

## The Price is Right: A Kid's Story - 09-03-2009

by vcmorris - The Thin Pink Line Blog: women and work, women and leadership, women and careers, women and negotiation, women and money, work/life balance - <http://thethinpinkline.com>

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by vcmorris - Thursday, September 03, 2009

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I am the very proud grandmother of two. I've told you about my grandlittles before. My granddaughter Savannah will be 3 next week. My grandson Morgan turns 7 in December. But more importantly, he started first grade yesterday. The day before that, he and his Mom and I did back-to-school shopping.

The big event was to purchase *the* high top basketball shoes he'd had his eye on and had worked to earn money for all summer. My daughter and her husband had told Morgan if he *wanted* those particular shoes then he *needed* to be able to help purchase them. It was a new lesson about *need versus want*. His wallet was bulging with 39 one dollar bills. The shoes of choice cost \$60.

He led us from the parking lot into the mall and directly to the shoe store. He knew the way. It was a ritual of familiarity developed over the summer months whenever the family made a trip to the local mall.

The moment was here. His foot was measured. His toes stretched well beyond the kids' size 12, even beyond the size 12-1/2. A look of sheer joy and amazement crossed his face when the salesman said: "You need a big boy's size 1!"

He laced and relaced the shoes. He walked in circles. He cruised by the full length mirror. He jumped. He hopped. He declared them "just right".

Now came the math lesson from me - Grandma GoGo.

I explained that his hard earned \$39 meant he was more than half way to being able to buy the shoes. I went on to say that while he *wanted* these particular shoes he also *needed* new shoes for school because his foot had outgrown the ones in his closet. I reminded him of our many conversations about the difference between *needs* and *wants*. If he just *wanted* something, he'd have to go to his piggy bank to pay for it. But if he really *needed* something, I'd always try to help him get it.

My final question to him as we sat together on the bench in the middle of the shoe store with the coveted high top sneakers still on his feet: "How much of the money you've saved are you going to give the salesman for these shoes? He said: "All of it, GoGo." It was both a statement and a question.

I told him I knew he had also been saving the money he'd earned so he could buy a new skateboard. I told him that I'd like to help him stretch the money he had saved so that he wasn't broke. A short conversation then followed as I explained the new meaning of the word "broke" as it applies to money.

Then I told him that I thought he should pay for the toe space that came with his new, big boy size 1 shoes. "One dollar per toe," I told him, "and I'll pay for the rest of the shoe."

He thought for a moment: "You mean I give 10 of my dollars and you give 50 of your dollars, GoGo?" I

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smiled, nodded my head and watched my grandson carefully and deliberately peel off his contribution and give it to the salesman. He stood and watched me pay the rest, said "thanks, GoGo" - not once but twice, and asked if he could "break them in and wear them out of the store."

As he led the way to our next stop which was the store that had back-to-school supplies - Morgan hopped, skipped, walked in circles and declared that his new shoes were "pretty cool" and that his toes were *really* happy.

Ah yes, the price is definitely right when it brings such a sense of ownership.

Here's to your health and wealth!

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