

Remo C. Bertugli Memorial Essay

When I think of a time I have had a positive effect on someone's life I think of a lady that I met when I was very little. I would go with my aunt to see my great grandfather, Pap. I would go with her when I was young and continued to go as I grew older. I would visit him at least three times a week sometimes more. I would go and see him; but I also would visit with the many other residents living there.

There was always this one lady named Mable that I was drawn to and I would spend time with. Each time I went in, I would go see my pap and then go play cards with her. She definitely knew her card games, and taught me just some of the games that she knew while I was there. She taught me how to play solitaire, go fish and even checkers. Her favorite game to play was go fish so we would play it and invite the other residents to play with us. She also loved listening to me play the piano. I was just beginning to learn to play but she always made me feel like I was the best piano player.

I went many times with my aunt to see my great grandfather and every time can remember something from each. I will never forget the time I went in and they all had masks and beads on. The amount of laughter coming from the room cannot be described. That night we passed out food to them, played many games, danced, and just had good time. I have many great memories of my Pap and Mable.

One time that I went in to visit I had been doing everything like usual and then Mable said I will be right back. She went to her room and came back with a jewelry box. She said "I always wanted to give this to my grandkids but since I have not seen them in awhile I would like to give it to you since you remind me so much of my granddaughter". She went on to say that the jewelry box had been passed down to her from her mother and she had now given it to me to pass on to my family. That day I left there thinking of how much of an impact I had left on her.

I continued to come and see my Pap. Although he was not getting any better. He started to stay in his bed all day and only saying a few words here and there. Mable knew that my Pap was not getting any better. He later passed away from Alzheimer's. My aunt did not want to be reminded of him and the way he was towards the end, so going back there was difficult for her. Once we stopped going, I felt like a part of me was missing not only my Pap but also my dear friend Mable.

Two years went by, of me occasionally asking to go see Mable. When I was around twelve I got what I had been wishing for. My aunt found out where she was staying, because she was moved to another home. On the way there, we had picked up some things from Wal-Mart and made a basket for her. Once we were on our way it felt like forever to drive to see her. We pulled in and it finally hit me, I was so excited to see her that I had forgotten to put the picture I was going to give her in her basket. We then got everything ready, and walked in. Once we got to her door we could see her sitting on her couch watching the news. I knocked on the door and finally walked in. There are no words to even start to explain the look on her face. I gave her the basket and we sat there and looked through it. There were cards, mints, chocolate pretzels, and many things that she loved. The card was the only thing left in the basket. She opened it up and saw the picture in it. The picture was of us sitting down playing solitaire. We spent a couple of hours sitting there playing go fish and just talking. My aunt then said that we had to get home before dark. Mable then gave me her number to call her whenever. She then said goodbye and so did I. We gave our last hugs and then said goodbye. As we were walking out I felt like that would be the last time I would get to see her. The drive home was quiet. I called her a couple times after this visit and would talk for awhile. A few months later, I got the news from my aunt that Mable had passed away. When I heard this news I felt like I had lost my closest friend.

When I think about someone I made an impact on in their lives I think of Mable. But when I start to think about how I affected her life, I realize that she too had a great impact on my life. I was trying to reach out and help someone living by themselves in a rest home and that was not in the best of health, but in return I made a great friend that I will remember forever. Even though our lives

were so completely different, I still felt like I connected with her. I learned a very valuable lesson from this experience, my intention was to help another person whom was lonely, but in return she gave back to me so much more.