They Can Do It…Really!

We always tell our children that they can do it; they can be whatever they want to be. When my five kids were young and as they grew up, I said the same thing. While I spoke those words, I also had an image of what "doing it" should look like.

Last week I attended my niece's graduation from San Francisco State University. While I felt the exhilaration of her success, I pondered on how her journey had not taken the expected route. She had been interrupted, challenged and delayed. All the while, she had maintained the dream of graduating from college and becoming a social worker.

Becoming a mom interrupted her education. She earned a medical assistant's certificate so that she could support herself and her child. This deviation delayed the completion of her bachelor's degree by a few years.

Now that she has graduated, she will continue her education and earn an MSW in order to reach her ultimate goal of becoming a medical social worker. When we first told her that she could be whatever she wanted to be, we never imagined the turn her life would take.

It was very difficult for her to be a mom and go to college at the same time, but she is a much stronger and more responsible person as a result of her challenge. As her family, we had to find ways to support her dream and encourage her to stay the course even though it was not the path we had originally envisioned for her.

Helping Our Children Believe in Themselves

As our children grow into their lives, their journeys may take them on unexpected paths. As parents, we will be challenged to continue to support and encourage our children's dreams and goals. It is difficult to let go of our image of what the journey should look like, but If we mean what we say, they CAN become whatever they want to be. We may need to support them when the challenges come, but they CAN do it! They may even grow stronger as a result of the detour along their journey.

With love and affection,

Rosemarie