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Chapters

turning the pages through grief

REMEMBERING DAD

...just the
way he was

By
Eileen
Madsen

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Chapters Newsletter

Typically, celery shouldn't make one cry, or feel nostalgic. None the less, I can't eat it without remembering my dad. He had celery every evening with supper. I used to watch him closely when I was a kid, so I could crunch, crunch, crunch it like he did. I don't know anyone who could make as much noise with a vegetable as my dad could.

The problem was, I hated celery, no matter how delicious it sounded. Much like the sound of patent leather shoes on the sidewalk. An oddly satisfying clackity clack—even though the shoes were uncomfortable and not particularly stylish. You have to take the good with the bad I guess.

Same with our fathers. They aren't perfect. Some are close to it in our eyes, and others not so much. My dad has been gone now nearly 20 years. Of course I miss him, but I am used to it. Except for when I'm not.

My dad was the very epitome of the meaning of the word "dad." He was a quiet guy who loved his vocation as a mechanic, and worked very hard running his own shop. He treasured his evenings with the newspaper, lying on the couch, or watching Hawaii 5-0 and Mannix. He was devoted to my mom, was sincere and steadfast in his faith, and especially in his support of his children. That didn't mean we could get away with anything. Far from it. But he was always on our side when it mattered. And we knew it. There are days now, even if I am Medicare age, that I could use that kind of support—to know there's a dad in my corner.

I remember once when some bully in grade school was threatening me and my sister, and demanding our names so he could turn us in to the principal for whatever he imagined two little girls did. We ran home and told dad. His suggestion was to tell him our names were, "Puddin' & 'Tain, ask me again and I'll tell ya the same." Of course we didn't really know

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JUNE
2025

Any man can be a father, but it takes
someone special to be a dad.

—Anne Geddes

...continued from front

what he was saying, referencing some old song. All we knew was that dad came to our rescue. He had a surprisingly impish sense of humor at times. He'd also never let us hear him swear, replacing expletives with tamer versions. Although, when I heard him use terms such as "who is this sausage coming to the door during dinner!" or "What a chowderhead!" I knew he meant business.

Sure, dad has his issues. He liked everything just so—the temperature in the room, the speed of the fan, the volume of music, how his sandwich was cut—it was his way or no way when it came to so many things. And if things weren't exactly as he thought they should be, everyone, including total strangers would hear about how wrong they were. He also let my brothers get away with practically everything, while us sisters were held to a higher standard. Sigh.

But, I have come to realize there's a healthy dose of dad in me. So when I am missing him I channel those attributes by rooting for my nieces and nephews, working hard, loving my husband, and maybe calling a few people "sausages" now and then.

It's human nature to turn our loved ones who have passed into some glorified version of themselves.

But I don't think it does their lives or memory justice. We need to honor the good, the bad, and the crunchy. Now pass the celery and turn that music down, will you?

CARE & FEEDING of YOUR GRIEVING PERSON

@refugeingrief

LEAVE THEM CARE PACKAGES



BE SPECIFIC ABOUT HOW YOU CAN HELP



ASK QUESTIONS



REMEMBER BIG DATES

SET A CALENDAR REMINDER FOR BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, HOLIDAYS AND SEND A TEXT OR NOTE.



PARALLEL PLAY

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TALK TO SPEND TIME TOGETHER. YOUR PRESENCE MATTERS.



ACKNOWLEDGE THE LITTLE DATES

AN ORDINARY SATURDAY CAN SUCK TOO.



SAY THEIR NAME

SHARE A MEMORY, SAY THEIR PERSON'S NAME.



LET THEM BE SAD

SADNESS IS HEALTHY.



BE AWKWARD

IT'S OK IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY OR DO. YOUR FRIEND NEEDS YOU! DON'T LET FEELING AWKWARD STOP YOU.



YOU DON'T NEED TO BE PERFECT, JUST PRESENT.

Refuge in Grief, art by Brittany Bilyeu, refugeingrief.com

The Lessons of Grief

"For me grieving over losing loved ones has been different every time. **My dad died suddenly and I had a difficult time even talking about it for a year.** It just was not real. My mom passed after ten years of fighting cancer. I didn't grieve as much as when my dad died. I still question that. I loved her and hated losing her, but she was free from the grips of the monster that cancer is. Then there was our dog, Harley. Yes, we grieve our pets. We had lost several pets before him, but losing him hit me hard. Hard to explain, but I still tear up over that. He was the best. Our hearts eventually heal, but the sorrow is still there deep inside. It's different for each of us and we all handle it the best we can. One thing for sure, there is definitely no time line on grief.

~Theralyn S.

BREAK TIME

Sometimes the best advice is a break from advice. Take 5 and enjoy these tidbits of this & that.



- **Summer Solstice:** The summer solstice, marking the first day of summer in the Northern Hemisphere, typically falls on or around June 20th or 21st.

- **Longest Daylight Hours:** June has the longest daylight hours of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.

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- **June Babies:** A study suggests that babies born in June tend to be taller than those born in other months.

- **June Birth Flowers:** The traditional birth flowers for June are roses and honeysuckle.

- **June Birthstones:** The traditional birthstones for June are pearl, alexandrite, and moonstone.



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