



**YWCA**  
EDMONTON

A TURNING POINT  
FOR WOMEN

## My Grandmother

*Anonymous*

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There are so many amazing women in the world and I want to share about an amazing woman in my life. My grandma lived to be 99 years old but in my mind she was really 99 years young. She grew up in China, got married, and had 3 sons and 1 daughter. Her husband was killed when the children were young and grandma was alone to raise the children. When her 2 oldest sons came to Canada, she cared for the youngest son and when he had children, she helped care for her grandchildren.

Grandma came to Canada from Hong Kong when she was in her late 60s. I remember the times that she would come over to visit and teach me how to play Mah Jong. We would both sit on the living room carpet and play MJ. She with her one thin leg outstretched and me cross legged. I liked when she would come over to prepare our garden. Each row was perfectly spaced out and I admire how she could make it look so perfect.

She lived on her own for many years in an adult building downtown. Most of the tenants spoke English and grandma knowing no English still managed to communicate with them. She would go out and buy groceries, cook fresh food every day, and enjoy her independence. When her grandson in New York got married in 2001, we took grandma. She never complained about sitting on the planes, or the layover in the airport. She was just happy to see her grandson get married. Grandma was always in excellent health and it was probably due to her use of the treadmill and stationary bicycle in her apartment building, using her 11lb weights, and drinking half a can of Ensure daily. She once told me she would like to take the English classes too but her eyesight was too weak to see the words. Even in her 90s she believed in life long learning.

When grandma's health started to decline, I would go visit her in the nursing home. Sometimes I would bring my tofu and rice to feed her. She always loved tofu and I know why I love it so much too. Soon, I saw sadness in her eyes. The last time I talked to my grandma she cried, something I had never seen before. She told me she didn't have purpose anymore because she couldn't cook and feed herself, was losing her eyesight, and confined to a wheelchair. She lost joy that she couldn't do the little things anymore. And then I knew she was giving up for the first time in her life. I'm so grateful to have had grandma in my life. Almost three years after her passing, she still inspires me to be positive, not fear anything, and that ability is not limited by age.

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