



# BROOKLYN\_BORN

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## An old lady's advice – the view from the far side

Sunday, November 18, 2012

My grandmother was 65 when I was born. She seemed old to me from my earliest memory. Now I'm 65 and I have 6 grandchildren ages 11-18. I wonder if I look old to them.

She arrived in the USA in 1900 alone at age 17 on a ship that still had sails along with an engine. I saw a picture of it at Ellis Island. Today I can see photos of outer space provided by astronauts on the International Space Station. "Baba" and I led different lives. "Baba" literally means "old woman" in Slovak – kind of loses something in translation, doesn't it?

Widowed twice with 6 children, she worked "outside the home" as a cleaning lady – long hours, low pay. No wonder she never really learned to speak English. There was little time to "improve" herself. She did the best she could until her death at age 93 still living in her own home (rented), cooking on a coal stove which also provided the only heat.

I had it easier. However, my demanding job, 3 children and their activities, plus a stressful daily commute didn't leave much free time either. I thought I did the best I could.

Looking back there were things I could have done better. I've written about some of them previously. 50 years ago Baba was warning me to avoid the new stuff they were putting in food. She didn't know the word "processed" but she knew food was changing.

I spent summers with her as a child since my parents wanted me to get out of "the city" as much as possible. I walked with her to "town" everyday and to nearby "blueberry hill" to get the main ingredient of her pies. If you know northeastern PA, those "hills" are steep! We always picked more than we needed so we would sell the rest to a man from "the city" who bought them for commercial bakeries. 25 cents a QUART! I had \$300 in my bank account by age 12. That's a lot of blueberries!

When I was upset about something, she would tell me "nebudz taka" – don't be like that. She didn't mean I should just accept the situation, but I shouldn't let it get the best of me. "Don't stress your heart"

I have more time now to follow Baba's advice. I regret that I didn't make more of an effort to do it sooner. I well know how hard it is with competing demands on your time.

I hope all you young women (and men) will make a healthy lifestyle a priority. It's not perfection we're seeking, but each day to be better than we were. These years count too.

Related blog: Grandma said: "always get a fresh chicken".

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**ROOSTER72**

Grandmothers have so much to offer - if only we would listen.  
Nice blog, thanks.



3130 days ago



**MNNICE**

I so agree that when we are busy with our jobs, children, husbands, homes, and all that goes along with it, we do NOT take time for ourselves. I see many young women in their 30s gaining weight, and I can totally understand why because I made the same mistakes with eating what was quickest and easiest and not taking time to exercise. It always makes me glad to see the young women on here realizing that their own health is important and finding the time to fit "themselves" into their busy schedules. I certainly wish I hadn't waited until I was almost 50 to take care of me!

3130 days ago



**SUZYMOBILE**

I think there's no doubt that 65 today isn't the 65 that we remember! And the good thing is, your kids and grandkids probably don't see you as old either. Just last night, Bill's oldest daughter said, "Sue sure doesn't look 65!" so she's still operating under the old perception that 65 is "old lady" status. Someday, though, that will change, and as they say, 75 will become the new 65.

(And this is the kind of blog I was talking about.)

3130 days ago



**CELIAMINER**

You really do write well! You could write a book from your blogs. Thanks!

3130 days ago



**CD3468195**

Great blog, I wish I paid more attention to my grands growing up!

3130 days ago



**COCK-ROBIN**

Wonderful! And you're right. They have a lot to teach us if we'll listen.

3130 days ago



**TWEETYKC00**

Our elders do have the knowledge and their own unique ways that speak of their own years of struggle and it always seems that we take too long to listen to the wisdom they try to share. Better late than never, though.

3130 days ago



**IDAHOFLOWER**

It is nice to remember those wonderful times.

Keep sparking.

3130 days ago



**SWEDE\_SU**

thank you for sharing! your grandma was a wise lady.

3130 days ago



**MISCHAKEO**

Lovel blog. What wonderful memories of your gtrandmother and summers.

Good advice for the young people to live a healthy life now!

3130 days ago



**CD10259955**

Don't you sometimes wish you could turn back the clock! When we are young, we think the wise words of our elders are "fool's talk" - now we know better!!!! She sounds like she was an amazing woman!!!

Thanks for sharing these wonderful memories!!!

3130 days ago





**WONDERWOMAN**

Just beautiful.  
3130 days ago



**JOYNEW**

What beautiful memories!  
3130 days ago



**SAGELADY2**

Thanks for the reminders we forget about. Grandama's are always special, no matter what the decade they come in.  
3130 days ago



**GOPINTOS**

Loved this blog! Thank you for sharing!  
3130 days ago



**BOILHAM**

What wonderful memories of your Baba. How much younger we are today than our peers of 50 years ago. I love your blogs!  
3130 days ago



**WILSONWR**

Great story. We do learn a lot from our "elders" - hopefully we can pass that knowledge down to the youth of today.  
3130 days ago



**CD8113065**

I so hope you never stop blogging. Thank you, once again for starting my day with a good feeling.  
3130 days ago



**CD2516069**

Enjoyed your blog.  
The processing of our food these days has really taken away the healthiness of food and the taste. My mom always said "you can not make a good pan of Dressing if you can not make a good pan of cornbread" Well with the ingredients they put in cornmeal (or rather take out) leaves the wonderful taste of cornbread only a fond memory. We use to eat it like it was cake. And with a pat of butter, it was divine. Jiffy meal don't measure up.

The things our ancestors could teach us...  
3130 days ago



**CD11026554**

What words of wisdom - from Baba and you! "It's not perfection we're seeking, but each day to be better than we were".....how very true.  
3130 days ago



**CD2244567**

YOUR AS YOUNG AS YOU FEEL. ONE DAY AND ONE STEP AT A TIME WE WILL DO THIS WE ARE WORTH IT. REMEMBER TO TRACK DAILY YOUR FOOD AND FITNESS TO BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE. WE ARE ALL HERE FOR YOU IF YOU NEED ANYTHING AT ALL JUST ASK. TAKE CARE AND GOOD LUCK ON YOUR SPARK JOURNEY.  
3130 days ago



**FITFOODIE806**

So glad I have found you on spark! Thanks for this great blg this morning. It sounds like you have many good memories of a cool lady :)  
3130 days ago



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