

Be Someone's Moral Measuring Stick

My father and my grandfather told me to “be the man [I] was supposed to be” since I was young. In their code, this means telling the truth, acting honorably, playing fairly, working hard.

It's the code of farmers, and it's rare to find in the city, where the simple code sometimes invites scorn or condescension.

When I make the right (even if hard) decision, it is comforting to know that at least my father and grandfather would be proud. With them as fixed points in my mind I can afford to let the outside world get to me a little less.

My grandfather was a man who lived as he ought. My father is a man who lives by the code. And because of that they are moral measuring sticks for me, constants and landmarks for moral navigation and self-evaluation. This is what I'd like to be for my children and grandchildren.

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