

JUNE 2018 DAD

As I flip the calendar page from May to June, I can't help but remember my Dad. He's been gone for almost 30 years now, having died relatively young from years of hard work and hard living. A chemistry major in college, he went on to spend his entire career selling industrial polymers for DuPont. He traveled extensively and entertained frequently. When he was home, he spent a lot of time in solitary pursuits. He went to the health club, played golf, shot pool, paid bills, and watched detective shows. (He was particularly fond of Cannon.) I don't ever remember him working in the yard, puttering in the garage or shoveling snow. He never attended any of our school or sports events. Yet, he left the five of us with this incredible legacy—he taught us all to love to cook. He spent much of his weekend in the kitchen. He made spaghetti, veal scaloppini, scalloped potatoes and ham, chili, chicken cacciatore, bean soup, baked beans—pots and pots of spicy slop that could be reheated over and over again. I have a freezer full of his recipes.

Ultimately that is what a parent hopes—to better the world—to leave a legacy. This act fulfills the powerful adult need of generativity. Generativity is the persistent pursuit of an enduring achievement—a body of work, a difference, or most often a family. It can appear at any adult age but becomes a deeper calling as one approaches midlife. The concept was first defined by psychoanalyst Eric Erikson and later studied by Dan P. McAdams, chair of the psychology department at Northwestern University. McAdams in particular discusses generative goals and cites the Loyola Generativity Scale (adapted below) as a means of assessing one's generativity. See if any of its generative statements resonate with you.

I try to pass along the knowledge I have gained through my experiences.

I think I would like the work of a teacher.

I feel as though I have made a difference to others.

I have made and created things that have had an impact on other people.

I try to be creative in most things that I do.

I think that I will be remembered for a long time after I die.

Others would say that I have made unique contributions to society.

If I were unable to have children of my own, I would like to adopt children.

I have important skills that I try to teach others.

I have made many commitments to people, groups, and activities in my life.

Other people say that I am a very productive person.

I have a responsibility to improve the neighborhood in which I live.

People come to me for advice.

I feel as though my contributions will exist after I die.

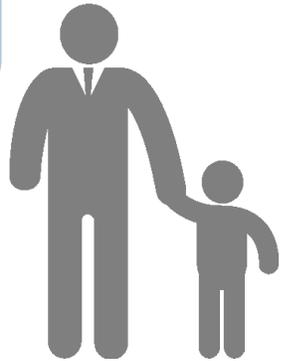




the supplement
FACILITATING VITALITY

This led me to ask colleagues and friends some questions. Their answers were surprisingly similar. What lessons did you learn from your Dad? What lessons are you passing on to your children?

- Get an education.
- Be honest.
- Respect everyone.
- Work hard, play hard.
- Practice.
- Listen.
- Be humble.
- Serve.
- Be kind.
- Shine your shoes.



While my Dad valued hard work, humility and honesty and we certainly took those lessons to heart, I think the cooking thing would have surprised him. Be sure to wish the fathers in your life a happy fathers' day and most especially thank them for their life lessons.



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