselves up. It must be exhausting. Let me tell you something, girl. I doubt the good Lord made a mistake giving your kiddos the momma he did. So you just be you. He'll take care the rest."*

Two things are striking about Bones' words to Allyson. First, everything he said was spoken with tenderness and compassion rather than condemnation, which made it easier for her to hear his advice without becoming defensive.

Second, and most importantly, Bones gently addressed Allyson's deepest problem (unbelief) by reminding her of God's unshakeable love ("Jesus will always be loving you with his arms open wide") and by reassuring her that "the good Lord did not make a mistake giving your kiddos the momma he did."

By reminding Allyson of the love, wisdom and sovereignty of God, and by encouraging her to be content simply using the gifts the Lord has given her, Bones gives Allyson a renewed perspective and hope for loving and serving the people God has placed in her life.

Yes, this is just a movie clip. But all of the issues and dynamics are real life.

And the relational skills that Bones demonstrates are precisely the ones that you and I can and should develop so that we're prepared to serve the discouraged people God brings into our lives ... whether we meet them in a jail, at the office, or sitting beside us at church next Sunday.

– Ken Sande

PS – For further insights on how to remind people of God's love, wisdom and sovereignty, see *Penetrating Barriers* and *Always Bring the Gospel*.

PS – If you'd like to develop these kinds of relational skills, register for our new online course, **Discovering Relational Wisdom 2.0**, before August 5 to take advantage of the **30% discount** (use code **d03eht**). This 20-lesson, interactive course is available for individual or group study using a computer, tablet or smartphone.



### Reflection Questions

- What was most impressive to you about how Bones engaged Allyson?
- How did Bones demonstrate the SOG Plan? (**S**elf-awareness, **O**ther-awareness and **G**od-awareness)
- Describe a time when someone engaged you in much the same way that Bones engaged Allyson. How did it make you feel? How did it impact your life?
- Which of the relational skills Bones demonstrated would you most like to develop in your life? Why?

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