

Losing Dad with Grace

We lost our dad on October 13, 2015 and our lives will forever be changed. Like anyone who loses a father, there is grief in losing someone you love so much. But, we also had the opportunity to experience his passing on his own terms which was courageous and an act of profound love for our family. He fought long and hard these past 10 years, but on that day he told us he was ready and not afraid. As my brother said, he went, he was not taken. And, we were able to let him go with grace.

My favorite time of the year is here. I absolutely love the holidays. Not the commercial side, but the feelings of family, friends, spirit, celebration and love. This is the time of year where I think about what I am grateful for. Through all the challenges and difficulties throughout the year, there are things that I am so grateful for. My father was a man who valued tradition, love and family. I am grateful for the legacy he left behind and the way it has shaped the family.

On Thanksgiving, we go around the table and everyone says what they are grateful for. The answers range from heart tugging to downright funny. As I look at the faces, I am overwhelmed with the feeling of how much I love each and every one of them. The wash of gratitude is so intense that thinking about it brings tears to my eyes. I look at all their different faces, eclectic personalities and varying points of view and love them all. This year the gratitude circle will be particularly emotional but grace will see it through.

I encourage you to *take in* the holidays instead of *going through* them. Think deeply about what you are grateful for and make a list of them, big and small. Use that list to remind you of what is really important. At Thanksgiving, look around the table at the faces of the people who drive you insane, make you mad, make you happy and most of all are irreplaceable.