



## Personal Essay Grandma's Influence

My grandmother loved the morning sunshine. We would go out where, my grandmother would sit in the wheelchair, and I would sit below her knees from where I would feed her. On a quick glance, one would think she was feeding me. Every time I would finish feeding her she would always thank me, addressing me as her “good nurse.” Even when I jokingly protested she would touch my face feebly and tell me that I had a nurse’s heart. My grandmother was physically disabled; her condition began with the loss of mobility and as time progressed her speech became continually slurred. Though she had difficulties with moving her arms, she would always get the strength to touch my cheeks as she thanked her “good nurse.” From a young age, I became my grandmother’s willing help. Taking care of my grandmother gave me immense pleasure. The way she would radiate in her eyes as she called me “good nurse” warmed my heart and left a lasting impression on me. The relationship between me and my grandmother has been the biggest influence on my choice to pursue my studies at Salem State University.

In due course, thank you to my grandma; I earned the “good nurse” nickname. I played nurse while my grandmother played patient for so long that it became a daily routine. My grandmother was a compassionate person. She would brag that I had inherited her kind heart. From the first day, I began attending school, grandma’s goodbye words would be a reminder to extend compassion. One day I came home, and as we sat, “nurse” feeding “patient,” as usual, she asked me about the career I wished to pursue in future. With all innocence, I simply answered that I wanted to extend compassion. Grandma’s eyes lit with youthful optimism. Despite the joyful tears rolling down her wrinkling face, a satisfactory smile was plastered across her face as she congratulated me on my career wishes. Grandma never missed a chance to boast, that evening she declared to the family that she always knew I would become a

nurse. Regardless of the fact that I did not mention my profession, she translated extension of compassion to mean nurse.

Eventually, I had to leave home for college. The particular day was marked with bittersweet feelings, especially regarding my grandmother. She could not stop crying despite her earlier assurance that she would not cry. The previous night, grandma and I had the lengthiest conversation of all time. We sat outside, under an amazing sky; decorated by a full moon and millions of shiny stars. I revealed to her my intention to pursue medicine in the university and promised her that I would work hard to achieve that dream. Grandma was genuinely happy for me. However, I could see the sadness in her eyes; they seemed to be longing for something. Though the radiance in her eyes was gone, grandma still smiled at me through her sadness. I knew she would feel lonely without me, but seeing her so forlorn broke my heart. I never knew how much I had become attached to grandma. My heart broke for our relationship and candid conversations. Despite our mixed feelings, grandma told me to shine brighter than the stars in the sky. We hugged so tightly that, it felt like the last hug, as I shook such thoughts from my head, a dark cloud covered the sky and the bright moon and stars were no longer visible. It was late and “nurse” and “patient” had to retire to bed.

While at school, I received the worst news in my life. My grandmother’s condition had been unstable ever since I had left, but nothing had prepared me for the news of her death. I felt as if the air had been knocked out of me. I felt so guilty that I could taste it through my tears. I will never forget how vulnerable I felt and the feebleness within my legs. The news hit me so hard I thought I would not recover. I blamed myself for it and almost gave up on my aspirations to become a nurse. How could I thrive without the one person that helped me realize my passion for nursing? On the day of grandma’s burial, I remembered how she prided herself in my passion for medicine. My mother had always teased her that the way she bragged about it, it would be thought that we shared the dream, to which she would consent. I realized that though she was gone, our dream still lived on. Her inspiration still lived on; I had

to spread the ‘compassion.’” Grandma’s death may have blown the air out of me, but reflecting on our moments together made me stronger and more determined.

After grandma’s burial, that night I researched for Undergraduate Institutions for nursing where I found out about Salem University. The university is well renowned for its nursing programs in Boston area. Looking at the university’s cost, I felt assured that it was the place for me to pursue my longtime dream of becoming a nurse. I imagined my grandmother looking at the University and nodding her approval of the professional and homely aura reflected by the University’s complex. Overall, Salem State University has all the qualities that I consider robust for my achievement and excellence in the nursing profession.