

Charice Maddela

Ocean View High School

My Father's Morals

My dad is the most hard-working person I know. For five years, he'd always come home from work to our one-bedroom apartment all worn out from the hotel he used to work at. Despite how exhausted he was, I still recall the nights when I secretly pretended to sleep, patiently waiting for him to get home. He'd always make an effort to kiss my head every night, even when he thought I was sound asleep. Life was hard for us; it was just him raising my two older siblings and me.

He always did his best to make sure that we had everything we wanted. But as a child, I failed to appreciate his efforts.

When I was in third grade, a friend of mine asked for my help funding a party she was throwing. Initially, I refused because I didn't have anything to contribute. But then she suggested I take my father's hard-earned money. A classmate passed by and said she'd accuse me of being selfish if I didn't agree to help.

I didn't want to be labeled selfish at school, so I decided to go with it. That following afternoon, I began taking small amounts of money from my father's wallet—hoping that he wouldn't notice. I had given my friend about \$20, and she was pleased. However, she insisted on needing more. So I stole money again. She kept insisting, and what started as a few dollars eventually spiraled into \$50, and even \$100 bills.

My dad started noticing the decreasing money in his wallet. I still remember the look of concern my dad had that weekend as we paid at the register, hoping he'd have enough cash to cover all our groceries.



That was when the guilt had finally struck.

For the following days, I refused to speak to my dad. However, the remorse I felt was unbearable; it was impossible to keep it from him. So, soon enough, I decided to tell my father what I had done—a confession that weighed heavily on my heart. Tears welled up in my eyes as I admitted to my wrongdoings, and the words had poured out. I told him about the money I had taken, and how it had started small but had gotten out of control.

My father saw the regret in my eyes, and instead of disappointment and anger, he came to me with open arms and understanding. He reassured me that mistakes were a part of life and that taking the courage to learn and confess was the right thing to do.

Now, when I'm faced with an ethical choice, I make sure that I'm honest to my heart and make the right decisions. In life, you'll be faced with decisions that can lead you to the wrong path. Even if you make the wrong choice, my dad taught me to be a strong believer that learning and properly reflecting on experiences is the baseline for someone's personal development to become a better person.