



Rocking It
GRAND

— 18 WAYS TO BE A —
GAME-CHANGING GRANDMA

**Chrys Howard and
Shellie Rushing Tomlinson**

In their new book, Chrys and Shellie will remind you about what you're good at, inspire you to do what you're passionate about, and figure out what will outlast you. When you turn the last page, you'll want to go do these things for your kids. This book is one for the ages.

MARIA GOFF, wife, mom, grandma, and author of *Love Lives Here*

Being a grandparent ROCKS. Watching my friends Chrys and Shellie share about grandparenting rocks as well. I love the way they honestly and transparently share about their families. And in whatever season these two find themselves, they share that journey with the rest of us. Honored to call them friends. Now . . . LET'S ROCK! Serve well! Love big! It ALL matters!

SANDI PATTY PESLIS

Food, family, fun, and faith combine beautifully in this offering from the hearts and minds of two women who know the business of grandma love inside and out.

LISA WINGATE, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Before We Were Yours* and *The Book of Lost Friends*

I adore this book! Not only did I feel encouraged by the gentle Solomon-esque wisdom for nurturing thriving relationships with my own five grands offered by girlfriend-authors Chrys and Shellie, I was LOL entertained by their hilarious and often poignant stories of grandparenting that are drawn from their own lives. I love how *Rocking*

It Grand motivates us sweetly ripened gals (and guys!) to remain vital *people* with our own interests as we age. Who wants to rattle around like shucked corn husks after harvest? Not me! Not you! This awesome little book will help us bound out of our rocking chairs and seize priceless opportunities to teach our progeny by example . . . and when necessary, to use words! *Rocking It Grand* gets my highest commendation.

DEBORA M. COTY, multiple award-winning author of over 40 inspirational books, including the bestselling Too Blessed to Be Stressed series, with over 1.3 million books in multiple languages worldwide

Chrys and Shellie have reminded me that we grandparents are “game-changers”! Not only that, but we can “raise the ceiling” for our grandkids! Matter of fact, our ceiling becomes their floor to walk on and live out our legacy. Our works/legacy will outlive us (Revelation 14:13)! Nice to know that we can “set the stage” for those coming after us! This is FUN FAITH!

DENNIS SWANBERG, America’s minister of encouragement

Rocking It Grand feels like I’m sitting on the porch listening in as two wise women share wisdom, faith, funny stories, and recipes. I walked away with a buffet of inspiration and instruction to call on as I walk out my Grand journey—oh, and an amazing host of cookie recipes. Shellie and Chrys share from their personal grand journeys, and the stories they share are sweet, life-giving, and at times challenging.

But I know this: I'm encouraged to lean more into my grandparent time—it is so sweet and life-giving (and I don't have to be the rule enforcer—that's Mom and Dad's job!). This book will delight, inspire and encourage you—don't miss it.

MARY R SNYDER, Compassion International, virtual events team

As the Honey of seven grand darlings—ranging from newborn to teenager—myself, I appreciate Chrys and Shellie's sound wisdom from God's Word, seasoned with years of life experience as grandmothers themselves. From start to finish, this book is full of wit, humor, practical advice, and my personal favorite—tried and true recipes from a sisterhood of fellow grandmas that are guaranteed to be a blessing to your grandkids. I was encouraged on every page and reminded of the incredible privilege, honor, and responsibility I've been given to help shape and influence the next generation for His glory!

STEPHANIE "HONEY" HOLDEN, pastor's wife and storyteller

ROCKING IT GRAND



**Chrys Howard and
Shellie Rushing Tomlinson**

**FOCUS
ON THE FAMILY.**

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Dedication

I'm dedicating this book to my sweet grandchildren who challenge me to be the best I can be. Thank you, sweet grands, for the privilege of loving you and sharing life with you. In my quest to be a game-changing grandma, you are the real game-changers! Making each day shine so much brighter anytime you call, text, Snapchat, direct message, FaceTime, or—the best—come over to see me! I love you to the moon and back and can't wait for the next generation of great-grands to join our big family.

HUGS, 2-MAMA (CHRYS)



What a blessing it is to dedicate my share of these words to my grands, The Super Six. You wreck my heart in the best of ways, and experiencing life through your eyes is the gift that keeps on giving. You remind me just how important it is to laugh hard, play harder, and truly see our Father's world as it unfolds around us. Life with you makes me a better person. Here's to more grand adventures! To borrow the phrasing of C. S. Lewis, my deepest desire for you and for me is that we begin to know God and never finish.

HUGS, KEGGIE (SHELLIE)

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Introduction

Welcome to *Rocking It Grand!* If you've found this book, you're either a new grandma or already have a few little cuties who love you unconditionally and call you one of the many nontraditional grandma names floating around today. Chrys is called "2-mama" by her grands and Shellie is called "Keggie" by hers. We love our names and wouldn't trade them for the world, and we're sure you love yours, too.

So are we rocking this grandma thing? Absolutely! And we love keeping up on social media with our grandma friends as they post and boast about their grands. It's the one thing the world can agree on—grandkids add sparkle to any day, even if they're not your grandchildren. But yours are the best. Right?

As much as we love our grands and need them in our lives, guess what? They need us, too. Not just for an occasional cookie or the lollipop you hide in your purse for bribing purposes, but because we fill their love tanks. A grandma

is the one person capable of taking over when Mom can't be there. Even if Mom is in the same room, a hurting child just might turn to Grandma because no one hugs, soothes, and comforts better than she can.

You might be thinking, *What are the rules for being a grandma today? It seems like things have changed since my days as a grandchild. I'm not anything like my grandma. Plus, things have changed since my kids were little. What does a grandma in today's world look like?*

We don't have all the answers, but we have some! And we would love to go on this amazing grandma journey with you as, together, we hone our grandma skills.

We've used Scripture, quotes, and our own personal stories to help you understand just how valuable grandmas can be! We have the potential to be game-changers, but to do so, we must be intentional. It won't happen accidentally. It can be tempting to step aside and play a lesser role because we've raised our children, but we want to challenge all of us to step up and into this grandma life, in the way God intends for one generation to mentor the next. God designed us in such a way that our influence is needed to help raise godly young men and women. Often stepping into such an important role can bring doubts and worries, but trust us when we say that you've got this because God's got you! So rock on, Grandma!

As a bonus, we've included twenty cookie recipes from the rocking grandmas in our families. You'll find our contributions as you turn the page. We know that some days just call for a good cookie. Isn't that right, Grandma?

INTRODUCTION

Hugs to all you “rocking” grandmas.
Chrys and Shellie

2-mama's Famous B-52s

This is a family favorite that Chrys started making in her early twenties. She believes the original name was I-45s, but when she took it to a family gathering for the first time, someone asked her the name and she couldn't remember it. So she said B-52s. That's been the name ever since. Whatever it's called, it's a favorite. Enjoy!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 stick of butter, melted
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 8-ounce package of cream cheese, softened
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar, unsifted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 pinch of salt

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 325°F. Combine melted butter, 1 egg, and cake mix. Spread into the bottom of a 9" x 13" pan, forming a small edge around the sides. Combine cream cheese, 2 eggs, brown sugar, confectioners' sugar, vanilla, and salt. Beat until

smooth. Spread over cake mixture. (Here's where that edge you formed helps hold in the cream cheese mixture.) Bake at 325°F for 45 minutes. When done, sprinkle with confectioners' sugar (because it's not sweet enough!). Let cool. Cut into squares.

Baking cookies is comforting, and cookies are the sweetest little bit of comfort food. They are very bite-sized and personal.

— SANDRA LEE —

TV HOST, FOOD AND LIFESTYLE AUTHOR, AND
CONTRIBUTOR FOR *Good Morning America*

Keggie's Amazing Chocolate Caramel Cookies

This is as near to perfect as a cookie can get. It'll bake to a nice crunch around the edges, while maintaining a chewy center, thanks to those caramel pieces. Keggie says trust her. You'll score big points with these cookies!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) salted butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 2 eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2¾ cups (12 ounces) all-purpose flour
- ¾ teaspoon coarse sea salt

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1 teaspoon baking soda
1½ teaspoons baking powder
1½ cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
1½ cups caramel chips

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Cream softened butter with sugars. Blend about 2 minutes until the batter is fluffy, and then add eggs and vanilla extract. Continue blending another couple of minutes. Add baking soda, baking powder, and salt. Slowly add flour until it's incorporated into the batter. This last step will deliver the chocolate bang and the chewy caramel flavor: Add semisweet chocolate chips and caramel chips! Drop 1½ tablespoons of batter per cookie on a cookie sheet and bake 14 to 16 minutes. Closely watch your cookies because all ovens vary. Your cookies are ready when the edges are golden brown. Allow the cookies to cool a couple of minutes on the cookie sheet—if you can.

A balanced diet is a cookie in each hand.

BARBARA JOHNSON

AUTHOR AND WOMEN OF FAITH SPEAKER EMERITUS

Our Ceiling Is Their Floor

A few years ago, I (Chrys) traveled with my granddaughter Sadie Robertson to one of her speaking appearances. While there, I ran into a young lady who had attended a church in our small town and knew our family. She asked if she could bless me and pray over me. Her words touched my heart in a profound way. She said that the hard work my husband and I had done in the Kingdom of God would be the foundation for our children and grandchildren to serve the Lord. Then she said, “Your ceiling will be the floor for the lives of your grandchildren.” Wow! What an inspiring thought! All the things we had worked for, prayed about, strived to achieve, aimed to do, conquered, cried over, and fought for become

the floor—the foundation—for our grandchildren to build upon!

It was such a powerful blessing, especially on that day, since I was with my granddaughter who was about to speak to a group of teens about her faith. My granddaughter is so much more than I was at eighteen years old. She passed me up in spiritual growth and now speaks to thousands of young people about Jesus. She's also been on a national dance competition show where she proudly and boldly shone the light on Jesus. Is Sadie able to do all of those things so comfortably and confidently because she's standing on the spiritual floor built by her parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents?

I saw this concept come to life in 2017 when my husband, Johnny, and I decided to take our entire family to Israel for a tour of the Holy Land. It was such a blessing to walk where Jesus walked with my kids and grandkids. None of us will ever forget our trip. One of the most profound places we visited was in Jerusalem. There we stood gazing into a giant hole. In that deep hole, people can view the remnants of three different civilizations—one on top of another. What this young lady at Sadie's speaking engagement had prayed over me I was now seeing in real life. One civilization was built on top of another. Centuries came and went. As each generation (or civilization) worked and toiled to build their lives, they set the stage for the next generation to continue the work. Years of excavating now give us a clear picture of how one civilization's ceiling became the floor of another.

But how does this work with *spiritual* ceilings and floors?

I have no idea what my great-grandparents did on a day-to-day basis, but I do know that they loved God. I'm fairly confident they didn't attend anything that resembled a major Christian youth rally like the event I attended with Sadie. I can also say with confidence that they didn't attend a summer camp where they played games and swam in a big pool. No, these events didn't exist in their time. But I'm sure they attended church, fed the hungry, cared for the sick, and went to the church potluck. I know they tucked their kids into bed at night and prayed over them.

You see, the layers of spiritual civilizations will look as different as the layers of physical civilizations. As a society and as individuals we grow and change; our methods will change even when the message does not. Just as every civilization cooks and cares for their families, each in a different way, every civilization seeks God in a distinct manner. While I can't dig a hole to see the layers of God's Word lived out in the lives of my ancestors, I know it happened. I heard the stories and am a recipient of their good deeds.

Here's one example: My husband's dad, Alton Howard, founded a Christian camp in 1967. His vision was to create a place where young people could learn more about God and each other while being outside in nature. He bought a hundred acres in West Monroe, Louisiana, and the dream began. Now more than fifty years later, his great-grandson, John Luke Robertson, is the director of that camp. Papaw Howard had no idea his great-grandson would one day take over the camp's operations, but he would be happy to know it. Papaw

laid the foundation, my husband and I kept it going, and now John Luke is growing it into the future.

Recently, I was blessed to participate in a podcast with my mother, Jo, one of my daughters, Korie, and one of my granddaughters, Bella. Four of our five generations were represented in this podcast about legacy. We were asked to share one thing that we valued and had handed down to our children. Since Bella was the youngest and didn't have children, she planned to share something that had been passed on to her. Yet all of us—even my mother, who is ninety at the time I write this—shared what had been handed down to us. Then we talked about the values we wanted to pass on to others. We had assumed only Bella would share what had been handed down to her. But we discovered that we couldn't share what we'd passed along to our own children until we talked about what we ourselves had received. That's legacy living. That's leaving a ceiling strong enough to carry the weight of your children and grandchildren and supportive enough to inspire more growth in the future generation.

As we contemplate our legacies, one thing we must consider is how we'll confidently hand over the reins to our children and grandchildren. My daddy was a wise man; he always told me that no one is irreplaceable.

In our lifetimes, we've seen talented men and women come and go. They had remarkable, brilliant minds like Steve Jobs; unforgettable acting skills like John Wayne; comedic genius like Robin Williams; amazing voices like Whitney Houston, and on and on. Each of these men and women held a place

in this world big enough that many people wondered if they could be replaced. But then someone did. New voices, new ideas, new jokes—something new replaces what we thought was irreplaceable. And over and over, we hear of young men and women who credit one of the people I mentioned above with laying a foundation for them to grow. They raised up a ceiling that became the floor for others to build upon.

Ecclesiastes says, “For everything there is a season” (Ecclesiastes 3:1), and God designed us for a specific time and place. Each of us will take our turns at being a child and a teenager, and many of us will become moms and dads and grandparents. It’s the circle of life that is so beautifully displayed in the movie and play *The Lion King*. It’s glorious to be part of a moment when you *realize* the legacy is being passed on.

Yet many of us feel confused and uncertain about our purpose as we reach this new stage of life. That’s natural. After pouring our hearts, souls, and everything else into raising our kiddos, it’s no wonder it takes us a while to find a new purpose. When the grandbabies start arriving, we think, *You’ve got this. This is familiar territory. It will all come back. It’s like riding a bike.* But when it’s your turn to babysit, the new mom shows up with a video baby monitor (which we never had), a heart monitor to strap on the baby’s foot (which we never had), a huge blanket and instructions to “swaddle the baby” (which we never did), and a sound machine (which we never had). That’s when we begin to let thoughts swirl around in our heads: *You’re out of sync with the world. You don’t know what you’re doing. You don’t have anything to offer.*

We're here to tell you *none of that is true!*

Just because times change doesn't mean your purpose has changed. In fact, your purpose just became more valuable. In Proverbs 13:22, King Solomon wrote: "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children." He's talking about your grandchildren—your children's children. King Solomon, who was the wisest man in the world, saw how important we, the grandparents, are in the lives of our grandchildren.

But what kind of inheritance is Solomon talking about? When I listened to eighteen-year-old Bella share on the podcast that she loved her family because they encouraged her to be anything she wanted to be and not feel tied to her hometown, I knew. Solomon wasn't talking about leaving a financial inheritance. He was talking about leaving our grandchildren values, attitudes, attributes, and character traits that will catapult them into adulthood with confidence and strength. I had three children to mentor, shape, and mold. I have fourteen grands and five great-grandchildren, so far. My job hasn't gone away—it's multiplied! It's the same for you. As long as we're on this earth, we're to keep aiming high and fortifying our ceilings so our children's children will have foolproof floors, foolproof foundations.

I love the song "The Blessing" performed by Kari Jobe and Cody Carnes. The lyrics speak of God's favor resting upon the generations, from parents to their children and then to their grandchildren.

In your grandparenting role, you are no less important

than you have been at any time in your life. Your children and their children and their children are all counting on you. It's your turn to be the tried, true, and tested one. It's your turn to pass wisdom, experience, and capability on to the next generation.

Our future generations depend on you and me! Let's raise the bar high!

Hugs,
Chrys

Reflect on It



ALL GOOD MEN AND WOMEN MUST TAKE RESPONSIBILITY TO
CREATE LEGACIES THAT WILL TAKE THE NEXT GENERATION TO
A LEVEL WE COULD ONLY IMAGINE.

JIM ROHN, AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN AND AUTHOR

If you don't have the generational legacy of faith that I have, it can start with you. If you have grandchildren, you're already the generational leader of your family. I once read that grandchildren are not able to picture their grandparents as young men and women. On some levels that's a sad reality, but on other levels, it's a blessing. Our grandchildren have the opportunity to experience the best of us. While we're not perfect, we've lived through many adventures. Share those adventures with your grands. Teach them through your stories and allow them to see you today as a woman of integrity.

After you're gone, how you lived your life will help them make life decisions with more confidence. They will surely ask themselves, *What would grandma (or grandpa) do?*

Remember It

We will not hide them from their children,
but tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.

PSALM 78:4

Rock It

Discovering your genealogy has never been easier. Track down some of your ancestry, and then write it down for your kids and grands. Because I've done this, I walked into a Mississippi museum and recognized the name of an Indian chief! He was a cousin of an ancestor who was also a Choctaw Indian chief. Give your kids and grandkids a brief history lesson about those who walked before them.

K-mama's Haystack Cookies

K-mama is Korie Robertson's grandma name. Korie is Chry's daughter. This is the perfect fall cookie and one Korie made often when her kids were little. It's easy to make and fun to eat.

OUR CEILING IS THEIR FLOOR

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 ounces butterscotch chips
- 6 ounces peanut butter chips
- 3 tablespoons peanut butter (regular, not all-natural or chunky)
- 1 package (6 ounces) dry chow mein noodles

DIRECTIONS:

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. In a large bowl, combine the butterscotch chips, peanut butter chips, and peanut butter. Microwave on 50% power in 30-second intervals until the chips begin to lose their shape. Stir until melted and smooth. Quickly fold in the chow mein noodles with a large rubber spatula. While the mixture is still warm, form into small mounds (about 2 inches wide and 2 inches tall) on the lined baking sheet. Let sit at room temperature until firm. Store in an airtight container at room temperature.

*A grandma's cookie jar
can never be too full.*

————— KAY ROBERTSON —————

