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BUSINESS

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The Canterbury Sales®

Gran'ther Pendleton Returns

By Andy Gole

Gran'ther Pendleton has been a treasured literary favorite since childhood. Dorothy Canfield Fisher tells his story in *Heyday of the Blood*. Everyone should know Gran'ther and his zest for life – particularly in these challenging times.

At the outset, Gran'ther's great grandson Professor Mallory – nearing retirement – talks with his unhappy young assistant.

The younger man started, "Why-Why-" his face twitched. He went on desperately, "I've lost my nerve, Professor Mallory."

"What do you mean – nerve?" Asked Mallory, challenging impatience in his tone.

The younger man started, "Why, Why" His face twitched. He went trembling so the papers he held fell on the floor. "I worry – I forgot things – I take no interest in life. The psychiatrists tell me to relax, to rest. I try to, but it's no good. I never go out – every evening I'm in bed by nine o' clock."

To inspire his assistant, Mallory tells of an extraordinary experience with Gran'ther at the turn of the century. Gran'ther – 88 years old, in very poor health – worried everyone in the extended family, who tried restricting his activities appropriately.

Gran'ther ignored obvious and sound medical advice, did what he pleased and:

"He used to remark triumphantly that he had now outlived six doctors, who had each given him but a year to live, 'and the seventh is going downhill fast, so I hear!"

Professor Mallory recounts a glorious childhood day, when he and Gran'ther stole off to the county fair after being forbidden by his parents. Here's a taste of that day, a description of the horse race:

"If I live to be a hundred and break the bank at Monte Carlo three times a week," said Mallory, shaking his head reminiscently, "I could not know a tenth part of the frantic excitement of that race or of the mad triumph when our horse won. Gran'ther cast his hat upon the ground, screaming like a steam calliope with exultation as the sorrel swept past the judges' stand ahead of all the others, and I jumped up and down in an agony of delight which was almost more than my little body could hold."

Mallory recounts Gran'ther's view on fear:

"I've larned a lot about the way folks is made. The trouble with most of 'em is, they're 'fraid-cats!... The only way to manage this business of livin' is to give a whoop and let her rip!"

Mallory concludes with Gran'ther's recurring motto:

"Live while you live, and then die and be done with it!"

Gran'ther is a fictional character. My father-in-law is a flesh-and-blood relative of Gran'ther.

Grandpa Charles, now 85 and largely retired, has a unique business in upstate New York. He purchases merchandise and drives into the countryside to migrant work camps. He is the store.

His health has been failing for many years, but he continues to do what he loves – to the extent he can – going on the road, selling merchandise, against medical advice.

Last fall, Charles was hospitalized for a heart attack; his kidney function declined dangerously. We drove to Rochester to say goodbye.

He was ashen, largely confined to bed.

When he and I were alone in the hospital room, I asked him how he kept mentally alert. He told me he was planning his next sales trip. I felt this kept him going, thinking about getting back on the road.

We were concerned he wouldn't last the week.

Well, he did last the week. He returned home, his kidneys regained some functionality, and within a few months, he started getting out again.

On Mother's Day my mother-in-law returned from a morning walk and passed Charles taking off in his car, going on the road to sell – against medical advice.

We waited all day for his safe return. When he returned safely, I was reminded of Gran'ther's motto:

The only way to manage this business of livin' is to give a whoop and let her rip!



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Andy Gole has taught selling skills for 17 years. He started three businesses and has made approximately 4,000 sales calls, selling both B2B and B2C. He invented a selling process, *Urgency Based Selling®*, with which he can typically help companies double their closing or conversion ratio. Learn more about Andy's method at www.bombadillc.com or by calling him at 201.415.3447.