

The Greatest Thing My Grandpa Taught Me



My grandpa died last week on December 5th, the same day that my daughter had her 18th birthday. It was a happy day overall, but of course, I had many moments to pause and reflect on life in general. I felt thoughtful, driven, happy, proud and calm, all at the same time.

My grandpa was 89 and he was spry and handsome until the day he died. He lived about four hours away from me, and sometimes, up to a year would go by without me seeing him. But I was so fortunate to visit him just five days before he passed.

He had had some health problems in the past few months, but it seemed we were in the clear, as his health had been improving. He was so excited to see me and my baby. When I arrived, he and his beautiful wife were decorating their Christmas tree. I remember looking around the room and seeing the pictures of him as a pilot in the Air Force, and framed medals and other awards he had been given. In his photobook, the caption for this photo reads, "B-29 cockpit -- on way to hunt hurricanes."

My grandpa was a man who lived for himself. He was an extremely responsible person and always took care of his family, but he went after what he wanted.

You wouldn't believe it, but the single greatest thing I learned from him, I only learned a few months ago at another visit with him.

He always called me Missy, the only one of my family to do so, and at this particular visit, he asked me how business was going. I told him business was doing pretty well and I was enjoying it, but that I was working harder than ever and was tired." He said, "How old are you again?" I replied and then he said, "Oh good. *This is the time in your life when you're supposed to work hard!*"

It impacted me greatly. He couldn't have known how it would affect me, but in this day and age

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when everyone talks about how working too hard will cause a plethora of health problems and how we need to slow down and have balance in our lives, it almost seems that hard work is as bad for your health as smoking.

People tell me I work too hard all the time and that I'm going to end up in the hospital. Actually, I believe that sometimes myself, too, and sometimes I do work too hard! But get this, statistically, people who have very little stress in their lives actually die sooner than those who have regular times of non-traumatic stress in their lives (*The Longevity Project* by Friedman, Ph.D. and Martin, Ph.D. 2012)

I love to work hard, I love the feeling I get when I accomplish something huge. I love the way I feel when I see one of my finished creations in real life before me!

Let's face it, there's no such thing as balance, there's only doing what you love, and that doesn't mean only doing *work* you love, it means, **DO WHAT YOU LOVE. All of it!** I love watching House, M.D. I love taking my baby to the park. I love cooking! I love sewing and having lunch with my friends. And I love hard work.

Thank you, Grandpa Poole. I really needed that show of love. Rest in the deepest peace. I love you.

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