

Significant moment



I sighed and leaned back into my seat. It made a squeaky noise. I had just been given an assignment where I needed to write about a person who had made a great influence in my life. As I sat silently and listened in my seat, my mind went racing to the past, searching for ideas and digging up precious memories. It had been years since I looked back at those memories but I still remember them. By the end of class that day, I had already decided on whom to write about. I remember that momentous time in my life like it was yesterday.

Two years ago on a hot Wednesday afternoon on the month of August, as I was walking home from school, I kept replaying the earlier events of the day in my mind. I was not having a good day. That day during speech class, I failed my first oral presentation. I either could not stop stuttering or talked extremely fast. I was so nervous it felt as if my gut was about to turn itself inside out. Instead of trying to finish my speech, I went back to my seat and glued my head to my desk for the rest of the day.

I was utterly convinced that I just couldn't do it. It took me about at least thirty minutes to get home. By the time I arrived, I was covered in sweat and despite my exhaustion, I was also stressing about possible ways to make up for my last failure. I tried to shake away the thought as I pushed open the front door. Instantly, I knew that my grandfather was in the kitchen. The cool air that was being dispersed by the ceiling fan was mixed with the sweet, soothing aroma of my grandfather's home-made pancakes and freshly brewed coffee.

As much as I wanted some of those delicious pancakes, I wanted more to just lock myself in my room and bury my head in my pillow. I attempted to tiptoe through the living room pass the kitchen and run to my room but he greeted me with a voice so understanding that I found myself seated at the kitchen table without even thinking about it. After he had set the pancakes on the table, he pulled up a chair across me, sat down and put his eyeglasses on. For a man of his age, he always seemed younger than he really is. He wore his usual clothing, the kind he wears on hot days.

His Hawaiian shirt would always have the first three buttons unbuttoned. Along with that, he had on his favorite pair of white shorts. Sometimes, I even wonder if he had been a surfer. He took a sip from his coffee mug and went back to his puzzle book. I took advantage of the silent moment to eat a few pancakes. I hated disappointing him so I decided not to tell him about speech class. After I hastily stuffed myself with eight delicious pancakes and two glasses of iced tea, I stood up slowly making an effort to leave.

However, a single question came from him asking if something was wrong made me want to tell him everything not because I expected him to tell me it was ok, but because I felt guilty not telling him. His voice was also so promising that I knew that he would understand. I sat down in the chair I sat in earlier so that I faced him. After taking four deep, cleansing breaths and centered myself, I told him everything. He was a great listener. Throughout the course of my explanation, he eventually nodded and sometimes responded with " I understand. After I had told him everything, I held my breath and waited for his response. He was quiet for what seemed like a very long time. My forehead started beading up with sweat. I was afraid he might

scold me for being nervous in front of a class of only fifteen students. I was also worried about what he might say about my latest “ F” that I received because of my lack of confidence in myself. I was on the verge of panic when he finally spoke. I was surprised when he laughed. He literally laughed as if I had told him a very funny joke.

Instead of getting angry or disappointed, he patted me on the shoulder and smiled at me reassuringly. He held my hand and told me that I reminded him of himself when he was young. He went through similar situations. It was almost impossible for me to believe that. How can he, the first speaker of the Federated States of Micronesia and the senior pastor of our church, who always touched the hearts of many through simple words, have the same issues as I? He told me that every time he gave a speech or a message, he was always nervous.

He told me that no matter how nervous he felt or how much he believed he couldn't do it, he would always try again. He gave it his all. He kept doing it until he overcame his lack of confidence. No matter how much he wanted to give up, he just kept pushing until he had full faith and trust in himself.

Hearing this, especially from him, whom I respect the most, I promised myself that I will always be persistent in all that I do and try my best to gain self-confidence. His words motivated me and made me see that I already had the persistence and the confidence that I needed.

All I needed to do was believe I could do it. Looking back to that significant moment in my life, I realized that without the encouragement given to me by my grandfather, I do not think I would be as confident and as persistent as I

am today. That day he had helped me become more persistent and more confident. That moment will always be forever branded into my memories as one of the most precious ones. Even though the time we spent talking was for a small amount of time, it made a big difference in my life. I am thankful for having B***** H**** as my mentor and most importantly, as my grandfather.