

# The Balanced Mom MAGAZINE

summer 2013

NAVIGATING THE PHASES OF  
**MOTHERHOOD**

*career mom*

**AMY TIRION**

*mom entrepreneur*

**I Am Putting  
What... Where?**

**Chemicals in Common  
Products We Use**

*body image*

*angela*  
**SCHAEFERS**

As a mom of three, and a diagnosis of a terminal illness, Angela has realized her purpose and has touched many people around the world in the process.

# AMY TIRION



BY JENNIFER GRINER

From the challenges and demands of motherhood, Amy Tirion became a beacon of light for many women searching to reconnect and find peace within themselves. Amy shares how the demands of life became detrimental to her well-being, how she creates space that invites the delicious pieces of life and how her new book came to life.

## SHARE A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF.

I am a mom of 2 girls who are about to enter the teen years, a 12 year old and a 10 year old. I also have a husband and they all bring me great joy. Right now, I would say that at my core, I just have a great desire to support women in finding their own centers of calm, wisdom and inspiration. It is because I am on this journey myself. It comes from a background of having a very intense ten-year corporate Change Management Consulting career with an international consulting firm. I did that work right up until having my first daughter.

Motherhood has been a very meaningful chapter for me. It has been a role of transition that ultimately brought me to create my business, Delight for the Soul and to author a new book, *Knowing Beautiful* which I am very excited about as well.



### WHAT WAS YOUR JOURNEY THAT LED YOU TO YOUR BUSINESS, DELIGHT FOR THE SOUL?

I think the physical demands of motherhood were pretty overwhelming for me, as I think they are for so many women and men. It is that time, especially in the beginning where, you just push through each day. For me, the days moved to years of pushing until I found myself at this level of exhaustion that I could no longer ignore. It got to the point where I would take my children to school and then need to crawl back in bed before I could even clean up the kitchen from breakfast. I just became extremely disconnected from myself on many levels.

I finally went to the doctor after a wake up call when I was shopping

with my younger daughter for her birthday. It was only about 7 o'clock at night, and I literally thought I could not make it home. At the store, I was trying to figure out if I needed to call my husband to come and get us. I knew that there was something wrong with me.

I eventually went to the doctor and found out that I have an undiagnosed condition of Hypothyroidism. It is an auto-immune condition that is going to be with me the rest of my life. It is a condition that absolutely impacts my energy, my physical condition, my mental and emotional condition. Now I am on medication, which works out great.

However, of all the things that it could've been, I felt very blessed. Everyday I am being reminded of the importance of staying connected to my physical well being, to be more

gentle with myself, and to find an ease in the world that is not going to be handed to me, and I am still working on that. I feel this awareness to be a gift.

That is really the invitation that I received to see my story, and then, really look and see how often it is reflected back, with some of these women I come in contact with. Women who are working so hard and managing so much. Often becoming physically depleted to the point where real conditions kick in.

That really is the birth of Delight for the Soul. It was my desire to honor women and help them see themselves, in all they do, and all that they are. To give them some deep meaningful insights into the fullness of what they bring to the lives of others. So that is my intention.

**DELIGHT FOR THE SOUL PROVIDES RETREATS. TELL US MORE ABOUT THOSE RETREATS.**

I do mini-retreats and I call them mini-retreats because they are uniquely designed to fit into our busy lives. I also do workshops and keynotes for women, for teens and I have done a workshop for men as well, because we all need this. They are designed not only to pamper women, but to really guide them through a journey where they restore themselves from the inside out, on many levels. We focus on the physical side through doing yoga. We focus energetically through meditation. We focus emotionally through a combination of all of these things because our emotions are attached to all of this - all parts of us. The guided journaling around important topics for women and the guided discussion, really help women hone in on what they are personally going through in their own life journey. Sharing and connecting with others is a real source of comfort and support for women.

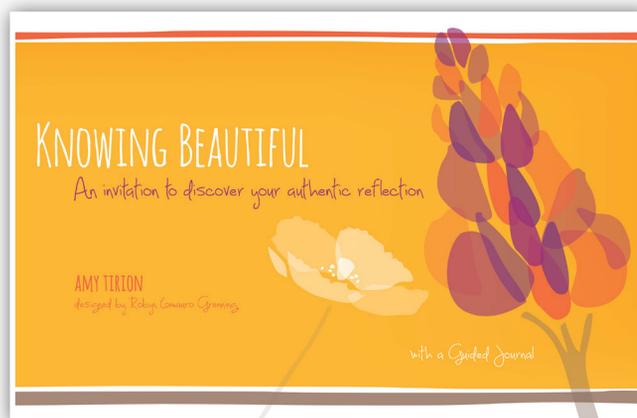
I also do painting. Painting is an important part of my programs for many reasons. It really is a contemplative tool to help women find another way of being by using the other side of their brain that is not the mental chatter. It is the creative non-verbal part of themselves. It's there to be playful, fun and to try something new. Even though we really work hard at playing with our children, I find that our own sources of deep play feel far away.

In addition, I offer dance and other special retreats that focus on self-compassion, exploring joys and desires, strategies for renewal and transitions in motherhood.

As mothers, we need to be very aware of what we are modeling and what we are teaching our children, especially our daughters. How are we caring for ourselves or not? It not only impacts us but, with everything we do or don't do, it is what we are teaching our children. What our own mothers taught us in their own ways is probably what has gotten a lot of us into our patterns.

**TELL US ABOUT YOUR NEW BOOK, KNOWING BEAUTIFUL.**

I was interviewed by Elizabeth Arden for a documentary series they were producing called, "Her Story," and they asked me the question, "What makes a woman beautiful?" I thought it was such a powerful question.



It really was a question that stuck with me because I really wanted to think about my own answer. I think every woman should have a chance to figure out what their answer is and explore what creates beauty in themselves and in others.

In my own life, I started to be aware of that. I found that bedtime is the time when I was the hardest on myself. There is this thing about crawling into bed at the end of the day and instead of going to bed feeling the fullness of me, I often started a story in my mind about what I did not get done and what are

the parts of my life that I needed to work on. All the agitations that get in the way of me feeling light about life tend to arrive for me at bedtime. It is hard to feel beautiful and critical of yourself at the same time.

I thought about all the stories I read to my kids and have been reading for years. I decided that I would love to end my day with a different story about myself, and really provide that same invitation for other women.

*Knowing Beautiful* is an invitation for women to really look closely, see a different reflection of themselves and feel complete. It is a perfect bedtime story. It has a section for journaling with questions to guide women through the many wonderful layers of themselves. I wish I could put it on every woman's nightstand, because it is a lovely way to tuck yourself into bed with a feeling of self-acceptance and serenity. That is why I wrote it.

**YOU WERE PROFILED IN ELIZABETH ARDEN'S MINI DOCUMENTARY SERIES, HER STORY. SHARE WITH US HOW THAT CAME ABOUT?**

A woman, who is a regular reader of my blog, was hired as part of the creative team for this project at Elizabeth Arden. She asked me to come to their casting when they were interviewing women on both coasts to find who they wanted to profile. I was really touched that my story was one that spoke to them. There were a total of 14 amazing women who were highlighted. Through this documentary, I think it is another wonderful way to promote a deeper sense of beauty in women.

**WHAT DOES BALANCE MEAN TO YOU?**

It's an ongoing journey, isn't it! I would

say that I am a serious student. I am definitely not an expert, but I think that balance comes from having a quality of energy that matches what is being taken away by life's demands. There is a space that I think is an important component of balance. Space between our breaths to send messages of balance and calm to our nervous system. Space between our thoughts to give our minds a break to soften our emotions and lessen the density of the mental pieces of our lives. By creating that kind of space, we make room to invite in all the delicious pieces of life.

If we approach life with space that gives us grace, which gives us mindfulness, it offers us strength to handle life. I am a true believer in space as a component of balance. It is a precious and powerful resource and it is something that I really teach in my workshops.

I also think that being gentle with yourself and playful with life helps to shift the weight of the world over to your side. This strategy is a constant exercise for me and it is how I invite balance in my own life. I know when I operate with more self-compassion, I see what is in front of me in a different way.

**WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE THOSE TIMES IN YOUR DAY WHEN THINGS ARE HAPPENING AT SUCH A FAST PACE, HOW DO YOU QUICKLY GET BACK TO MINDFULNESS AND BALANCE?**

Well, I think stepping away from whatever that is causing that sense in me is part of the space that I am talking about. Whenever I am working on my business and it is starting to feel intense, it's time to take a break. I know I need to give myself the time to power up again. That is when I build in time for yoga.

I know that, for me, dance is a re-balancer. It infuses me with a

different energy that makes me feel more capable. So I just have that as part of my week and it's sort of a preventative.

I also think that, literally, just getting horizontal - lying on the floor and putting your feet up helps me see things differently. For me, there is something I love about being upside down. It is all about being mindful of what is overwhelming me and shifting perspective energetically and physically. I bring in self-compassion and put that in between me and what I am bumping up against.

**YOU MENTIONED YOGA, DANCE AND PAINTING AS THINGS YOU LIKE TO DO. WHAT ARE OTHER THINGS YOU DO TO LIVE A MORE BALANCED LIFE?**

I also use writing as a place of self-reflection that helps me process. I think that self-reflection is an important way to work through what is feeling heavy in life. There is a lot of talk about a new formal practice of gratitude. Whether it is a formal practice or not, I believe that connecting with what I am thankful for throughout my day helps ground me. ■

