



FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS

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Detroit, Michigan: a city filled with baseball games, concerts, and huge corporate buildings. Yet this was not true of the city thirty years ago. My dad, who was born and raised in Detroit, didn't grow up in the bustling city of today. He grew up in a neighborhood where a person could not walk down the street without being stunned by the sound of gunshots or being asked for money. His parents were avid smokers and didn't care much about what accomplishments their kids made. So, he really didn't have the best of role models. But he still became my role model.

My dad started working at age 10, which is a very young age to start a job, but he worked hard because he wanted to live a better life than his parents. He spray-painted addresses on the driveways of homes for five dollars per house. At such a young age, my dad had an obvious entrepreneurial streak. He had a unique drive and passion to do everything with excellence. Following high school, he attended college and paid for his bills and tuition completely by himself. He majored in marketing and advertising and graduated with a degree. A couple of years later, advertising became a lackluster job for him. He quit advertising and moved on in search of a new opportunity.

After marrying my mom, he wanted to start a campground, just like her parents had done. They found one, but it was run down and looked like it had been deserted. No grass grew, and there was little greenery. It had one rustic cabin and no play structures. But, where other people saw nothing at all, my dad saw an opportunity. Taking a chance, he bought the campground on a loan. Multiple people told him that his dream was pointless or stupid. More people told him that his business would never be successful, and that it would fail quickly. My dad didn't listen and pressed on.

One of my dad's biggest supporters in his life was his dad. Even though he wasn't around for much of my dad's childhood, he always told my dad to follow his dreams. Sadly, in 2018, his dad died of a seven-year long fight to cancer. My dad was grieving a

lot over the loss and eventually consulted a therapist, which was hard for him to do. He still gets sad about it every so often, but he has learned how to remember him with happiness. I could never imagine losing a parent or trying to come to terms with their death. With a newfound determination, he worked to make the campground better than ever. Years later, he and my mom now own a successful business together.

In the end, my dad is my hero because no matter how many challenges he has faced, he has always found a way to persevere and work hard. He is an amazing entrepreneur, and he always inspires me to follow my dreams.

