

KEEPERS

I grew up with practical grandparents who had been frightened by the Great Depression in the 1930's. A mother, God love her, who washed aluminum foil after she cooked in it, then reused it. She was the original recycle queen, before they had a name for it... A father who was happier getting old shoes fixed than buying new ones. Their marriage was good, their dreams focused. Their best friends lived barely a wave away. I can see them now, Dad in trousers, t-shirt and a hat and Mom in a house dress, lawn mower in one hand, and dish-towel in the other. It was the time for fixing things; a curtain rod, the kitchen radio, screen door, the oven door, the hem in a dress. Things we keep.

It was a way of life, and sometimes it made me crazy. All that repairing, eating, reusing, I wanted just once to be wasteful. Waste meant affluence. Throwing things away meant you knew there'd always be more..

But then my Mother died, and on that clear summer's night, in the warmth of the hospital room, I was struck with the pain of learning that sometimes there isn't any more. Sometimes, what we care about most gets all used up and goes away...never to return. So.. While we have it... it's best we love it... And care for it... And fix it when it's broken..... And heal it when it's sick.

This is true... For old cars.... And children with bad report cards..... And dogs and cats with bad hips.... And aging parents.... And grandparents. We keep them because they are worth it, because we are worth it. Some things we keep. Like a best friend that moved away or a classmate we grew up with.

There are just some things that make life important, like people we know who are special.... And so, we keep them close! I received this from someone who thinks I am a 'keeper,' now you may want to send it to those people who are 'keepers' in your life.

"Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass.... It's about learning how to dance in the rain"