

# Thanks for the Memories

Category: Connections

written by Ronna L. Edelstein | December 1, 2022

I have always felt blessed to be a person who enjoys her own company—who does not feel lonely when alone. That being said, I do welcome technology and its ability to link me virtually with family and friends. I do rely on a car, train and plane to transform those virtual connections into in-person ones. And I am grateful to books that always create a bridge between me and other people and worlds. Although the content of the books is fictional, the characters, plots and themes resonate in a very real way.

Yet, throughout my life—and especially as I grow older—I more profoundly appreciate memories and how they connect me to the people and experiences that have enriched my life. Memory keeps Dad, Ma and Grandma alive for me. Sunday walk 'n talks with Dad. Strolling through the children's section of the local library with Ma. Lying next to Grandma in the bedroom we shared, as she assured me that no monster lurked in the closet. Through memory, I can relive times with my now adult son and daughter, both of whom live in distant cities. Memory links me with my son as a child who imagined he was the Incredible Hulk and who turned his love for the Hardy Boys into dramas in which he and his sister acted. Memory links me with my daughter who, as a child, mediated conflicts within her family of dolls and who, as young adult, met me in New York to share a Broadway weekend.

Through memory, I re-experience school—inhaling the promising aroma of textbooks, watching chalk turn a blank blackboard into a math or science problem, and hearing teachers excitedly share their insights with me and encouraging me to become a lifelong learner. Memory connects me with the magical setting of Disney World—a place where Ma, Dad, my children, and I often vacationed. It takes me to the Atlantic City boardwalk and the waves crashing against the Steel Pier. It puts me in Israel, Greece, Italy, London and Paris, places I have been privileged to visit.

These memories matter because connections matter. Connections make it okay to be physically alone because they remind me that I am never emotionally or mentally isolated. Memories keep the past alive, and they let the present and future live on in my mind and heart.

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