



# Letter to a Great Grandson: A Message of Love, Advice, and Hopes for the Future

*Hugh Downs*

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"When you are a *great* grandfather you will experience something so much more powerful and meaningful than being a father or a grandfather, that you will look at the march of generations with new eyes."

When his great-grandson Alexander was born in 2002, Hugh Downs suddenly gained a rare perspective on the world -- he had seen the evolution of American culture through *five* generations (his parents', his own, his children's, his grandchildren's, and now his great-grandson's). Once Downs realized the extraordinary amount of love he experienced for his brand new descendent, as well as the profound connection he felt between them, he decided to write him a letter, to be read at different stages of Alexander's life. *Letter to A Great Grandson* offers wisdom, advice, and speculation about how life was, how life is, and how life may be in the future. As one of America's most trusted commentators, Downs is a grandfather figure to many, and his words will resonate with readers everywhere, at any age.

*Letter to A Great Grandson* presents a completely new system for categorizing life. Downs has divided it into seventeen stages, ranging from infant, to post-puberty minor, to "young old," to ancient, and everything in between. This unique organization allows him to offer specific thoughts on each stage, making the book pertinent to all age levels, ideal for reading over and over again during different periods in life. Downs discusses the common problems and achievements in each stage, and along the way offers his characteristically erudite and conversational thoughts on relationships, science, sex, education, careers, literature, and life in general. He also includes touching tidbits from his own childhood, and those of his family, illustrating that sometimes one must look back, in order to look forward.

Though *Letter to A Great Grandson* is not a how-to book, it does teach by example. It stresses the importance and joy of sharing your thoughts and feelings with the children in your life, and of actively maintaining family connections -- before it is too late. This makes it a wonderful model for great-grandparents, grandparents, and parents alike. Considering the special bond between grandparents and grandchildren (and great-grandparents and great-grandchildren), surprisingly few books address this important relationship. When this vital, no heartwarming subject matter is combined with Hugh Downs's unique wisdom, wit, and warmth, the result is a book that will truly be treasured.

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