

#HomeSweetHome 7 Day Challenge



How to Make Your Home a Happy Place

A Simple 7 Day Challenge

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“There is no place like home.”

“Love begins at home, and it is not how much we do, but how much love we put into action.”

“Home is where your story begins.”

“Home is where the heart is.”

There are hundreds of famous “home” sayings, but we must delve deeper and try to define what home means to each one of us. Home is not the color of your walls or the sturdiness of the structure that you reside in . . . it is a place where love surrounds and abounds. Love needs to surround you, your marriage, and your parenting style. Love needs to surround your actions and reactions. Love is an action, a reaction, and the way that you carry out your promises – even when you selfishly want to throw the towel in. Love is

a choice. Love is not always rainbows and butterflies – sometimes it is showing grace during difficult and physically/emotionally/spiritually challenging moments.

As part of the [#HOMESWEETHOME](#) challenge, I want to encourage you, your spouse, and your children to join in on this 7 Day Challenge! It's simple . . . join me and take these daily challenges for the next 7 days and beyond. Take the challenges again week after week – day after day.

Day #1: [Define family](#). It is vital for the health and future of your family to take some time to define what family means to you. Maybe you have lost sight of it and it's time to re-create and re-invent your sense of family and what the home should mean for you. Family is more than the mouths you have to feed and the amount of bills you have to pay. For your home to be a happy place, you must realize and define what family means to you. *Why did you first fall in love with your husband? What was it like holding your child(ren) for the first time? Etch those beautiful moments into your mind as you begin laying the foundation of what family means and should mean to you. Take out a notebook and start jotting down some of your favorite memories. Create a box of memories – photographs, airplane tickets, movie tickets, and other keepsakes that bring back fond memories of your family timeline. It is important to remember the beautiful moments happening now instead of holding onto any lingering pain from the past.*

Day #2: [Go out of your way to show love and affection](#). Too often, we let words flow off our tongues without putting them into action. You must show love and affection. Spend quality time playing with your child. Greet your husband at the door with a hug and smile. We become so consumed with life and to do list's sometimes that we forget to embrace moments. *Stop and read a book as a family, make your husband's favorite dessert, eat dinner together, hide your smart phones during family movie night, ... If they ARE (and they should be) important to you – SHOW THEM! 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NIV), "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.*

Day #3: [Create unique family traditions](#). To create a place of joy, you can create family traditions so you can begin paving that roadway to joy, beautiful memories, and endless giggles. Create a new tradition with your family. *Start a family movie night, read together as a family before bedtime, have midweek dance parties, let your children help you bake before the holidays, have a smores/hot cocoa party on Christmas Eve, and the endless list of ideas can continue... Family traditions like this will forever be etched into your child's*

mind. You won't have your children under the same roof forever...don't let the years go by without fun, unique family traditions. Start one today – it is NEVER too late!

Day #4: [Open your mind, ears, and HEART.](#) It is important to take time to sit down and talk honestly, openly, and without judgment as a family. It is important to build a strong support system within the home instead of a place of yelling and judgment. *Ask your teenagers what they are struggling with. Enter a conversation with your husband without judgment and instant frustration. Take time to listen with your heart instead of your pride. This is one of the biggest ones I am trying to apply to my own life. Don't assume responses before they get to answer. Don't start fussing and acting negatively before a word is even muttered. Listen with a heart of compassion. Listen with the desire to genuinely help your family and know what is going on in their heart and mind. Love them and ask questions about their emotional state and spiritual state. Ask what they are struggling with, with the intent of supporting them instead of condemning them (challenging them is different than condemning them....).*

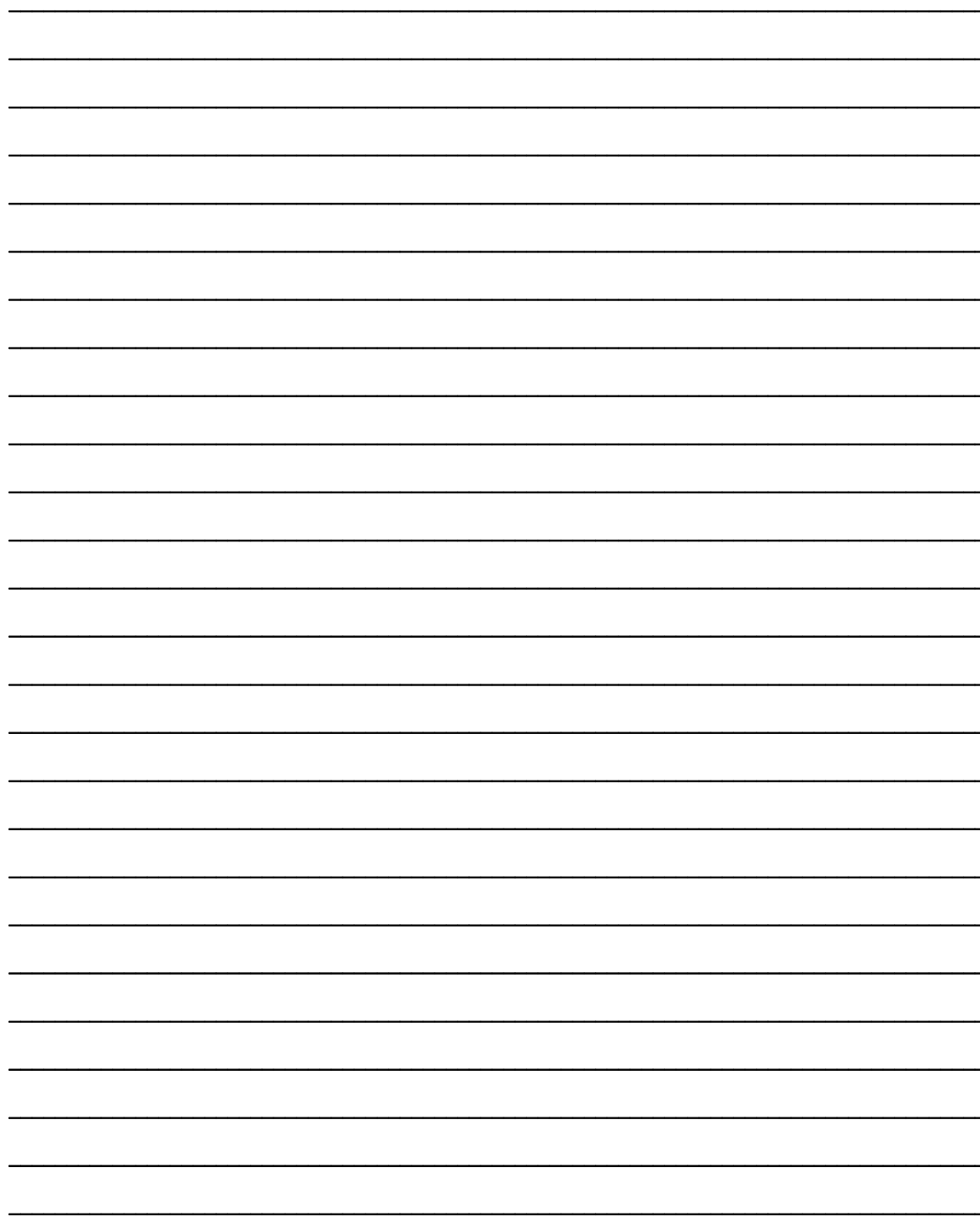
Day #5: [Laugh, laugh, laugh.](#) "Laughter is medicine for the soul." "You must learn to laugh at yourself daily ... it builds character." Learn to laugh at yourself. Learn to be silly. Act like a kid sometimes. Learn to laugh at your child's corny knock-knock jokes. They don't know what a punch line is! You can't be so serious and stressed out all the time that you do not take time to laugh. Laughter is at the core of creating a happy, loving home. *Tell your spouse weird jokes. Play dress up with your daughter. Pull out the light sabers with your son. Start today – your children will always remember and you and your spouse should NOT talk bills and children's schedules 100% of the time.*

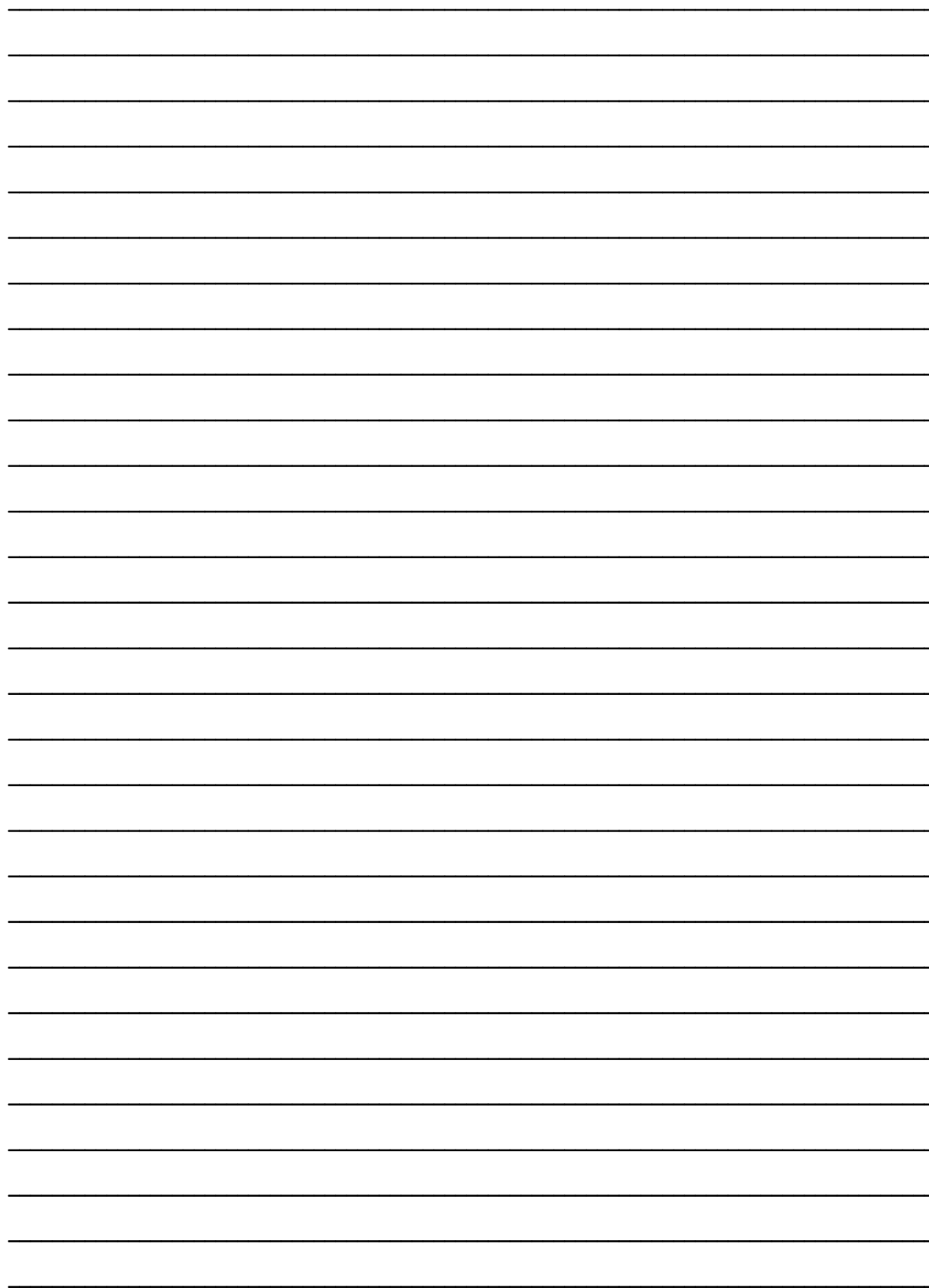
Day #6: [Have impromptu dance parties!](#) This is my new motto lately. My son loves when I turn on the music and start dancing crazy. He smiles and giggles and it warms my heart beyond anything I can put into words. I also love when my husband and I bake together, turn the music on, and have a mini dance-off in the kitchen (which is no competition-I have no rhythm). You have to let loose sometimes – no matter how many things are on your mind - no matter how much it may hurt your pride of always trying to appear "perfect." *Have your own impromptu dance parties. Life is not about perfection. We are imperfect people living by the grace of God. His mercies are new every day and so is the opportunity to create a place of warmth, love, and memories with our families.*

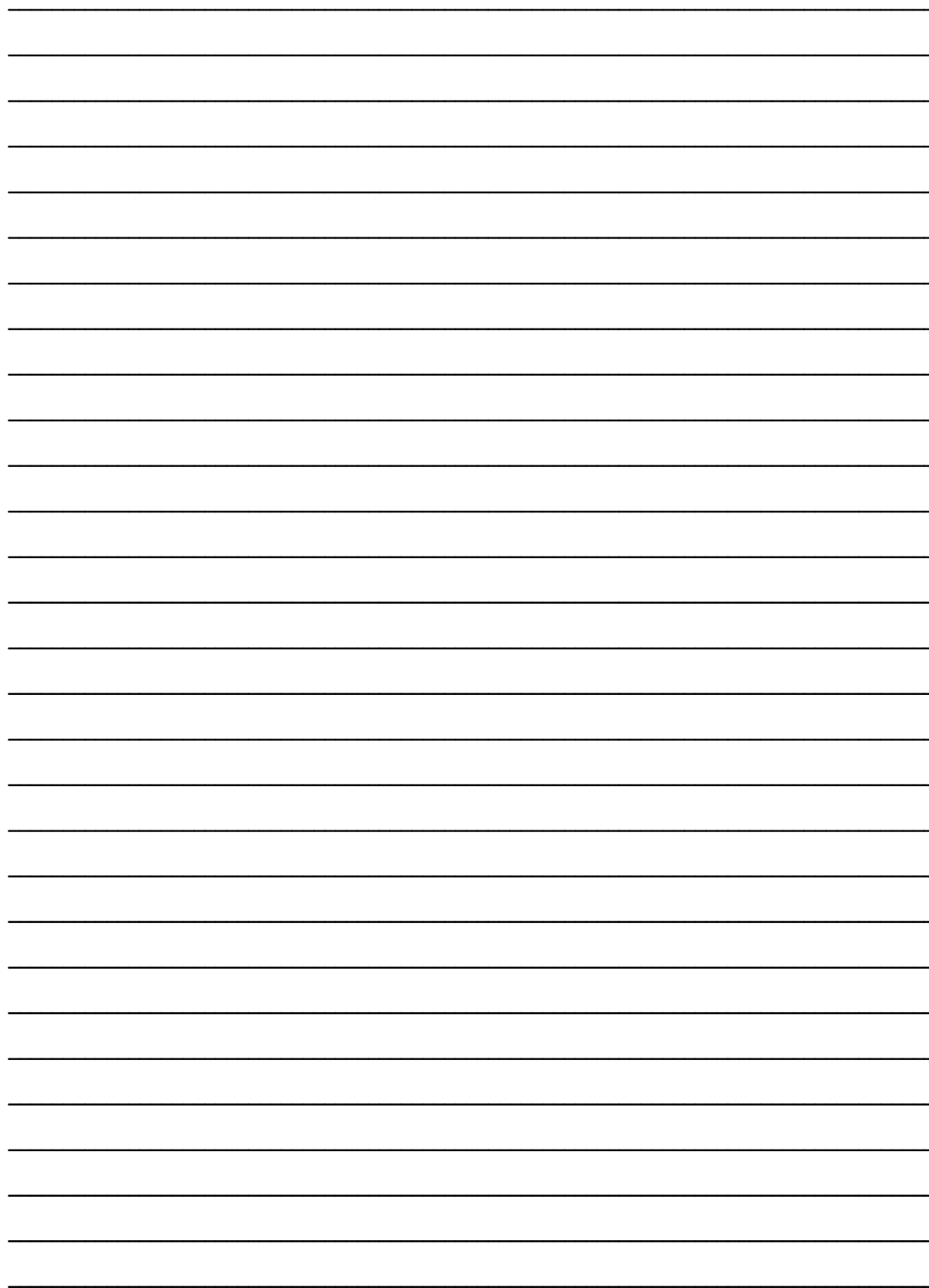
Day #7: [Make the choice to love daily!](#) As I mentioned earlier: *Home is not the color of your walls or the sturdiness of the structure that you reside in . . . it is a place where love surrounds and abounds. Love needs to surround you, your marriage, and your parenting style. Love needs to surround your actions and reactions. Love is an action, a reaction, and the way that you carry out your promises – even when you selfishly want to throw the towel in. 1 Corinthians 13:13 (NIV), “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”*

Today, I want you to use the rest of this space (and some!) to jot down the following:

- 1.) What does family mean to YOU? What does it mean to your spouse/children? *Is it a positive or negative portrait that is being painted?*
- 2.) How can you carry out the promises you make to your spouse/children? Don't promise what you cannot and will not carry out. This does not create a place of trust.
- 3.) How can you love without limits? How can one set pride aside and let God-centered love take over?
- 4.) How can you create family traditions that you and your family will always remember and treasure?
Which ones are you going to implement NOW?
- 5.) How can you create a place of laughter? (family game idea-PIE FACE☺)
- 6.) When will you have your first impromptu dance party? (umm...it's impromptu – but start the music NOW!)
- 7.) How can you create a place of openness and honesty that is not judgmental but knows how to challenge the other person in a positive way?
- 8.) When are you going to start your family memory box? (umm...I think you know the answer-NOW.)
- 9.) How are you going to go out of your way to show love and affection?
- 10.) *Write down scripture EVERYWHERE to encourage, motivate, challenge, and steer you on this journey of family, love and life.*









Use the [#HOMESWEETHOME](#) hashtag on Instagram/Facebook to document some of the family traditions you and your family make so other families can glean from your ideas.