

Opinion

# Dad's advice still works in hard times

**T**HERE are times when I really, really miss my dad.

I've been thinking a lot about him lately as I join millions of other Americans in trying to prepare for what lies ahead in the country's ongoing financial meltdown.

Dad was a commonsense, unflappable sort of person. He didn't fly off the handle, didn't speak without thinking



**As Kansas Farmer Sees It**  
By P.J. GRIEKSPoor

and didn't allow much of anything to get him down.

And, much as I wish I could turn to him for a repeat of some of his gems of

wisdom, memory will have to do. We lost Dad back in 2002 to old age and repeated strokes.

This month, I thought I'd share some of his memorable advice in the hope that it will give you a lift. So here are a few bits of Wayland Wilhoit philosophy that seem to fit today's challenges:

■ "Don't get all worked up about what might happen. You could very

well need that energy to deal with it if it does."

He used to say that just about every time I, or one of my siblings, got on a "but, what if?" track. I thought of it this week when I was staring at the computer screen and thinking, "What if my 401K goes to zero?"

■ "Old 'I can't' never did do anything, and when he died he wasn't even trying."

I used to get furious and insist, "But I *really* can't" and Dad would just smile. Funny thing, most of the time, I could — and did — do whatever I thought was impossible.

■ "It takes more effort figuring out how to get out of work than it does to do the job."

I might add my own observation that it also often takes more effort to try to get someone else to do a job than it does to do it yourself.

■ "Anything worth having is worth waiting for and working for."

Boy, wouldn't we all be better off if that one was more widely applied!

■ "Don't count your money until the bushels are in the bin."

I credit that one to Dad, but I've heard it from many a Kansas farmer, too.

■ "You get to pick what you think about. So don't think about bad stuff, just think about good stuff."

I've heard it called the "power of positive thinking" in later life. The first time I remember hearing that from Dad I was about 10 and my grandma had just died. I remember wailing, "But without Grandma, my life doesn't have any good stuff." Dad gently prodded me to make a list of all the things Grandma taught me and all the things about Grandma that made me smile. "You just keep reading that list over and over," he said, "and you'll see that Grandma is still making you smile."

I had that list in the bottom drawer of a jewelry box with a shiny blue fabric cover for a good 20 years. It was stolen when my house was broken into, and I've often wondered if the thieves got any benefit from my list.

Not long after Dad died, I made a similar list of the things I wanted to think about when I thought of him — things to override the memories of frailty, illness and loss and remind me of his strength and lasting wisdom.

I hope you've enjoyed sharing a few of them.



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