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Chapters

turning the pages through grief

5 Life Lessons

Losing My Father Taught Me

by Confidence Coach Susie Moore
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My Father was just 59 when he passed. I was 19. We knew for a few years that it was coming — he had a bad heart and an addictive lifestyle. But the finality of it was still shocking and heartbreaking. That was almost 11 years ago. I think of my father every day and the funny, assuring thing about time is that it allows grief to change shape. Certainly if I remember certain tender moments my dad and I shared, on a particularly sensitive day, I can weep as if losing him were yesterday. Over the years however I have consciously sought some positivity in the loss and have tried to live a life he would be proud of.

When I reflect upon my life without him I realize that there are five key things that the past 11 years have taught me.

1. Love is stronger than death.

My relationship with my dad continues. He lives on through my sister and I. When I make a delicious roast lamb, win at scrabble, watch old English television, read the classics and even write an article (my father was an author), I feel as if we are together. Physical planes cannot separate love. My sister feels this way, too. And I know we are right.



"I don't care what your cup says, we can't both be the world's best dad!"

2. People who are going through the most can often hide it the best.

I hid my loss from people to avoid sympathy. I still do. Anyone who had lost a parent, or anyone for that matter, knows the awkward moment when family arises in conversation. Like when people ask about our parents and we talk about only one. It's not that it upsets us to talk about it

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JUNE
2023

*Any man can be a father, but it takes
someone special to be a dad.*
— ANNE GEDDES

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(although sometimes it might), we don't want to explain, make you feel comfortable with having asked etc. When I was struggling the most I had the shiniest veneer to deflect any further discomfort. Never guess what someone's story is or what they are going through. It's impossible to know.

3. Mortality is motivating.

If I live to my dad's age, and I hope I am fortunate to live much longer, my life is already half way through now at age 30. This sounds morbid but to me it is encouraging. I think when we come to terms with our death, both metaphorically and literally, we are at our most courageous and powerful. I also simply don't sweat the small stuff like I used to.

4. To write memories down.

I share this advice with friends when people they lose a loved one and they often thank me later. It is such an intense time — the months we grieve — there is so much we can forget. Write down the last moments you shared and the most precious moments you can

Nothing is more important and worthy of your time than the people you love. Nothing.

remember with that person. Be vivid in your writing. You will reread this many times over the course of your life.

5. Get to know the people you love.

As the old Baz Luhrmann song, "Wear Sunscreen," said, "Get to know your parents, you never know when they will be gone for good." Spend time with your parents, your siblings, your old friends. Ask them questions about their lives. What did they think about the world when they were your age? What are their passions? When were they the happiest in their lives? I did this recently with my mom and the answers surprised me. Nothing is more important and worthy of your time than the people you love. Nothing.

What has loss taught you?

Susie Moore is a writer & life coach based in New York City. She inspires and educates people to live the lives they imagined by tuning in to their authentic power and unlocking the confidence to ask for what they really, really want. You can sign up for Susie's free weekly wellness newsletter at www.susie-moore.com.

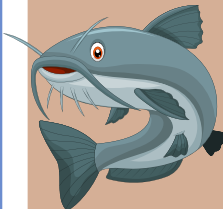


Sometimes the best advice is a break from advice. Enjoy your favorite beverage and these tidbits of this & that.



- The thing dads want most Father's Day, according to a survey, is phone call from their kids.

- Flamingos are an animal dad that shares equal responsibility with his partner for building a nest, incubating the egg, and sharing parental duties of the hatchling.

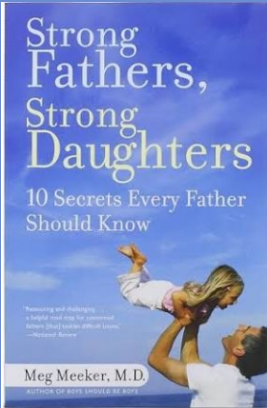


- A catfish dad will keep the eggs of his children in his mouth until they hatch.

- There are around 72 million fathers in America.



Bookmarks



■ In this unique and invaluable guide, Dr. Meg Meeker, a pediatrician with more than 20 years' experience counseling girls, reveals that a young woman's relationship with her father is far more important than we've ever realized. To become a strong, confident woman, a daughter needs her father's attention, protection, courage, and wisdom. Dr. Meeker shares the ten secrets every father needs to know in *Strong Fathers, Strong Daughters*.

■ *Every Friday* will appeal to children who have or would like to have routines and traditions with their dads. In this simple story about father-son bonding, a boy and his father look forward to their Friday ritual of breakfast at their favorite diner and a walk through the neighborhood. *Every Friday* received a New York Times Best Illustrated Book of the Year and a Bank Street Best Children's Book of the Year.



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