

The Magic of Compounding Emotional Assets

by vcmorris - Thursday, April 16, 2009

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I believe in assets - of the wallet and of the heart. Let's take a moment to count the one's of the heart and why we should count on them.

I was the recipient of an extremely nurturing form of perfectionism that came from the loving hands of my 20-year old mother. Vivien (Vicki) Baxter married my Dad William (Bill) Dickerson (with her parents' permission) three weeks before her 17th birthday. When I was born, I became her real life doll and she took exemplary care of me. Everything she did for me and with me was as perfectly orchestrated as she could make it.

Perfection had been an important and early discipline for this child bride to master. Though she was the teenage wife of a young Army/Air Force lieutenant who was just a few years her senior, she was a *military wife* now - in the midst of "older women" already in their 30s!

Her perfection for being stylishly appropriate was one of my Mom's greatest assets. She practiced what she learned on me. Where did she learn this grown up sense of the life and style she wanted to provide me? From my Dad.

The story goes: A few weeks after they were married, he arrived home to change into his military dress uniform and pick up Mom for a squadron party. He found her dressed like the 17-year old that she was - in her best pleated skirt, white Angora sweater, matching socks and black Mary Jane shoes. Dad told her she looked beautiful and that he'd like her to save the outfit to wear when just the two of them went out to dinner because in the Air Force there was a sort of *uniform for wives* too. "The *older* women usually wear a cocktail dress," he said. "Let's go get one for you!"

And so it was that every Friday of those early months of my Mother's married life that my Dad would take her shopping for her "uniforms". One Friday it was for hats. Another it was for shoes. The next - for suits. Yet another for purses and so on. And so it was with that history and evolution of my Mother's perfectionism into which I was born and grew up.

My parents have been gone nearly six years now - first Mom then Dad six months later. They'd been married 61 years. This story is always a special memory to me for how tenderly Bill brought Vicki into the world of older - *women of a certain age*.

It was this environment that taught me to recognize the value of different kinds of assets in our lives. Money is an asset and certainly matters. We should make deposits into our savings and retirement accounts on a regular and committed basis.

But memories matter, too. They're priceless assets and should be considered valuable deposits into our emotional bank accounts.

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