



ANA DRUCK

June 25, 1928 - March 28, 2019

I am here today, to publicly express my deepest gratitude, respect and honor Mom. I've learned that "Love isn't love until, it's given away." I did. I actively loved her every day. I concede, my deepest regrets are the things I wasn't able to do for her, not from oweness but love.

So, I lamented for awhile, "What is left of her life, a few boxes"?

I think a friend answered that for me. He said, "You. She has left her stamp on you and your kids". We are then, her legacy. The many lives she touched, like the little girl she sponsored in a third world country until she was an adult or you, who came out today, because she meant something to you. She, in some way, touched your life too.

She passed at home, in her room overlooking the backyard that she absolutely loved. She would often gaze out the window with almost childlike enthusiasm waiting to see if the deer would visit. We hadn't seen deer in the backyard for months for whatever reason, but in the very early morning hours of the 28th, we spotted a baby deer through the trees by the creek. She passed later that day. She was surrounded by the people that actively cared for her, loved her and shared with her every day. Her favorite music was playing and I was holding her hand as she took her last breath.

Ana Celeste Druck de Leon

This Eulogy was approved by my Mother.

She was known to her entire family as Ana Celeste. I only ever heard that full name when we traveled to Santo Domingo or when her family visited but she never wanted to be called Ana Celeste. I never understood why and had asked several times before but it was only recently, she finally explained how she came to hate that name.

Her mother, Ana Maria, had a favorite niece, Celeste. Celeste was kind, thoughtful and even mom's elementary teacher at one time. Everyone loved Celeste. So what was the issue? Mom recounted. Celeste married the man of her dreams and worked as a school teacher to put him through school. One day after the husband graduated, he took off leaving Celeste after she sacrificed everything for him. Celeste never stopped loving him and cherishing his very memory and spoke fondly of this man that took advantage of her.

This, to my mother, was pathetic, disgraceful and a sign of weakness. Mom new at an early age she would never let weakness define her. If you look closely, Mom would have a life that demonstrated she would not be ruled by fear, show weakness nor would she easily forgive anyone that would take advantage of her kindness.

Mom's earliest aspiration was to go to University and get an education and that she did. I have heard the stories and seen the love letters from suitors from all over the world rivaling for her attention. She even had the son of the University Dean vying for courtship but much to his mother's disbelief and chagrin, Mom wasn't having it. She wasn't intrigued by any of them until she met my dad who she felt embodied a spirit of adventure with which she identified and craved. This woman, the youngest of 6, endured living through the regime of a communist dictator, Trujillo, while her father editor and owner of a newspaper read throughout the Caribbean denounced dictators and was jailed by Trujillo for his rhetoric. Her mother quieted the conflicts. She was the compassion, strength and beacon of light always finding solutions to problems for the family. From her father, Mom would take her father's articulate, tenacious literary and vocal roar and from her mother, an indelible determination to be the best mother possible and promote the value of doing anything for her family.

Her family cautioned her about marrying my father who came from such a different background and means but she was more determined to not be afraid then, to head caution. After Mom married this foreigner, her new life of financial constraints and children would make it impossible for more than 7 years to visit her family from which her identity was created and her entire life once revolved. Her new life of loneliness, struggle and sacrifice was a bold and stark contrast from the life she had in Dominican with the support of her big and extended family and camaraderie of lifelong friends.

She learned to appreciate the life she built with my father. She put him through school and for years he stayed at home raising the kids. By the time I came along, 10 years after my brother, the first born, they had built a business and their lives started yielding some prosperity. Mom was able to enjoy life differently, becoming an avid and passionate tennis player. She played for Miami Dade county on the A team for many years. She began making friends, enjoying family vacations and taking me everywhere with her like her shadow.

Mom had plenty of fears but she would be damned if she was going to allow them to overcome her. That was the early age determination I mentioned earlier. She learned to swim early into her marriage after being terrorized with fear from having experienced the loss of a brother who was only 16 when he died from drowning. She would drive cross

country to go on a trip by herself to have a vacation she had only ever been able to dream of taking with my father. She would pursue learning to fly a plane and went onto fly solos. She would travel to new continents, buy her own house and then, in her senior years, move to an entirely new city well after an entire life only knowing the familiar spots of Miami. Over her life, she would face four separate life threatening encounters with Cancer. She refused cancer treatment as her belief that standard treatment of killing both good and bad cells was not for her. Her faith was her anchor with Psalm 91 her favorite to recite every morning and any moment of weakness, fear and fragility. And she will tell (would have told ☐) you, in all of these moments, she was afraid and in some instances, like her first solo when a floor vent inadvertently opened and the plane lost pressure, she was downright petrified. In my mind, more notably, Mom was courageous.

She has taken on the age of technology with chutzpa as complicated as it can be. She had her cell phone and texted and even took selfies. "Amanda!", she would call across the house, "Come and show me how to selfie!" She wasn't great at answering her phone as you likely already know but if you know me, that just may be more of a genetic thing than anything else. Just a few months ago, she insisted on going to the book store because she wanted to learn how to dictate letters on her tablet. She wanted to buy a book to learn how to make it work for her. Think about that for a minute. She wanted to learn something new in the area of technology and was going to figure it out. She read that book at all hours and reread it. In this case, as in most case, she would succeed because her blinders to failure or the word "can't", wasn't acceptable. She would often get what she wanted no matter how hard she had to work. This would also be her double edge quality.

If you really knew us, you knew my mother and me were frequently at odds. We had very different perspectives on life, very different ways of assessing values of things and a different way of disagreeing. You also would know we were very close. In my entire life, Mom has only ever had short stints where she wasn't in my or our day to day lives; eating family dinners in the dining room, yucca breakfast, Christmas mornings, carrot cake birthdays or helping or weighing in on parenting . Yes, some of those parenting moments were less fun and a bit sticky but just as memorable; that's for sure.

I have been with mom through some of her darkness hours of depression that surfaced from the demise of her marriage. I held her hand through every surgery and recovery and walked along side her everyday thru her last days. While we may have had our differences, our commitment to one another and our value of life and family always took precedent over other opportunities. She taught me this. She knew I had her back.

She had my back too. She sacrificed of herself for me as she did for Dan and Lori. She

was a very good mom. She was there for me in my darkest hours when I had to consider my illness would leave my babies without a mother. When my medical bills left us short for basics, mom would bring over Publix rotisserie chicken, cereal and the other bare essential, flan of course. She reveled in my sweetest victories as well. One of sweetest memories I can only hold with Mother; she came to see me as a surprise at my baby shower in California and stayed for my homebirth with Jesse. She helped every minute of my delivery. She would too, hold this as one of her fondest moments in her life witnessing the birth of her first grandbaby in my bedroom and into her arms.

I believe Mom might have relished being a grandmother even more than being a mother. No, I am sure. Mom would come alive giving the kids bubble baths, having sleepovers in her big bed, doing library runs, sponsoring movie nights and preparing private dessert parties for the kids. Oh my mom and sugar. She used to tell the kids that she was full and couldn't eat another bite but was ready for dessert. She would go on to explain that obviously, she had a leg open for dessert. She showed up for countless school awards, doctors' appointments and sick days. She helped pick out Amanda's prom dress, helped take Vaughn to endless physical therapy after this accident and gave Jesse his first tennis lessons to prepare him to join the tennis team. She would rush the kids to school as they were always running late. Allen and I had a hard time trusting anyone to babysit the kids except mom. While she wasn't the traditional grandmother who was going to forfeit her life to be cooped up changing diapers and cooking, she was very sensitive to Allen and me and would watch the kids if we needed a date night. She even offered to watch the little hellions for occasional weekends so, we could have a break and get out of town.

On her top 10 favorite things in life

10. Traveling. She and Dan enjoyed road trips. Lori and she also had some very special moments traveling. They really enjoyed each other's company and traveled extensively.

9. Gadgets- of course gadgets. To this day, I won't have a kitchen without a trash compactor.

8. Reading – she read anything she could get her hands on but loved mysteries

7. Murder mysteries – Matlock, Perry Mason, Murder She Wrote, McGyver, NCIS

6. Tennis, Tennis and more Tennis. She knew the month of every championship and she wasn't missing it. She would tell you every set detail whether you were interested or not. She would tell you who was going to win as she watched the televised matches bouncing on the edge of her seat, fists clenched and arms raised as she loudly cheered on her favorite player with audible words of encouragement and coaching them on the next strategy.

5. Dessert/fruit - if it was fruit vs dessert... hmmm... I'm not sure flan would win over

mangoes

4. Shopping Well, Marshalls really as she lived for “the find”

3. Her family

2. Her hair perfectly cut every three weeks and her white teeth , all her own I might add

1. Her grandchildren

I can't be sure that the order is correct as “looking good” might take precedent to everything else because you can do all the rest but if you don't look good, who will respect you? And that she did. She always had herself put together. Doctors and therapist would be astonished that this older women would come into their office NOT LOOKING HER AGE, OF COURSE with her platforms on and dressed for respect. I tried to get her to acquiesce to more sensible, less life threatening shoes but she wouldn't have it. There's a little hint as to when that double edge determination quality could really make for a good challenge. She wasn't going anywhere until her makeup was done. “ The doctor will have to wait”. Just a couple of weeks ago, I had her hair done and she insisted on getting her eyebrows done too. Even in her last days, she would get up and get fully dressed and put on her makeup. She rarely remembered to close the applicator on the mascara and it always dried up. I quipped and told her “Ma, you never take your makeup off at night anyway so don't' worry about reapplying. Suffice to say, after I got her ”infamous look of derision,” I went out and got her a new mascara.

Only in the last handful of years did I get to know my mother in a way I had never seen or perhaps remembered. I suspect I got to know the person that her entire family new back when she lived with them before she was altered by life's challenges, disappointments and rejections. She was gentle, playful, more forgiving and all around easier going than I had ever remembered her to be in my earlier years. I feel very fortunate that we got to spend these past years together as it will forever make a positive difference in my life. I know so much more about Mom, my family and in term, myself.

Her biggest regrets are those that have been out of her control.

- She forever mourned the loss of Mia, Dan's daughter and my god daughter from our lives. Repeated and extensive efforts were made to have a relationship with Mia after Dan left but her other side of the family wouldn't have it.
- She regretted not being able to connect with Dan in a way that he felt valued though she knows she did the best she could with the knowledge she had. She missed him so very very much. For me the pain from that kind of neglect and rejection from your child for so many years and without even a call or letter is truly unfathomable. She would go on and on and try to figure out what she could have done differently. I saw how it affected her.
- She regretted not being properly prepared for her senior years, though she knows that

wasn't her fault either

- Lastly, she regretted and lamented over the poor relationships between Dan, Lori and me or in Dan's case the lack of any. This defied everything she believed, modeled, taught and for which she sacrificed for us to value family. She continued to try to encourage a camaraderie between Lori and me as the relationship she had with her sister was among the most important in her life and wanted that for us. Mom finally, came to see that my life philosophy about family is true. Family is a privilege and not a right. If you are lucky enough to have good people in your family cherish them above even your friends. You have to work at family relationships just like any other and if it is going to yield, like most things, it requires effort, sacrifice and investment. Some people, family or not, just cannot put the need of others before their own and think family should always be there in good or bad irrespective of their investment.

What my mother wanted you to know:

- She will not be told what to do. She is an educated woman with an advanced degree.
- She doesn't need you or anyone to tell her what she needs to do. If you thought she didn't like you, you were right. She was always civil even when you were an ass.
- She may not have the family lineage of pedigree but she comes from an upstanding, educated successful family that made a difference to her and those in her community. She has class, decorum and values life, love, family and education.

Yes, she valued family. She modeled it and taught it. If you did something against her or the family, she didn't want you to think she didn't know but would give you a chance to better yourself and make right. She wanted us to be happy.

My mother wanted to communicate with my brother before she moved on but was resigned that she would never likely see or hear from him again. She said that while what he did was awful and hurtful, she didn't want to be hurtful in kind. She wanted to tell him how much she loved him. She wondered if he was happy because all she ever wanted was for him to be happy. That was my mother in her purest moments.

Lori came to town in December and Mom said her goodbye to Lori but would continue to ask for Cameron and Cesca.

She wants her grandchildren to know :

- You are smart, beautiful and very capable but love yourself first before you can love another or before others can love you.
- You have what it takes to be successful at whatever you want but be honest with yourself about what you are good at and stay focused and discipline on your studies.

- Do your best at whatever you do and finish what you start.
- Be forgiving of yourself and others.
- Take care of your parents, and always honor them with your actions.
- Don't hurry life, it will happen.
- When you find someone that you think you want to spend the rest of your life with, look at their family and listen to your parents. Always seek out advice from those doing it right.
- You have been a blessing to me and I will cherish every day I have had to spend knowing you and loving you. I will miss you Jesse, Amanda, Mia, Vaughn, Cameron and Cesca but know in your heart that I am with you always in spirit.

Mom had a difficult time letting go to die as she felt she needed to continue to be a part of the kids' lives to offer words of counsel and wisdom. She wanted them to learn from her life experiences. She wanted them to be happy and successful and could only see their struggles as obstacles to self empowerment and fulfillment. When she said good bye to me a few weeks ago, she finally thought that she would have more power and influence in their lives being in the presence of God who would show mercy on them on her behalf as she felt He had done for her so many times in the long and fruitful life she had.

So, as her shadow, Kimci as she often referred to me, I will tell you she passed with the dignity she commanded. No one spoke of her age just of her power, presence, smile and beauty.

Mom knew she was lucky even if she didn't always feel it but in contrast, she always knew, in this house, she was deeply loved and well cared for.

So to reiterate, Mom had a life that demonstrated she was not ruled by fear but by determination to do the things that mattered most to her, to promote family. She would have endless patience with her kids and grandkids because she always believed they would come around from the strength she now resided in them and with a little prayer, psalm 91, God would help them through. She was proud of her family past and her family present and maybe she didn't even know that it was because of her presence in our lives, raising the bar with encouragement on family commitment and loyalty that make us who we are, her always.

Kim Drozd (Druck)

Kindly consider instead of sending your condolences through flowers which shortly wither

away and make us sad again, contribute to the Cancer Research Institute that will use your efforts to promote healing and passes my mother's legacy forward.

<https://fundraise.cancerresearch.org/anadruck>

Events

APR **Gathering** 04:00PM - 07:00PM

12

Van Orsdel Coral Gables Chapel
4600 S.W. 8 Street, Coral Gables, FL, US

APR **Memorial Service** 05:00PM

12

Van Orsdel Coral Gables Chapel
4600 S.W. 8 Street, Coral Gables, FL, US

Comments



“ A tribute video has been added.



Van Orsdel Family Funeral Chapels - April 11 at 03:23 PM



“ 11 files added to the album Ana Pics



Kim Drozd - April 17 at 10:36 AM



“ I don't know if I can put into words what Ana has meant to me and our family. I met Ana in 1976. We had just bought our first home right next door to Ana, Dennis, and their children, Danny, Lori and Kim. They were such an awesome family and Ana was so proud of them.

Ana always looked so attractive even if she was cleaning house or had just played tennis. She once told me right before our first child was born, "to always get up and get out of my pajamas, put on makeup and dress like I have somewhere to go". The best advise for a new stay-at-home Mother.

I still do this today!

She was my mentor, she was there to give me support in being a new Mother.

I thank God everyday for her and Kim. Kim, at age ten would come over and play with little Laura to give me a break.

Again, Ana was such a great example of Motherhood for me to follow. We spent a lot of hours talking and supporting one another over a cup of coffee, flan or banana bread through all of our ups and downs over the years.

Even when we lived far away from one another, as soon as we walked into the door, it was like we had never been

Apart. She was more like a sister than just a friend.

Ana was a remarkable, beautiful, strong Lady and Mother, that loved her family more than anything. She will be greatly missed.

Love you and Rest In Peace!

Vivian Shay

Vivian Shay - April 10 at 05:22 PM