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Training Wheels

Chibeza Nyirenda

Xavier University of Louisiana, pathways@xula.edu

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Training Wheels

Dignity is something that is better shown than told, having a sense of pride and self-respect, even when no one else respects you, and sticking to your beliefs and your morals when all else fails. Dignity is something that is only found in oneself.

When I think of dignity I look to my mom, everything she does is done selflessly. My mom rarely has her own interest in mind, but it's ironic because her children's interest is also her best interest. Selfless and worthy of homage, she's my idol and who I hope to be one day. She works a job where a majority of her peers make enough to live a very wealthy lifestyle, and she makes enough to do the same. However, the sacrifices she makes inhibit her ability to live the same way as they. She does not mind it, though. There have been countless times that her friends stopped by the house and critiqued the way we live, but she takes pride in herself and the lifestyle she chose, even when they don't. She finds more assurance in looking after us than she does in looking out for herself, and material things are something she has never cared for to begin with.

I want to be just like her for my children, but I also want to repay her myself. She has ignited a sense of pride and dignity in me that will continue to go on as a legacy throughout our family. Whenever I am looking for the motivation to finish or push through, I think of the people I do it for, rather than of myself, and I think that is something that my mother has instilled in me.

I lost my father at age sixteen, but I was only blessed to really get to know him for two years of my life. He was the same way. Both my parents sacrificed so much in order for me to live the lifestyle I live, and at times I would take it for granted. They were my training wheels for the real world, and sometimes I would get ahead of myself and try to ride alone, only to realize I

have so much more to learn. I believe I will never stop learning. The lifestyle I'm referring to is to have the freedom to choose whether to go to school or to drop out and chase other dreams, the freedom of choice. Some of my peers don't even have the same opportunities as I, but when you grow up with parents like mine, it's easy to look at simple things as blessings and view them as necessities, rather than privileges. Some kids have it tough because they have to grow up riding alone rather than having training wheels their whole lives. Due to this they fall more often and it's harder for them to keep getting up. But when you are able to have the blessing of having a family that's going to instill multiple positive traits, such as dignity, compassion, fairness, and equality, it's easier to get back up even when you do fall because you know how many more people you can help get back up themselves. When you have dignity, it becomes less about you, even less about your family, and more about everyone as a whole.

As I said, it begins with yourself; you cannot help anyone until you can help yourself. However, once you can help yourself, I feel like you're obligated to help those who can't. Therefore, I believe the simple definition of "dignity" does not do it justice. Dignity may just be self-respect but it creates so many more things. Dignity is more than just pride. Dignity is staying true to yourself and others regardless of outside circumstances, and I am a firm believer of dignity not being able to genuinely be taught from one person to another, but rather only to be passed down from experiences in our life. Dignity is also passed down from someone else's actions; therefore dignity extends from having self-respect to having respect for others as well. It is compassion, fairness, and equality all in one. It's not just what keeps you rolling but others as well; dignity is the training wheels of life that is experienced through the respect others show for you.