

Danny's speech

Today is a day I've not only feared but dreaded. It's a day of overwhelming emotions. It's a day of a journey of memories across my entire lifetime. I have so many things I want to share even though I know that this is going to be a difficult journey. I'm grateful however, that we all can share this journey together. Not gonna lie..it's a little overwhelming...albeit in a good way. Looking out among the many many people here today celebrating my father's life...it reminds me of just who he was...a man who was loved and respected by a great many people. It's difficult to wrap my mind around the fact that even this large group of people who loved and respected my father...that this large group represents only a tiny fraction of all the people whose lives were touched by Harvey. People who in some way...maybe something large...maybe something small were able to experience his many many great qualities.

I could talk for days on end about the good things he did..about the kindness and generosity he showed and it still wouldn't be close to covering everything. And I know that some of our guests have early bedtimes so I'll try to keep this shorter than that.

More importantly, I want to use this time to not only honor his memory and celebrate his life but I want to do something that he would approve of. I want to do something that would emulate who he was. That is to say...that I want to use this time to share not just stories about Harvey but also to hopefully plant seeds that will ultimately blossom and be shared by all of you to carry on his legacy. I know he would approve. I know that's what he wanted.

Many of you probably already know but my father was born and raised in Brooklyn New York. He had two wonderful parents. William..who was a kind and hard working man who worked as an electrician. He came from modest means and through perseverance and hard work made sure his family was always provided for. His mother Molly...was probably the closest person I have ever known who could have been nominated for sainthood. She saw the goodness in everyone and doted on her grandchildren like only a Jewish grandma could! Sadly his brother Arnie passed away at a far too young age but he too was a kind and hardworking soul.

My father went to Brooklyn Tech and then to Purdue where he got his degree in Chemical Engineering. From there he went to pursue..at least to my knowledge...the only job he had for his entire career earning an MBA along the way and bringing the family to Canada where he worked until he was able to retire early. To my recollection, my father retired (from work anyway) at an age younger than what I am today...somewhere between my age and my brothers. This seems nearly impossible to imagine today. It's not that he was fantastically wealthy financially. He made a comfortable living and was an excellent provider but he knew what he wanted to do and he took the steps necessary to continue living in a comfortable yet never ostentatious way. This marks two of the lessons (or maybe seeds) that I want to plant today. 1. Do what you love...which unsurprisingly he reminded me of during one of our last recent conversations. 2. Live within your means. My father strongly believed in enjoying what he had and not being wasteful even though he was generous with everyone around him. I remember him once talking about getting a big screen tv at a time when that was a luxury not many could afford...He said...I'd like it...but I'll let the urge pass. Through smart investing and being a good steward of his finances in general

he enjoyed life to the fullest. His love of travel was also definitely supported by his incredible talent for finding ways to get free airline miles through credit card and hotel offers while never paying a penny in interest charges. Somewhere at Visa or Mastercard...I know his picture is hanging in a hall of fame for beating their system.

Growing up my brother and I had incredible experiences. Rather than overly focus on material things, he made sure we traveled across the US and Canada. These trips always included museums and historical sites because he knew the value of learning about our history and respecting all those who went before us to give us the country we have today. He made sure we always had nice clothes and good bikes to ride. Beyond that, he also taught us the value and importance of earning money if you wanted other things. Hard work was part of the family heritage. Both my brother and I worked for extra money from an early age with paper routes and various jobs in our teens. This is a lesson that took hold and we have upheld throughout our lives. Whatever you want, you can get it if you earn it. You can usually earn it if you are willing to work hard and save responsibly....again with the exception of those credit card miles

That being said, he also not only stressed the importance of generosity...he lived it daily. Generous with his means, generous with his time, generous with his energy. He found happiness in sharing with others and while smart with his money, he was never stingy. As I reflect on these qualities by the way...I realize that there are few if any people who could actually find an unkind word to describe him. He never took any measure of pleasure in seeing someone experience misfortune.

He met our mother Bonnie at Purdue University. They married and a couple years later...I was welcomed into the family. Roughly 6 years after that...we welcomed my little brother Doug. Once again....he would become a role model in a new way. As a husband and partner. Bonnie and Harvey were two very different people but they shared a bond and a marriage that lasted until Bonnie passed from cancer in 2008. Even though the final years brought many challenges to their relationship..he never left her side and cared for her until her last day. Few people are ever so fortunate to find that kind of love and lasting relationship...but like I've said...my dad wasn't like most people. After a couple of years of the single life he defied all the odds and found love a second time. He fell in love with Eileen McHenry and created a new unity known affectionately as McBeef. Eileen had some pretty big shoes to fill but she more than filled them. My dad changed in so many ways after meeting Eileen. He started eating healthier, exercising more, traveled the world again and again and perhaps most notably...developed a sense of fashion. After years of accomplishing everything possible with Eddie Bauer polo shirts and levi's action slacks, Eileen inspired Harvey to dress up and have fun. Most people are fortunate if they can find true love once. My dad found it twice. In doing so he also gave my brother and I yet another precious gift. I have a wonderful stepmother 2 wonderful step-sisters and step brother, 4 amazing little nephews and a niece..and that's just so far 😊 . He was pop-pop to them and I was in awe of the joy they brought to his life. They adored him and he adored them. I swear they made him younger when they were around! Im sorry they won't get to enjoy him into their teens and beyond but what they wont have in years I hope they made up for with an abundance of love

Looking around at all the people here is heartwarming beyond words. He didn't have to be a celebrity to earn your love...he was just himself. He volunteered at his computer club helping anyone who needed some guidance. He exercised like a man a third his age. I remember him telling me...I swam two miles today...then I rode the exercise bike for a couple miles..then I went for a two mile walk...this was when

he was 81 years young. Once again...a role model and an inspiration. He led not by words but by example. He made everyone around him want to do better and be better.

I want to close by mentioning the very last conversation I had in person with my dad. It was probably the hardest conversation I ever had to have. He did his best to make it easier for me. He told me that he wasn't scared and he wasn't sad. He told me that he lived a good life and that was good enough. I struggled not to burst into tears as I witnessed his bravery knowing that his time with us here was drawing to a close. He then told me...the most important thing. The man who taught me to be a gentleman. The man who taught me to look people in the eye when you spoke to them. The man who insisted that I address adults as Ma'am and Sir. That I greeted people with a firm handshake and held the door for everyone no matter what. The man who taught me the importance of kindness, generosity and integrity. All of those things he taught me at an early age....but he had one last lesson to teach me. One that seemed so obvious and yet I had not truly understood or even heeded until he said it. He said Danny...the most important thing is to do what makes you happy and enjoy your life. Do not wait until.... If you want to sing...sing...if you want to do theater...do theater. Travel if you want...whatever it is. Do it and don't wait until because you don't know when it is going to arrive. I plan to finally do this. Those words will guide the rest of my life

In closing I want to share one last story. My father was not devoutly religious but the values of our religion were certainly ingrained. He reached out to a family member who was wise in the ways of our religion. He asked this family member about what happens after we die. It was complicated and there were plenty of different ideas but what he understood was that the most important thing is that even when someone dies in the physical form, they are kept alive through the memories of all the people whose lives they have touched. If you think about all the many many people whose lives were made even a little bit better... He may not be present here among us in body but all the goodness he shared will be carried on and passed down generation to generation. Any of us who learned from his example will carry that forward and share it with others. In other words...he has achieved immortality. Alive forever in our hearts, in our memories, and in our actions. Thank you Dad. I love you. I wish I had said that more when you were here to hear me. I promise to you now and to everyone here that I will carry your legacy forward and always try to leave the world a little better than I found it.