

Tips from Past Generations

<https://youtu.be/P6S9oN65Grg>

Sam: Good morning and welcome to ***Sunday Snacks with Sam and Ellie***, we never say that the same twice. <giggles>

We're here to talk to you about what we've both learned from older generations in our family. I know I've talked about my grandmother a lot, and Ellie has been reminiscing with me about her grandparents and her mom, which has been interesting because we kind of put it together that my grandmother is actually about the age that her mom would be.

Ellie: They'd be about the same generation. Yeah.

Sam: It's really interesting because when I look at my husband's family whose grandparents - one of his grandparents, is still alive. His grandmother is only now in her late eighties. When my grandmother passed away in 2016, she was almost 95! Hmm.

It's just an interesting an interesting dichotomy how that all pans out now, In comparison to families and how I always have looked at is I have an older family. And just because that's how my family versus my husband's family is, and then you have your whole family and I loved hearing the stories that you were telling me about the different routines that your grandparents had.

Ellie: Yeah, It's kind of interesting. One of the thoughts that came to mind was one set of grandparents was more strict than the other one. They lived on a small farm and when you wanted something, you didn't go to the cupboard and grab a glass and get your glass of water. You asked if it was okay. It just was a formality that was expected.

My other grandmother, when you arrived, she would point out that the chipped, chopped ham was in the fridge, the buns are over here. You know, the sodas over here, whenever you guys are hungry, just grab something.

And today there's so much focus on our kids kind of just being allowed to be. And I'm like, how, how do you learn to relate to people if you don't learn to just honor and respect those differences, like in our grandparents?

Sometimes they'll say, well, they're young. Well, my grandparents were like that from the time I was old enough to know they were different. You didn't feel more or less loved by one or another. And interesting in later years, some of the leniencies that my strict grandparent did became the stories I tell.

I remember them most because they were so out of character. So, when they broke the rule, it was an event - a special event, exactly.

So I think, I think even in terms of relating that's how we learned to interact in the world. That is also partly missed because so many aren't growing up with grandparents and stuff and discovering how to behave and honor them and respect them.

Family isn't quite the same. And it's not just now - it's been happening ever since the industrial age - that change. But something that comes to mind and always intrigues me is that the stories that are the most fascinating for me are oftentimes the one with the parents, the grandparents who were the most strict.

I think there's much to be gained by those differences and their routines, but they also had ... the routines established a ... It's like how you knew everybody was getting along, you know what I'm saying?

Sam: A sense of normalcy.

Ellie: Yes, exactly, exactly. If there was a house full of people, it, it worked, it wasn't people weren't getting all upset and because you were trampling on somebody else's territory that you just knew what the routines were.

I think that's one of the differences I see that I appreciate today when, when I'm around people who seem to respond to that, they don't try to take over your household or whatever, they respect those boundaries.

Sam: Boundaries. Yeah. One of the things that you brought up earlier that I found interesting was that these relationships weren't just within the family, they were within the community. A lot of it came from front porch sitting, like where I grew up in Philly. It was you, you sat on the stoop and I know you said,

Ellie: Yeah, I was trying to think of that word.

Sam: Yep. You, you had one as well. I'd be playing in the street and my grandparents would be talking to their neighbors on either side of the front porch. And even when I wasn't with my grandparents, my mom and I had a front porch, but it was enclosed. I have been racking my brain since we were talking about all this trying to remember, did we really ever talk to our neighbors from the front porch setting where I lived with my mom? And the answer is no.

Like we talked over the fences in the backyard, but the irony to that is, is that when we moved from Philadelphia and we only talked to either side of our house; we moved to Lancaster county, Pennsylvania, and my mom and dad had this beautiful front porch where you could put rockers and you could sit out there and drink ice tea or do whatever.

What I, what I picture as like Norman Rockwell, iconic Southern style living, my parents never did that. They rarely talked to their neighbors. They were in the backyard. They were always in the backyard. You had to invite someone in to your personal space. It wasn't how my grandparents were, where they're all sitting outside, chatting. And sometimes they're talking across the street because

Ellie: ... somebody walked by and you say, "Hello", And sit on the steps and chat a while.

Sam: Yeah. It was definitely more of a community versus isolationism. Yeah. But with all that came more of an understanding. I learned from my grandparents that you really make do with what you have, and if those people that came up the stairs were now there at dinnertime, you didn't turn them away.

You. as weird as this might say today to a lot of people, you might add another cup of water to the soup or another can of sauce to your goulash or your pasta to make it stretch. And that's always been the thing is like, you, you make it stretch or maybe you weren't expecting them. So now you have salad and a little bit of pasta so that everybody gets a little bit of something to eat or something to just open it up a little bit.

Yeah. To make more for everyone. And it was one of those things that for me, with my grandparents, we were going through a laundry list, ironically laundry was on the list, a laundry list of the things that I learned, that you inherently learned from your mom, I learned them more from my grandma and my grandfather - like canning and gardening and sewing and composting in the eighties, I was composting before it was really popular because that was just something my grandparents did innately, part of my everyday life.

You know, ironing was one of those ironic things that we were talking about that I don't like to do especially, unless I really just want to calm down, because it's one of those like really 'chill' things. I would never have thought I would do that (iron) because I was a modern woman. And then I realized, you know what - this is actually incredibly relaxing just to stand there. Kind of like do It.

Ellie: There's a wonderful satisfaction when you're done - when they're pressed. And I'm like, wait, everything is like bright and shiny and fresh and all those things.

Sam: But it's novel because even though my mom hung out her laundry, I really learned hanging my laundry out from my grandparents because we weren't always at home.

You know, a lot of the time I was at my grandparents growing up. So, I would help with their laundry, hang it out, bring it in, fold it and just having that fresh air smell. And it's interesting because my next-door neighbors now are amazed that I'm doing that with my kids and teaching my kids to hang their laundry out.

Not just as an act that is environmentally friendly, it keeps your clothes fresher in my opinion. I agree. But they (my neighbors) find it interesting because they have kids with children the same age as me, there may be a year or two off, and they're like, no, we're not hanging our clothes outside.

Yeah, no, that's what the dryer's for, like, that's what the sun and the air school.

Ellie: Well, and what's really interesting is some of these developments where they have what is it called? An HOA - homeowners associations. Some of them you're not even allowed to hang them out,

Sam: Which I think is wrong.

Ellie: Oh, I do too. They've made it socially unacceptable.

Sam: Okay. If I want all my clothes to smell nice and fresh from the outside air, I think I should be allowed to do that. The reason why I went from living in a townhouse where I wasn't allowed, I was not allowed, but I went around the rules and I put the drying racks on my deck.

Ellie: Well, and I'm in a small apartment. I handwash a lot of my clothes, but I have a rack in my bedroom, and I turn a fan on when I can't open the door. And when I can, I open the door, I'm in a commercial area where there are offices. So, I don't think they'd like my rack out in the front yard.

Sam: Yeah. I mean, I don't put my underwear on display for my neighbors, but in my backyard...

Ellie: But I still like that. And I've learned that, if I turn the fan on, it's like having a little wind and they dry quickly and very rarely do I have to press them!

Sam: Yeah. And they smell nicer. In my opinion, it doesn't matter how much fabric softener someone uses, I think still better putting your clothes outside.

Ellie: They also don't get as much static because they're not coming out of the dryer.

Sam: There you go.

Yeah. And just, I think that smell of like, just Sunshine, Sunshine, air, I don't know what all the science behind it is, but it, they just always smell better - ionization or something.

Something like that. Like when it's raining. I'd ask my husband, but I'm not going to or I'll get a whole lecture, a whole lecture behind that. I don't really want the chemical engineer in him to be like, Ooh, I can explain. Nope. Thank you. Thank you.

But the whole point of our conversation here is that we really wanted you to think about what are the things that you've learned from the older generations. It could be your parents, your grandparents, your great-grandparents, even your neighbor, yeah. Your neighbor, friends of family that you learned, you adopted and they're practical.

And these things are really great in your everyday life that maybe somebody doesn't think about today. You know, I would have never thought when I was a kid that I'd be baking bread regularly for my family. I just didn't think about it. Even though my grandmother did it, wasn't something that I thought I would do exactly. Because it was already available at the grocery store. Why would I waste my time?

But, I've learned it's not a waste of my time. It's way better for me. It's way better for my family.

So what are those kinds of oddball, practical tips that you've learned from somebody else?

Because we'd love to share them. We love to compile them, let everybody else know because of your stories.

Ellie: We love the stories.

Sam: The stories are wonderful and hearing them is just fabulous.

So yeah. Leave them in our comments. We can't wait to hear from you and have a good one. Have a great Sunday.

See ya.

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