

If Only ...

*By Sheila Johnson*

As I look back over my life and consider the ups and the downs, I believe I am truly blessed to have survived some of the societal and domestic traumas that invaded my personal space. I was also pretty lucky to have gathered some nuggets of teachings about kindness, patience, compassion, and love from my parents and my village. And although I think I now live a pretty balanced life, there are people and things that I sorely miss. If we lived in a world that had no limits on time, space, or travel, I'd quickly reverse the clock and go back and pack up those people and things, then jet forward into the present, and maybe even into the future. But as we all know, we live in a world where that is impossible to do. Unless the science fiction gizmo, known as the time machine, really does exist.

I would design my time machine to be electronic, fueled by the tiniest batteries known to humans, tall enough and wide enough to fit my body type, built with a peach colored steel frame, lined with a cotton interior, equipped with automatic locking seat belts for one, two speeds – fast and faster, a virtual potty, Jetson-like food, and the words I'M MOVING FAST, painted on the outside!

Upon arriving at the home where I grew up, I would take my father's gentle spirit, his quiet speech, and his no nonsense determination. I would grab my mother's looks, her wisdom, and her beautiful smile. I would latch on to my grandmother's steady hands, her quilts that were crafted for cozy, warm days, and her lemon meringue pie recipe. I would steal my grandfather's wide, strong lap, and his gentle yet firm embrace.

Once I packed my time machine, named Betsy, we would jet out of the land of cactus and weeds, and land in Denver Colorado. With limited storage space in an already full unit, I'd have to pass these cherished and invaluable gifts on to my children and their children praying that the world would feel their impact. But since time machines don't really exist, I guess we'll just have to pass these timeless gifts on memory-to-memory, soul-to-soul, heart to heart and pray that they won't get lost in time.