

I wasn't sure how to start this, largely because I never wanted to say it. But I'm going to try.

I consider myself to be an extremely lucky person. I may not be feeling very lucky right now – but I am. I am Walter Steinberg's son. And that means much, much more than could ever be drawn on a family tree.

As everyone here must know, my dad was amazing. During my childhood, I admired my father *tremendously*. I was enormously proud to tell people that he was *my father*. I saw in him everything that I could possibly want in a father. He was ridiculously smart, he was *really* funny, he was the president of his company, he was a pilot, and he knew *everything* about *everything*. And he always took the time to be – a *dad*. We would do little projects together. Well, most of the time he would do projects and I would hold the flashlight. But he told everyone that *we* did it.

I just have to share something that was so classic “Dad”. Several years ago, he had heart bypass surgery. When he woke up later on, he gave a thumbs up to show he was ok, and my mother asked him if she could get him anything. He couldn't speak, but he tried to mouth what he wanted. We couldn't figure out what he was saying. He tried again, but still we had no idea. So he reached up and finger spelled in the air “P A S T R A M I”.

This is a man who, every winter, would build a skating rink on our patio. What an incredible thing to have.

He used to bring home calendars – Snoopy calendars – that he made for us. He brought home punch tape that he had punched holes into in the shape of our names.

He bought us Pong. He bought us computers. He let me fly the plane, which was absolutely amazing.

He took us to the plant on weekends and let us play. We had a lot of fun. And I think he had fun, too. There was a soda machine in the back of the shop, and one time he wanted to buy us soda but he didn't have any change. So he got the key to the machine, opened the coin holder, folded up a dollar bill and stuck it in with the coins and then closed it up. I think he wanted to see the reaction of the guy who collected the change from the machine.

When I was very young, I was less than 10, I told him I wanted a toy car. So he sketched one out on paper, asked me if it looked ok, and then he went down to the basement and he made it for me. I still have it. And I always will.

For many years I took piano lessons in Brooklyn every Saturday. And it was usually my dad who would drive me there. I got two hours alone with him every Saturday. And we would talk. And it was wonderful. Very often we would stop at Republic Field on the way back, and we'd just sit and watch the planes.

He always, *always*, showed us that he genuinely respected us. As *kids*. And that meant a lot to me.

He showed us just how strong relationships are, and just how important family is. He demonstrated *every day* how much he loved my mother. And that has carried over into my own marriage.

When Jamie and I found out that we were losing our son, I don't know how – or if – we would have made it through that without the support that he and my mother gave us.

My dad always taught me how to take the high road. And how to do the right thing, even when it was the harder choice.

He taught me the value of education. And how to be proud of myself. He never spoke harshly to me. He helped me in Boy Scouts, he encouraged me in school, and he never said he was too busy for me.

My dad was so great at giving advice. He always knew when something was bothering me, and he *always* knew exactly what to say to make things better. We had a very special connection that I can't adequately describe, but maybe I can give a quick example. When I was maybe 10 or 12, we were talking and he brought up something very philosophical. He asked my opinion ... but at my age I really had no thoughts on the subject yet. But I never forgot the conversation. And about 10 years later I called him, and I started the conversation by saying, "You know what? I think you're right. I think it *is* such-and-such." And then I said, "Oh, you probably have no idea what I'm even talking about." And he said, "Sure I do, you're talking about [-this-]. We were just talking about it." *Just talking about it* – 10 years ago.

People measure success in many different ways. For some it's a measure of wealth and personal possessions. For others it may be recognition and awards. But I have a different idea of what success is, and I think my father did, too.

To me, a person's success is measured by the regard in which they are held, and the impact that they have on others. And I don't think anyone could disagree that my father was extraordinarily successful.

I love my father. And I know that I've got more than a few years left. I don't know how I'm going to make it without him. But I'm going to do my best. And I'm going to make him proud.