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TED TALK

***WHY MOMS MAKE THE  
BEST ENTREPRENEURS***

**BY JILL SALZMAN**

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QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

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## INSTRUCTIONS

Individually or as a group, watch the TED talk “Why Moms Make the Best Entrepreneurs” by Jill Salzman (available at [leanin.org/moms-entrepreneurs](https://leanin.org/moms-entrepreneurs)). Then use the questions below for a group discussion.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Jill realized that as moms raise their children, they develop skills to rival any business leader—skills like problem solving, time management, and constant learning and improving—and many do this on their own. In other words, all moms are essentially entrepreneurs. Do you agree? Why?
- Many moms say they just make it up as they go along. Jill points out that there’s another, fancier word for that: “innovation,” which is key to all entrepreneurship. Do you sometimes feel like you’re making it up as you go along, whether you have kids or not? Share an example of a problem you’ve solved in an innovative way.
- Moms are expert multitaskers. Research shows that women are often better at multitasking than men. According to Jill, this is because they have to be. Many women and moms must juggle multiple priorities at once—it’s not a choice. Do you agree with this statement? Do you have any strategies for successful multitasking?
- In Jill’s experience, moms often share information with their friends and family. She cites Malcolm Gladwell’s theory that talking to people is the most useful and efficient way to gather new information. Think about the last time you helped someone by sharing information. Who was it and what did you share?
- Whether or not being a mom is inherently entrepreneurial, there’s no question that a lot of moms—and a lot of women more broadly—start and own companies. When Jill gave her TED talk in 2011, there were 8.1 million women-owned businesses in the United States, and that number is on the rise. Take a moment to think of all the women-owned businesses you know in your area. Do a quick internet search to find some more. Were you surprised by anything, such as the number or types of businesses? Why?

Bonus: Organize a Circle trip to visit one or more of these companies!

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- Do you have an idea for a business? What's one step you could take to make it happen? If you've started a business before, what were your first steps?
  - Jill used Meetup to build a group of entrepreneur moms. They came together, supported each other, and shared experiences. That sounds a lot like a Lean In Circle. What are one or two ways your Circle has positively affected your work or personal life?

## **ONE ACTION**

### **The little push you need to go for it**

We recommend you close every meeting by committing to a “One Action”—one concrete thing you're going to do before your next Circle meeting to step outside your comfort zone or practice a new skill.

### **Step 1: Identify the action you're going to take**

Some of Jill's professional successes might seem like lucky breaks, but they came about because she took risks and put herself out there.

Between now and the next meeting, identify one person you want to connect with in order to take your career to the next level. It could be someone who has answers to questions on your mind or a professional hero of yours.

Use the questions below to help create your plan.

- Who do you want to connect with?
- What do you want to ask them?
- How will you reach out to them?
- What's the best possible outcome?

### **Step 2: Share your One Action with your Circle**

One by one, go around your Circle and complete the following statements:

- I plan to connect with...
- I will ask them...
- The best possible outcome would be...

Move quickly from member to member, and consider cheering one another on as you go.