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Advice from Kobe

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There are times we all come across messages that move us emotionally and are so piercingly insightful that we simply have to share them with those around us. Well, Integris just came across one such message that also happens to be germane to our work, so we decided to share it with you.

It is an excerpt from a letter that the Los Angeles Lakers basketball star, Kobe Bryant, recently penned to his 17 year old self. For those who don't know, Kobe Bryant joined the Lakers straight from High School, which is why a letter to his 17 year old self is relevant. He just retired after this past season at the age of 37, and proved to be one of the best players in history. At his peak he was earning roughly \$50 million per year between salary and endorsements, and he has an estimated net worth of \$320 million. The letter gives his 17 year old self some financial advice that we simply could not say better ourselves; we hope you enjoy it as much as we did.

Dear 17-year-old self,

When your Laker dream comes true tomorrow, you need to figure out a way to invest in the future of your family and friends. This sounds simple, and you may think it's a no-brainer, but take some time to think on it further.

I said INVEST.

I did not say GIVE.

Let me explain.

Purely giving material things to your siblings and friends may appear to be the right decision. You love them, and they were always there for you growing up, so it's only right that they should share in your success and all that comes with it. So you buy them a car, a big house, pay all of their bills. You want them to live a beautiful, comfortable life, right?

But the day will come when you realize that as much as you believed you were doing the right thing, you were actually holding them back.

You will come to understand that you were taking care of them because it made YOU feel good, it made YOU happy to see them smiling and without a care in the world — and that was extremely selfish of you. While you were feeling satisfied with yourself, you were slowly eating away at their own dreams and ambitions. You were adding material things to their lives, but subtracting the most precious gifts of all: independence and growth.

Understand that you are about to be the leader of the family, and this involves making tough choices, even if your siblings and friends do not understand them at the time.

Invest in their future, don't just give.

Use your success, wealth and influence to put them in the best position to realize their own dreams and find their true purpose. Put them through school, set them up with job interviews and help them become leaders in their own right. Hold them to the same level of hard work and dedication that it took for you to get to where you are now, and where you will eventually go.

I'm writing you now so that you can begin this process immediately, and so that you don't have to deal with the hurt and struggle of weaning them off of the addiction that you facilitated. That addiction only leads to anger, resentment and jealousy from everybody involved, including yourself.

As time goes on, you will see them grow independently and have their own ambitions and their own lives, and your relationship with all of them will be much better as a result.

There's plenty more I could write to you, but at 17, I know you don't have the attention span to sit through 2,000 words...

Much love,

Kobe

KOBE BRYANT / LOS ANGELES LAKERS

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kobe Bryant', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Source: www.theplayerstribune.com July 20, 2016