

What i learned from the last lecture



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At the commencement of Randy Pausch's lecture, the "elephant in the room", also known as pancreatic cancer, was introduced. He told the audience he was given approximately 3 to 6 months to live. However, he made it clear that he was not depressed, not in denial and did not want pity. Randy Pausch's only weakness was talking about his wife and children; therefore, that topic was off limits from the beginning. I think by opening the lecture this way, he relieved the heaviness in the atmosphere. This allowed the audience to focus on what he would be presenting.

During his lecture, Randy Pausch spoke of his childhood dreams, many of which he accomplished. There were numerous entertaining and inspirational stories incorporated within the lecture. These stories captivated his audience. Randy Pausch shared fond memories which tied into the points he wanted to get across. Many valuable life lessons were given throughout his lecture. The three that stood out for me was never give up, accept criticism and find the best in everyone. First, I learned to never give up. Brick walls definitely prove how badly we want something as well as being there to stop the people who do not want it badly enough.

Many people tend to give up after hitting a brick wall or two. This is much easier. The successful people are the ones who find a way to surpass the brick wall(s). As much as we would like them to be, things are not handed to a lot of us. Instead of complaining, which is not constructive, we have to work even harder to overcome the brick walls we encounter. Secondly, I learned that critics can be your best friend. Randy Pausch made an excellent point when he said "critics tell you they still love you and care. When you screw up and nobody says anything to you that means they gave up. It is

very hard to accept criticism. People usually walk away complaining about what was said to them, never truly digesting the words that were spoken. If we listen to criticism, we can use it as feedback. This will allow us to learn from our mistakes, better ourselves and make us more valuable. Finally, I learned we should find the best in everyone. It is so easy to point out the flaws in people. Instead of doing this, we should acknowledge their strengths. After all, nobody is perfect even though some people believe they are. It is hard for me to say how I would handle myself if I were in Randy Pausch's situation.

He was a middle-aged, successful college professor who had a beautiful family. He was enjoying spending quality time with his three small children, watching them grow up. This was all abruptly taken from him. I would like to say that I would not feel sorry for myself and try to do some of the things I always wanted to do but never took the time to. Hopefully, I would make my last days/months on Earth happy and memorable ones. I would spend time with my family, reminiscing about the past and creating new memories that will comfort them after I am gone.

However, I could also end up being angry at the world, pity myself and ask why me. I believe this is a situation where you could only guess what strengths you would use to handle yourself if you were in the same circumstance. It is incredible what some people do when faced with imminent death. Randy Pausch was one of those amazing people. Instead of shriveling up, waiting to succumb to cancer, he took his last few months, created fond memories with his family and left his mark on the world with his last lecture.