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IN SEARCH OF A ROLE MODEL

BY:

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Oblivious

Quote, "In my credulous search for good character to emulate, I passed hers by."

I've had many role models in my life, none greater than my mother.

It seems odd that I didn't recognize her magnificent qualities earlier in life. I suppose as a young adult, I wasn't consciously searching for someone to follow.

I recall days when I was an awkward preteen; she offered hugs and encouragement. Sometimes, her kindness rubbed me the wrong way and I would shake off her concern. She couldn't possibly understand how I felt.

Although I loved and respected my mother, during my teenage years, I didn't recognize her as a role model. She was my mother; someone whom I felt didn't really know all that much about life. As far as I was concerned, she had a lot to learn. In my credulous search for good character to emulate, I passed hers by.

Sure, I recognized her kind heart, knew her peers and fellow church members respected her. I even knew she made sacrifices for me. It was her job as a mother, or so I thought.

I didn't know why it was important to learn, nor did I like it, but my mother taught me how to clean a house - *really* clean a house. I recall days when my sister and I washed down baseboards, doors, and sometimes the walls in

our house. When I dusted, I wasn't allowed to run a dust cloth over the top of a piece of furniture and stop there. I had to polish it all the way from the top down to the legs and sides. I learned to how to sweep a floor, mop, wax, iron and a million other things to numerous to mention.

Surprising Awareness

Unconsciously, I noticed her mannerism, her actions and soon began to respond and emulate her, still my search for a role model continued. I never considered her for that title.

When I was sixteen and had passed the written test, I received my drivers permit. I was satisfied with that, never concerned about taking the drivers test, obtaining my actual drivers license. My siblings had theirs, I didn't need one. They took me wherever I needed to go.

My mother was the one to encourage me softly, and gently to take the drivers test. Never pushing, just encouraging; I didn't see the importance of having one, she did. When I finally received my license, she allowed me to drive her car until I could afford my own. This one act on her part allowed me to become independent. I no longer needed my siblings to take me places. It was at this point I

realized my mother knew what she was doing. It was a surprising awareness.

Early in my marriage, I called my mother asking how to do many things such as, how to cook a turkey, make tea, freeze corn, clean something, or how to get somewhere. She always knew the answer. When I had an unpleasant task to do, she volunteered either to do it or to show me how. She knew how to hang wallpaper, paint, remove wallpaper, how to cover up blemishes or rough spots in the house, how to decorate, deep clean anything, how to cook anything; she was all knowing.

Intellect from my Mother

Quote, "Her close relationship with the Lord is her strongest characteristic."

During my pregnancy, my mother's compassion and understanding never failed me. She was there in the labor hall, giving my husband a break. After I took my baby home, she came daily to help. She was there guiding me, showing me things to do or not to do.

Later, when our children were older, my siblings and I would drop our children off at her house on our way to

work. Every morning before getting on the bus to go to school, the children ate homemade gravy and biscuits, scrambled eggs, bacon or sausage and sometimes pancakes or homemade doughnuts. They climbed on the bus with their stomachs full and the knowledge they were loved-unconditionally.

I learned how to be a disciplinarian from my mother. I can't count the times I have used her line "Just wait until your father gets home," on my own child. She solved most problems herself. We were spanked, punished, scowled and sometimes threatened. If those things didn't work, that's when we *waited until daddy got home*. On those days, we dreaded to see his truck pulling into the driveway; we knew she would follow through with her threat.

My Mother, My Role Model

I'm not really sure when it happened, somewhere along the way, my mother became my role model. It wasn't a conscious decision on my part, somehow it just happened. I needed someone to follow, someone whom I could place my trust and to become my confidante. She willingly yet unknowingly became that person for me.

Now, she is the first person I ask when seeking an answer to any problem. If I need to know something, I pick

up the phone and call her. One would think at this point in my life, I would know everything she knows. Well, I don't. Her wisdom far surpasses anything I've learned about life.

I can count on her to pray for me without asking her to do so. Somehow, she knows what I need. Her intuition and wisdom are attributes I covet.

Her close relationship with the Lord is her strongest characteristic. To my mother, that relationship is the key to successful living. When it comes to her family, she is a prayer warrior. Her one desire in life is for each one to develop a closer or more personal relationship with the Lord. As far as she is concerned, there isn't a problem where the solution can't be found in Christ. Because of her, I have that same type relationship with Him.

My Best Friend

Quote, "Habitually, we talk several times before retiring for the evening."

My mother is seventy-four and still gets around very well. Even at her current age, she continues to serve people in our neighborhood. She cooks meals for shut-ins and the sick people in our community, delivering food,

making visits and encouraging them. Her homemade dumplings are a hit with many people.

She still takes care of me too. Many days when I am at work, she calls to let me know she is cooking my supper. If I am sick, she worries about me as if I was a child.

I do things for her too, trying to make her life easier. We spend a lot of time together. The one thing we both enjoy is our Saturday mornings. Sometimes we go yard selling, out for breakfast or visiting friends or family. Generally, we do not allow anything or anyone to interfere with our weekly Saturday morning outing. Occasionally, if my siblings are lucky, we might invite one of them along.

Our nightly ritual is for one of us to call the other. As soon as I arrive home from work, if I don't call her immediately, she telephones me and wants to know why I haven't called yet. It's a joke between us. It's almost like a competition.

We take time to report the happenings of our day to each other. Before ending our conversation, one of us will say,

"Call me if you hear something I need to know."

Habitually, we talk several times before retiring for the evening. We often laugh about calling when we have nothing new to report. We think it is funny, but neither

of us is willing to discontinue our ritual. We *have* to talk; each of us drawn to the other.

My Mentor

My mother is the strongest Christian woman in my life. Someday, I hope to be just like her. I'm already working toward this goal. I already look and act like her and some say, I sound like her when I talk. Sometimes I catch myself saying phrases that remind me of her.

Now, occasionally I accompany her on her visits to the sick. I will cook something too and off we go. She has a true heart for service. I suppose this is why, I've been involved in mission trips and why I try and help by serving others in my church and community. She and I both serve on a committee at church, cooking and serving food for the bereaved members.

She is still teaching me to show compassion, gentleness and be patient and kind to people.

No more looking for a role model, I had one right under my nose the whole time; look how long it took me to find out she was the one.

