

Dear Sarah,

My how the years have gone by. You are growing into such a mature and beautiful young woman and everyday I am more proud to call you my granddaughter. I remember when I was your age -- just graduating college and ready to begin my life. As I look back on life, I wish I had someone to talk to about becoming older. It is a scary thing, growing up. Taking on life's responsibilities is a difficult task, and can often lead to us aging faster than we feel we should. I want to share with you my advice on aging, as I see it now, and hopefully in terms you can understand at this point in your life. For starters, always remember what your parents taught you, for they do know best. Remember to practice good hygiene and clean up after yourself. While outer beauty shouldn't be your main priority, in order to age well, you need to brush, floss, and be sure you use conditioner. I know now you want to seem mature and look ten years older, but I assure you once you reach my age, you'll wish you looked as young as you do now. Along those lines, make sure to exercise and eat healthy. I'm sure you are busy with your new job and can hardly find the time for a bag of chips, but even something as simple as taking the stairs instead of the elevator can keep that beautiful body of yours. It will keep your heart pumping, your lungs healthy, and you will be able to keep up with your grandchildren, just as I am able to keep up with you. While outer appearances are important, it is just as important to age well on the inside as well as on the outside. Remember to always be respectful. As you age, there will always be people older and younger than you. You should treat each one of them with the utmost respect and understand that they have stories to share with you just as you have stories to share with them. In the words of your favorite childhood author, Dr. Seuss, "A person is a person no matter how small". And last, but not least, remember to stay true to yourself. As you age, your lifestyle may change, but always remember that who you have been will shape who you will become. To age well is to be ageless. Do not let the number of candles on your birthday cake define who you are. I know you are going to do wonderful things in the future, Sarah. Do not let yourself be defined by age, because the way you define yourself will be the way others define you. You are a strong, intelligent woman with so much ahead of you. I hope this letter helps you to understand the things you will soon be facing. Never forget I love you and am always proud of you.

Love,  
Nanna Jo