

An Ode to My Father

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Coaching for a Healthy Family

We PCI Certified Parent Coaches® are focused on parents in our coaching business. Sometimes, when I take my coaching hat off and turn the tables, I think of myself as the child and the influence my own parents had on my life. My father, almost 90 years old, passed away peacefully this summer. I was inspired to write this poem as I reflected upon his wonderful, gentle influence. I hope that one day my clients' children will be inspired to reflect kindly upon their parents' influence. Better yet, I hope my own children will be inspired by my influence upon them.

Every single person who has ever met my father has always remarked on what a true gentleman he was. It came from the core of his soul and his character shone out through his gentle eyes reflecting how he viewed the world.

His eyes were large, brown eyes that welcomed you with a twinkle and a soft smile. Cheery uplifting laugh lines at the corners reminded you that he enjoyed a good chuckle in spite of his serious nature.

His eyes saw possibilities that no others saw. He entered the highly conservative field of oil and gas working his way up through the ranks of exploration during an explosive period of growth, earning the admiration of his colleagues and management by finding oil and gas in previously unexplored areas.

His eyes saw hope when times were tough and trust that a better life was coming. He supported his mom, put three kids through college and graduate school. He worked steadily and dependably through the storms of life and work.

His eyes saw potential in people. He mentored many people at work, as well as friends and, of course, his own family. He always encouraged us to do our best and projected a quiet confidence that we would, indeed, be successful.

His eyes saw goodness in each person he met. As a young Chinese man in the deep South of the '50s, he looked each person, black or white, in the eyes with respect and an open mind. He was always ready to forgive and was able to see goodness even in people who had done him wrong.

His eyes saw adventure in the world and cultivated that spirit with his children and grandchildren. He drove us through the hot desert night to see us thrill in our first visit to Disneyland; brought us to wander through the golden statues in the gardens of the St. Petersburg summer palace; cruised us down the Yangtze river to catch sights now covered by water and climbed with us to admire the awesome sight of the Great Wall of China.

His eyes saw true love, faith and joy in my mother and his family. He gave us our character by the strength of his example and commitment to a sixty year marriage with all of its cycles thereby providing us with a guiding beacon to lead us through the trials and tribulations of our own lives.

I have my father's eyes. They are his gift to me...to my brother...to my sister...and to all our children.

We are the gentlemen and gentlewomen of T.Y. Chang. Through his eyes we have come to see goodness and potential in all people, endless possibilities in whatever we chose to do, hope in time of trial, a zest for adventure and travel, and most important of all - love, faith and joy in our family through all the cycles of life.

My father has started another journey but he will live on in each of his children and grandchildren as we go through our own life's journeys seeing the world through...

...My Father's Eyes.

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