



CAPITAL 5
— FAMILY WEALTH —

Teaching & Learning with Grandchildren: Harnessing the Gift of Perspective

It seems all around us, people are talking about how time flies. Each calendar year seems to pass more quickly than the previous. Even when we're taking time to enjoy our days and grow intellectually, life seems to progress at warp speed. Fortunately, amidst all this, many of us still find time to take mental pause and retain perspective on challenges, changes and achievements.

Even if it's during a workout routine or in traffic on the way home, we tend to ponder things. Somewhere along the line, we learned that being contemplative can disallow us from making the same mistake twice, or allow us to derive greater success or satisfaction from the mile markers of daily life. Consider how, if or when the young people in our lives will learn to embrace the gift of perspective. And remember how much you have to offer them in terms of instilling the habits of growth and contemplation early in life. Often times we can learn from them just as we are intending to teach.

Consider taking a few hours to work through the following exercise with one of your kids, or a grandchild, niece or nephew.

- ▲ If you didn't worry or wonder about money, what would change for you?
- ▲ What's the most important thing that happened to you yesterday?
- ▲ What's the most important thing that happened to you today?
- ▲ What's the most important thing that's coming up tomorrow?

After they've shared the answers to the questions above, delve a little deeper on each answer. Here are some follow-up questions...

- ▲ Why is that the most important thing?
- ▲ What did you learn from it when it happened?
- ▲ What are you thinking about now?
- ▲ What would you do differently next time?
- ▲ What would you like to remember about it for a very long time?
- ▲ Is there anyone you could say thank you to for helping you have that experience?
- ▲ How do you think it will feel for that person when you say thank you?

If they are old enough to write, encourage them to write their answers in a notebook. If not, consider documenting their answers for them on oversized sheets of paper, and having them draw pictures that support their thinking. Consider using this exercise on a recurring basis – weekly or monthly. If you have phone conversations with the young people in your life, consider using a modified version of the exercise to stay in touch with their lives and sustain a connection to their thinking. You may surprise yourself to see how much you learn about yourself and your own experiences in the process.

As always, please feel free to call with any questions regarding this or other important topics.

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