



The advice you need to live the life you want

Just In Case....

Life, family and business experiences have taught me a number of lessons in life.

We all have strengths and weaknesses and one of my strengths (which I have no doubt overcomes weaknesses) is I've never been afraid of hard work. Like many, I'm a grafter, always have been: I studied hard to get to university, I always worked hard in the jobs I secured, and put in extra hours as were necessary often at the expense of family and personal time.

I come from a long line of grafters. My Dad's Parents both worked hard, and retired comfortably, with final salary pensions and cash in the bank. My Dad continued the tradition of hard work, being a talented engineer and securing work with GKN for most of his working life.

My grandparents never spent their cash, they had no need to. They lived a simple life and their pensions more than met their outgoings. They were not tight, they were of the post-war generation, with rationing and austerity no doubt the foundation of their prudence like so many of their generation. Extravagance was alien to them.

My granddad loved cricket and I have very fond memories of watching test matches on TV with him in the 1980s, with us largely getting beat (particularly when the West Indies were touring). So, life changed when the BBC lost the rights to cover the cricket to Sky. Would my Granddad pay the £30 per month for a sky subscription? No way. So, he no longer watched the live action, he watched Teletext, which got updated every two or three minutes....could he afford Sky? Yes of course...but this was an extravagance!



So, they never spent their money. They helped Dad as any supportive Parent would particularly as my brother and I became expensive with university, cars etc... But their cash kept on moderately growing....that was for Dad.

When my Granddad died, my Grandma carried on the custom of nursing the nest egg for my Dad, an inheritance for him when she died. And, Dad too was building a nest egg for his future.

The only problem was my Dad did not have a future.



For further information please call 0121 313 1370 or go to www.henwoodcourt.co.uk

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Having worked for almost 40 years surrounded by factory walls my Dad passed away a few months after his 60th Birthday, before his own Mum.

So, this nest egg that my Grandma and Grandad had nursed for so long for my Dad would never be spent as it was intended. And my Dad's nest egg that would go to my Mum that was meant for them to use in retirement would not get spent as was intended.

Now my Mum is nursing that for me and my Brother and the custom continues.....

My Dad passed away almost ten years ago. Looking back, in the midst of building Henwood Court, long hours, ups and downs that accompany a business start-up, I got surrounded within my own factory walls: obsessed with work, perfection, service and in the early year's survival. Trying to be all things to all people. Stretching myself to exhaustion and near burn out, doing too much myself, with a selfless commitment to my business and our clients. A day did not go by when I did not think about work, and a day would rarely go by when I did not work. There were days when I was at work when I should have been home, and when I was at home I was often preoccupied thinking about work. Did I miss out on things as a result of work? Hell yes, in terms of family time and personal accomplishments (or lack of them)!



But, my story is not unique or special and I do not want a medal or a pat on the back. Millions of business owners, entrepreneurs and company executives will have a similar story to tell, and millions of people today are going through just this. That's business and the fast pace of life today.

So, what about now? Do I still work hard? Yes. Do I still work long hours? Yes. Do I put the business interests before me? Yes. The difference now is I understand and recognise this and having learned the lessons of the past. I work smarter, judging on results not hours clocked, and I have built a team and business infrastructure around me that provides me with the support needed to remain fit and healthy to go on running the business and serving clients, I



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hope, for many years to come. I will always work hard, but achieving satisfaction (not balance) in all areas of life is my key focus.

I have come to realise that you cannot have or do it all.

You cannot work a 60 hour week, then expect to run a 10k under 40 minutes, swim a mile under 30 minutes, ride a bike for 40k in under an hour, be a 'super' Dad, Husband and Son, or simply get a golf handicap (one day)!

Excellence in any field requires that we miss out on other things, things that are less important than the things you wish to excel at. Success always has required and always will require sacrifice.

I hope that the lessons I have learned from my family and in business will help me become a better Father, Husband, Advisor and Employer.



You see, my Grandad should have spent the money on the Sky subscription. And he and my Grandma should have spent more money while they were alive either enjoying personal experiences or treating their family to experiences. Or maybe they should have gifted some of the cash to my Dad during his lifetime so he could have spent some of that money on experiences, this may have encouraged him to escape the factory walls and retire a few years earlier.

My dad also should have spent more and saved less, he should have used his savings to live off and leave the factory earlier, he should have pursued his passion much sooner in his life (my Dad was an athletics coach and travelled the world with elite athletes in the last few years of his life). But he didn't. And now my Mum....should be spending more money on experiences and having fun.....but she isn't.....

You see, the problem is, none of us know how long we have got left on this planet. So, we do not spend our money 'just in case'...and saving is a habit that is tough to break.



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Well, just in case may never happen and it doesn't for the majority of people I have met. **Life is not a rehearsal.** While we do not wish to run out of money, we do not want to die with too much either.

So, I and Henwood Court are committed, based on my family and my business experiences, to help our clients to understand more clearly what is important to them. To help them plan to achieve their and their family's goals and objectives. To promote satisfaction, to budget, to forecast, to project and to ensure our clients can do what they want to do, to help their families, to ensure that they do not run out of money before they run out of life, but just as importantly they do not let **just in case** mean they die with too much...

I am slowly learning to practice what I preach to break family custom...while nagging my Mum to do the same!

It does appear that my youngest Daughter who is now 15 is fully intent on breaking the saving custom, and any client wanting to understand how to spend it is welcome to come into the office and **spend** 30 minutes with her!!



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