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Positive Psychology
Professor Danner
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Dear Grandchild,

If you're reading this, it means I could not be apart of your life in the way that I would have wanted to, and I have undoubtedly become a spectator in your life. That being said, it is my heartfelt wish that you live a life full of happiness and love, constantly striving to be all that you can be, and learning how to love every minute of it. I don't know what kind of life you will lead, but if you ever feel as I did as growing up as a child, I want you to understand a few things about life that took me far too long to realize, with the hope that your struggles are lesser than that of my own.

In life, it is important to acknowledge your faults and to strive to overcome them. Others (especially family), have a tendency to point them out more than we would like, discouraging us from facing them and pushing us into a defensive corner. Remember, you choose who you let in and who you don't, and even then you can choose how they affect you. Do not be misled by your pain and believe you are incapable and defenseless; you have all the tools you need within. It is critical to face your demons and to fight to overcome them. You must face the obstacles that life has and will throw at you or you will become bitter by the resentment for those who gave you truth—but mostly you will lose yourself in regret as you learn of all the wasted time you spent holding grudges and trying to understand this.

I stress this particular life lesson because I believe every person deserves their own negativity for giving up on themselves, and I hope for my future generations to learn this lesson faster than I so that they may be able utilize every second of their life in a positive manner rather than wasting time seeking the truth as I did. I also hope that through your roughest days you remember me as your guardian, giving you all of the strength I've acquired throughout my life and passing it on to you. It has been my life's work thus far to achieve the wisdom to lead me through my life with the right mindset, questioning everything and stopping at nothing until I found the answers I sought.

I feel as though I could write a book on my ideals regarding life lessons and what a person ought to be doing to lead a good life, but I'm going to end on a much, much smaller note. The world is made of balance, what you give in is what you get out, and what you take will be taken back from you. Time has no value in this equation, as you should live within the present anyway, ignoring the term altogether. And lastly, your brain and your heart are your most prized possessions. Love unconditionally and never stop learning.

That's all you need to know about who I was, who I fought to become, and who I died to be.

October 28, 2011

Letters to Grandchildren – My Reflection

In re-reading my letter to my future grandchildren, I acknowledge the fact that I did leave a lot of my life out, and purposefully I might add. The question asked was what I wanted to be remembered by, which I can honestly say I put a great deal of thought into before writing the letter. I don't want my grandchildren to remember me as the negative self I know I am, but rather a person with a fighting spirit, constantly trying to overcome that negativity, and wise, giving them advice so that they don't encounter the same issues as I have.

Things I spend a great deal of time on: school, work, homework, feeling pressured and angry from my family for being extremely unsupportive and pushing me to work hard and giving no praise for anything I do, feeling 'left out' in the world due to moving when I was younger and having friends that backstabbed me- forcing me to make entirely new friends again in High School, where yet again 'clicks' have already been formed, and making new friends became more of a job than fun.

I'm not entirely happy with my life at this moment. If I could just graduate in December, I will remove all the burdens of my family. They won't be able to criticize the choices I make in my life because I'll have already taken one step further than half of them (by graduating with a four year Bachelors Degree) and then finding a job and supporting myself. The worst part is that I know they do care, but all of them have been put under the same pressure that they have become bitter, resentful, and pushy towards other family members, not showing any sort of warmth or compassion, which I find to be

an extremely important factor to being apart of a solid family. Basically, they've somewhat already given up.

It is because of these things that I have become determined to become an independent woman, making for myself a good and supportive life while also proving to them that warmth, praise, and love is more important than anything else. It is our families that shape us, and I have spent years trying to overcome the repetition of negativity within my family, and even trying to show them what I see. Unfortunately being the youngest of four children raised in the environment such as the one I was brought up in, you are more like a dog in terms of how serious people will take your thoughts. No matter what you say, your opinion doesn't count because you "haven't experienced half as much as they have"- all because you are younger. Here is an example of how my family thinks, the most common thing I ever hear from them in seeking advice in life when I'm down: "Life sucks, get used to it". Comforting isn't it? ...My life motto on the other hand is more along the lines of "Live, laugh, love" (while also having a good and responsible working ethic).

I'm not entirely sure whether or not I have learned anything while doing this project. It has eased my mind a bit, being able to confess how I feel about my family. My father worked hard and made a lot of money, so I've always been considered a rich, spoiled kid who is just complaining about one more thing. No matter how hard I'd try throughout my teenager years, no one understood what it felt to be me, and honestly, it shattered me a bit, taking me years to overcome how I felt and what I am striving to become.

It did encourage me to keep moving. It has been uplifting to express all my thoughts however, considering and reflecting on how I would want to be remembered, which in turn reminded me of the strength I seek each day, and the happiness I know/believe exists. Instead of giving up, I will prove them wrong by showing them that they are the result of their issues, not me, and not the world. I will overcome it, thereby giving them evidence to their sunken personalities, and giving them two choices: agreeing with me about the need for positivity in life, supporting me as I will support them and starting over as a family in a real sense, or I will move on. Plain and simple. My goal in life is to reach a point where I can leave all negativity behind and be happy every day, loving everyone and expecting the same in return. As already stated, I plan to give them a chance at seeing things the way I do when giving them proof of everything I have sought to understand, but I refuse to spend any more of my life letting anyone knock me down, even my own family.