

Grandpa, What's A Grownup?

“Grandpa, what's it like to be grown up?”

“You want a big answer? Or a little one?”

“Little.”

“Well, then. Being grownup is like having two arms and two legs. You need them before you can run around and do what you came here to do. Come here and sit on my lap. Now give me your legs. See, you have to have two legs in order to walk and run, right?”

“I guess so.”

“Well, you do. Now this leg,” Grandpa put his hand on Jimmy’s left knee. This one let’s call ‘enough.’ You have to have enough for this leg to grow long and strong. Without enough you feel scared and have to stay in your mommy’s lap all the time. They talk about trust all the time and what they need.”

Grandpa patted the other knee. “You have to have this leg in order to walk away from you mommy and be on your own.”

Jimmy squinched up his face. “I don’t wanna ever leave my mommy.”

“Most people don’t. When they get too big to sit on their mommy’s lap they look around and find a substitute mommy. Or daddy. What they don’t know is that isn’t being grownup. It’s just playing dress up.” Grandpa was whispering. “That’s the big secret that big people have that everyone knows but no one’s supposed to talk about. Most grownup size people aren’t really all that grown up. They don’t have their own feelings and can’t think for themselves, either. They let girls do all the feeling and boys are supposed to do the thinking. But that’s like having your legs only come down to here.” Grandpa pantomimed chopping off Jimmy’s legs at the knees. Jimmy wriggled to get away.

Grandpa put his big hand on Jimmy’s left elbow. “This arm is called power. You have to have power to be able to get what you want in the world. And to keep other people from taking what’s yours.”

Then he closed his hand gently on the other arm and continued. “This one we call knowing who you are.”

“Like my name? I know my name! It’s Jimmy.”

“More than your name. Who you really are down deep inside. Not what anyone says you have to be, or your first name and certainly not your last name. All that’s just to put

on birth certificates and report cards. No. Who you are goes way deeper than that. And very few people ever decide on their own. They let someone else—or everyone else—tell them who they are and what they should be doing with their lives.”

Grandpa’s face took on a deep sadness until Jimmy finally said, “I know what I want to be. I want to be a bank teller because then I could have all that money to play with.”

“It wouldn’t be yours to play with. It all belongs to someone else. Besides, being a teller or even the president of the bank isn’t what I’m talking about. Being someone isn’t about doing a particular job, like being a fireman or even a hero. It’s being in the place where you can choose what kind of person you are regardless of what anyone else wants you to be for them. Believe me, you will find that just about everyone will can tell you what to do according to their rules and what they want from you. Even me. But what I want you to be is a real grownup. And that’s for you.”

“I don’t know if I can ever be all grownup like that. It sounds too hard.”

“It can be difficult at times. Very challenging. But the truth is you have to be grown up at some point, because that’s when you can finally do what you came here in this little boy body to accomplish. You’re not too old to have forgotten that, are you?”

Jimmy’s face turned very serious. “I think I remember. Last night in a dream I was standing on a stage and telling everyone something really important. I can’t remember what I was saying, but everyone was listening really hard. And I was feeling kind of scared and excited and like I was all filled up inside because they all got brighter and felt better from what I was saying.”

“That’s what I’m talking about. That’s getting to the place where you can share something special you have that no one else has in just the way you do. And you can’t do that very well in a little body, now can you?”

“I guess not. But growing up is still really hard sometimes.

“When you get full size, it’s only hard and serious if you are still working on growing up. You can do it when you’re still pint size.” Grandpa gave Jimmy a quick rib tickle and scooted him off his knee. “If you do your growing up while your still a boy then you can get there by just playing.”

“What about you, Grandpa? How old were you when you got all grown up?”

“Well, to tell the truth, I’m not done growing up, either.”

“You’re not?”

“Nope. Why do you think I like coming over to play with you?”

Much more on this and related topics can be found at <http://doihaftagrowup.com>. You can take a test of just how well you mastered connection and subsequent foundational challenges and read related articles.

Gary Robertson is author of ***DO I HAFTA GROW UP, THE ADULT GUIDE TO UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF CHILDHOOD***. As director of Springs Foundation, a non-profit organization, he designed a program called Growing Bones that allows clients to reclaim missing elements of their developmental foundation and become truly grown up. Springs Foundation offers healing methods based in Energy Psychology and Energy Medicine. Visit [HTTP://springsfoundation.org](http://springsfoundation.org) for more information.