

# My Mother's Best Advice

My mother, Tonia, is not much for giving lectures on what a person should do. She never taught us lessons that way. Her method of teaching was more conversational. You talked to her about something on your mind and she gave her opinion. But it was always clear that her opinion did not have to be your opinion. So, luckily, I grew up confident in my own opinions and thought processes.

Though her advice was never obvious as saying, "Here's what you should do," if I paid attention, I would get some good rules for living. The following are the three top pieces of advice I've received from my mother.

1. *"It always comes back to you."*

That was my mom's way of saying you reap what you sow. In other words, do what you're supposed and treat people right. She has always believed people should be treated with respect. We should do the same.

2. *"Don't let people talk to you any way they want."*

Again, my mom is big on treating people right. If she heard that you let someone treat you badly and verbally disrespect you, this may be the one time she gives you straight out advice. Stand up for yourself and don't let people walk over you. Nothing good can come of that and you deserve better.

3. *"Be a good neighbor and help out, especially when kids and the elderly are involved."*

This wasn't something she ever said, rather, this is the way she behaves daily. My mom has modeled for all of us (4 of us children altogether), that we are supposed to take care of our neighbors — rejoice with them, grieve with them, spend time with them — because that is what people are supposed to do. And in her job as a school cafeteria manager, she loves to be able to help kids on a daily basis. I can tell you that, at every school where she has worked, her name elicits one of two responses: elation or fear. Most of the time, the kids know my mother's good and serving side, but to the kids who misbehaved, she is the one person you don't want to anger. That's just a matter of respect.

My mother has taught me a lot about life and I continue to learn from her. I'm grateful that her best and most frequent advice revolves around treating people well and having a healthy amount of self confidence and respect.

(By the way, I didn't include a photo of my mom because I value my well-being. She'd get me good if I published a photo of her!)



*(Image via Flickr, PaysImaginaire)*