

*Do you know how to take a fish off the hook?*

When I was younger, there were always certain chores my family wanted me to do. It consisted of doing the dishes, cleaning my room, writing in cursive, and helping my Grandpa gather vegetables in the garden. My grandmother was the smartest woman I knew. As a young girl, I always wanted to be like her growing up. She enjoyed reading and seemed to have an opinion about everything. Her work ethic was contagious. It is what made me the person I am today. Having the opportunity to grow up with my grandparents, showed me how different our generations are. The older generations are built differently because of how they raised children. They made sure they knew how to survive. One of my favorite things my grandmother taught me was I never needed a man to be successful in life. As a child, her and my grandpa made sure I knew how to change a tire, taught me how to cook, and how to bait a hook. My grandparents always said, “if you have someone else take your fish off the hook, you should not be fishing in the first place”. I believe both males and females should know how to take care of themselves without relying on someone else. Yes, I have a husband and I do depend on him, but he knows I do not need him to do certain things for me. He knows I can mow the lawn, take out the trash, and open my door. Adulting is tough, but if you find the right person to “adult” with, you will be able to conquer the world. Your significant other should never feel like it is up to one or the other to make the other one happy. Both parties should have that fire inside of them to make each other happy. It should not be 70-30, it is 50-50. That is the key to a strong relationship. Just ask my grandparents.

Growing up with a strong, independent, and opinionated woman makes me think very differently. While all the other children I grew up with not knowing what was going on in the

world or what adult responsibilities were, my grandmother made sure I knew. I always had to watch the news when I would wake up first thing in the morning and bring my grandpa his morning coffee. They would always wake me up earlier so I could spend time with them before I had to get ready for school. While I hated it then, I look back now and wish it could have lasted longer. My grandmother always would explain everything to me if I didn't understand and would be able to know if I didn't understand by just looking at me. Most adults are terrified to tell children anything as if it will hurt them. It is possible that it is bad for me, but I feel like it taught me a lot as a child. My grandmother would always stand her ground if she was to argue about something and would know she was right. If my grandmother was to argue with you then that already means she had done her research and prepared this fight well before you ever said anything. Most of the men in my family are very old fashioned and don't agree with women having opinions about certain things. This didn't matter to my grandmother, she made sure everyone knew what she was thinking. I believe this is why my Grandfather fell in love with her. He never met anyone that didn't care what other people thought because everyone in our family doesn't say anything.

Seeing relationships growing up was never the greatest thing in my life. All relationships in my life would always end in divorce or friendships would never last. I believe this made me terrified of relationships for the longest time. I used to always say I was never going to get married. When I met my husband, it didn't take me long to realize I wanted to be with him and that I was tired of dealing with anyone else. But this took a little while for me to learn how to love myself. For a while, I didn't think I knew how to do anything and needed someone to do things for me. I grew up knowing how to take care of myself but as a teenager, it drifted off. Most teenagers go through this but some don't come back from this. When women grow up, they

eventually get friends and fall for peer pressure. Most women eventually think they should be like everyone else, and try to go along with it. Then they turn into women who don't know how to do anything and feel like a man should do certain things for them as if they feel entitled to not have to do those things. This eventually makes them think that they have to have a man to be happy. Before I was with my husband I lived on my own and took care of myself and no one else except my dog. This made me grow as a woman and made me love myself and find how great I am on my own without anyone else. This makes my marriage great because there aren't certain roles for either of us. There are no expectations for certain things to be done by either of us because all the chores are our responsibilities.

All women and men should learn how to take care of themselves before bringing other people into their lives. I believe everyone should know how to love themselves before trying to get into a committed relationship.