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THE PROGRAM

LETTERS ON LEADERSHIP

- LETTER ON LEADERSHIP #80 -



Dear Hazel,

I am typing this because I am not as smart as you and my handwriting stinks! My entire family and I miss you dearly and can't wait to see you when you return. I want to hear all the stories from your amazing summer. I am so excited for you and proud of you. I know you aren't my daughter (you already have a great father and mother), but I sure hope Anastasia grows up to be like you.

I personally know how difficult it is to leave home, do something you have never done before, try to make new friends, and have a great attitude the whole time while you are far outside your comfort zone. It can be very lonely. I know I have been lonely when in those same situations. I love you because you are a great young woman, but these are the reasons why I am so proud of you. You are getting outside your comfort zone and growing as a person because of it. Very few young women or young men do so, and even fewer adults. But not Hazel! You did it while hunting wild boars in Texas and you are doing it right now. I hope you are as proud of yourself as I am of you.

As for Team Kapitulik, we are all great. Axel is playing flag football this summer. He is playing great but lost his iPad privileges for a week for showboating too much during his game last night. I love him with my whole heart, though, and am proud of how hard he has worked to make himself into such a great athlete. He just needs to prove it by playing his best, not doing stupid dances after a big-time catch. But we all make mistakes and just need to learn from them. I still allowed him to eat dessert last night... 😊 Anastasia is great. She spends most of her summer naked. I would do the same except Mrs. Kapitulik would yell at me to put my clothes on, ALL summer long so it isn't worth it. Her swimming is getting really good, but she is fighting me on learning to ride her bike (Anastasia, not Mrs. Kapitulik).

Before signing off, I want to take this opportunity to give you 3 pieces of advice, if that is ok with you?

1. Be long-term greedy: never make a short-term "pleasure" decision at the expense of long-term happiness. This usually means you never do the "easy" thing. Do the thing that scares you a little bit, the thing that challenges you and gets you outside your comfort zone (like you are doing right now by being at camp). Remember, discomfort need not be physical. It could mean not going along with the crowd if you know what the crowd is saying or doing is wrong. Things like that are mentally and emotionally uncomfortable, but even more important for your happiness. Do those things in your life that you must sacrifice for in order to achieve them. A little bit of discomfort and sacrifice will lead to long-term happiness. It's why a lot of people aren't truly happy.
2. Reputation is what other people think of you. This isn't unimportant, but never forget that character is who you are. Most people spend time working on their reputation. It is a fool's errand. Instead, focus on your character. A strong one makes us happy. Admittedly, having a steadfast focus on always doing what's right and being the best person you can be might get lonely, but I know you have the courage to face that challenge.
3. Always remember - as President Theodore Roosevelt once said, "it is not the critic who counts, but the person in the arena." As you go through life challenging yourself, you will fall short sometimes. You will suffer defeat. Remember defeat isn't failure. Failure is never getting in the arena in the first place. Get in the arena and then don't listen to the critics who don't have the courage to get in it in the first place. They will probably be numerous.

4. I was a C student, and I didn't know much about Math, English, Science, or any school subject (other than Gym), but I do know something about grit and toughness, courage, kindness, and beauty (inside and out). You embody all of them. I know it! I hope you do too! If not, or if you ever waiver, please call me so I can remind you.

And always, ALWAYS listen to your parents!

Love,
Mr. Kapitulik

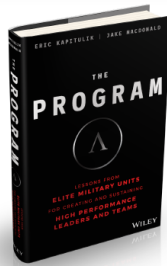


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