

Three Generations of Potential

I am a widow with an adult daughter and brand new granddaughter. When our daughter turned 7, she started asserting herself in a snobbish way that my husband encouraged. She associated totally with her father and has treated me harshly since. My son-in-law behaves arrogantly toward me, too, and my offers to babysit are ignored. I am devastated. I claim my fault in all of this. Your guidance is appreciated as I feel lost.

— *Heartbroken Grandma*

Just as you have had a part in creating this predicament, you have the power to change it. It begins with acknowledging what is most important to you and committing to honor that, even when it's difficult or uncomfortable. In "Rising Strong," Brené Brown says, "Disappointment is unmet expectations." Unspoken and unexamined expectations wreak havoc on relationships. So does holding onto old hurt and playing the role of powerless victim. Are you willing to be vulnerable and communicate your feelings and desires without placing blame or making assumptions? Will you give your daughter the same opportunity?

In the book "Shift Happens," Robert Holden writes, "Family is the practice ground for making peace with yourself and with the rest of the world. The bottom line is, you can't carry grievances and find peace. You can't attack and love, and you can't be a victim and be happy."

Perhaps your role of grandmother will provide the impetus for you to open a new door with your daughter. Let her know that your love for her and your new granddaughter is more important to you than any past resentments or behaviors (hers and yours).

Decide to be the example of a woman who accepts and forgives herself and those she loves. This is the greatest gift you could give yourself and your family. It may even be a big part of why you are here. Holden continues, "Give away pain for love. Give away conflict for freedom. Give away anger for peace. Give away the old for something new, something better. It's your move. It's your choice."

This transformational decision is yours to make, Grandma. I'll be praying for all of you. ❀



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