

Journal entry: donald
halls string too short
to be saved



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Toan-Thang D. Vo RHET 1311 11/ 20/05 Journal Entry: Donald Hall's String too Short to be Saved The bond between a grandparent and grandchild is every unique. Donald Hall's String too Short to be Saved shows us the relationship the author had with his grandparents. Not everyone is as lucky as Donald Hall. He can look back and write with fondness on his childhood summers. What made the relationship between Donald Hall and his grandparents' so special? I think their relationship was special because he made me identify with him. Even though I was raised in Vietnam and was raised in a different culture, the relationship with my grandparents had the same basic elements as the author of String too Short to be Saved. Both sets of grandparents had the same qualities, such as love, patience, and the need to pass on their legacy to their grandchildren. Grandparents with a good relationship with their grandchildren often show these three traits.

Grandparents show their love differently than parents or other family members. Some grandparents are indulgent with material things. For poorer grandparents that is not an option. This does not mean they do not love their grandchildren. They express their love in a different way. Mr. Hall's grandmother cooked special treats for him. Milk and bread before bedtime might not have been a good idea to his parents. Grandchildren can be appreciative of these small gestures. A milk and bread snack can be something fondly remembered forever. No matter the grandparents' lot in life, the fact is, grandparents will indulge their grandchildren a bit. There is something about spoiling a grandchild a grandparent cannot resist.

Parents sometimes find themselves losing patience with their children. On the other hand grandparents rarely lose patience with their grandchildren.

Instead of rushing around to do things efficiently, they show their
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grandchildren how to accomplish mundane task over and over again. Donald Hall showed this in his book by the way he accompanied his grandfather during chores around the farm. His grandfather taught him how to track the wild heifers by their footprints. Where a parent would think a child slowed them down, a grandparent takes the time to show the child footprints. Grandparents are also a little more understanding if a child spills milk, messes up, or loses cows. A parent might be furious, but a grandparent will just shake their head and talk about doing better tomorrow. I think grandparents are more patient because they are older and wiser. The grandparent realizes that as humans no one is perfect.

Another important thing that can be learned from grandparents is their legacy. They can teach you about their life and times. A grandchild can actually be witness to living history. In *String too short to Save* the author's grandfather likes to tell him stories of his life. Not major history lessons, but like the drought in the first chapter. Whereas history books tell of far away events and devastations, Mr. Hall's grandfather made the drought real through his antidote. The funny part is grandchildren like Mr. Hall love to hear their grandparents' tale. A child will listen with great interest to older people's stories. Parents teach children to be polite and listen, but after awhile the children find themselves fascinated with their grandparents' stories. Legacies are not only passed down orally. When Mr. Hall found the box labeled *string too short to be saved* it imparted a lesson from the depression. Save everything, because someday you might need it. It also shows that things that might seem unimportant may become useful later. Even though those strings were too short to save, they allowed Mr. Hall to reminisce about his grandparents after they were gone.

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In the end, grandparents give their grandchildren love, patience and their legacy. I think that Donald Hall showed this very well in his book. It reminded me of the love, patience, and legacy my grandparents imparted to me.