A year ago, I bought a book. I was in Barnes and Nobles book store and for whatever reason, I purchased a book on the philosophies of Kindness. I started reading the book each day by our community poolside.

When a neighbor asked me what I was reading, I answered her, but I felt embarrassed that I couldn’t call our some fancy name that would really impress her.

As I continued to read the book, I was also deciding that I would put into practice many of the ideas and values that I supported. So from that day forward, whenever a situation came up, I tried to handle it in a manner that would support the act of kindness.

That year, I had many dealings with my mother. She was slowly becoming mentally deficient and so she needed a lot of help.

When I look back on that year, I feel at ease in the ways that I performed around her during the tender months, days and hours that lead up to her gradual departure from our lives.

I attribute the peace that I currently feel to the purchase of that book. It gave me enough information to lead me to self evaluate my behavior day by day.

While in my presence, I noticed the abundant smiles that my mother shared with me. As I learned and accepted the principles of kindness in my own life, I became more aware of how this change was also impacting her daily experiences in a positive way.

I am grateful that I did not ignore my instincts when I saw that book on the shelf in the bookstore. I am additionally grateful that I took the time to read the book and accepted its viewpoint.

I look back on the decline of her health that year, what could have been considered an unbearable, disparaging occasion for my mother, became humbling, loving and peaceful instead.

We had many conversations, as she bounced back and forth between a good day and a painful day. She once said that if she slept away, she would not be abandoning the family, she would only be departing from the pains of the body that she was born into. She wanted me to know that her faith assured her that the family would be alright with or without her presence. She felt that she had done her job by giving us the tools to accomplish anything that we set out to do.

She concluded, that if we were to follow by her example, we would remember to put our love and faith first. By doing this, we would inwardly know what we were to do from day to day.

I believe that she finally found her peace.