

HAPPY BIRTHDAY DADDY!

Thursday 18th April 2019. Today would have been the 70th birthday of my late father John Francis Morrison. Much has already been said about my father and from the many tributes and stories, that followed his passing, it is easy to see how many people he inspired throughout his lifetime. For me, he was my Hero. My Friend. My Mentor. The quintessential example of what every father should aspire to be. I, like the rest of my family, are completely heartbroken but given time we will heal in the ways he himself had taught us.

Always the teacher and forever passing on his many words of wisdom with whomever wanted to listen, I am following his example and passing on some of the wisdom he imparted to me. Within this article are several quotes and pieces of advice my father had given to me over the years. Some are more poignant now than they were when he first told them to me:

“Never be afraid to cry, son. Crying is the body’s valve for releasing emotional stress.”

Being taught to show emotion in healthy forms is something he always tried to teach everywhere he went. He believed that people were at their best whenever they were both comfortable and in full control of their emotions. Hiding or suppressing emotions causes inner turmoil which eventually manifests itself physically throughout the body causing sickness and chronic disease.

“Ink it! Don’t think it!”

A deep thinker he always wrote, made notes or scribed annotations on a multitude of topics. It is no surprise that he became a columnist because whether it was an idea, coaching point, possible book, a new drill or simply something that was on his mind; if he felt it was important it was written down for future reference.

“Ideas are like rabbits, keep two of them together and soon you’ll have hundreds.”

Always be creative and never be afraid to try new ideas or something different that goes against the grain. Variety is a spice of life and without it everything would be monotonous and mundane. If new ideas work that’s great and if they don’t that’s also great, remember ‘I either WIN or I LEARN.’

“Be like an onion.”

Harp’s under-10 training sessions started with this quote especially when some kids turned up in bad weather wearing just shorts and a t-shirt. It meant to always wear plenty of layers because they can be removed or put back on if too hot or too cold. Essentially it taught us practicality and that preparation is key in everything we do.

“Be careful of people who want to pat you on the back, they may just be looking for soft spots.”

Be humble with success and don’t make fame and fortune your motivation or reward. Set practical, realistic goals and align these with both your personal and work life goals as

well as surrounding yourself with people who have similar values to your own and who value your friendship based on a cohesive bond rather than favourable association.

“Luck is merely the place where opportunity and preparation meet.”

Attributed to the Roman philosopher Seneca, and one of Daddy’s favourite quotes, to be fully prepared for every eventual outcome is to be truly lucky. The more prepared you are for a given situation the more chance of the opportunity providing a favourable outcome. Therefore, people make their own luck.

“Children don’t remember what you said, they always remember how you made them feel.”

Daddy was adamant that adults were just big children meaning that who we are when fully grown is learnt in our early cognitive stages of development. What we learn in these youthful years is what develops our innate traits and abilities for our future use. It is vital to focus more on how we say things to our children rather than the actual words as this is what reinforces your message, so ensure it is always articulated in a positive manner.

“Wonderful”

Whenever asked how he was, Daddy’s answer was always “I’m Wonderful,” because he knew how vital it was to always have a positive mental attitude. He also knew that positivity is highly infectious so always be positive in everything you do as it will keep you focused, motivated and will spread to those around you.

“You laugh at me because I’m different, I laugh at you because you’re all the same.”

Have the courage to follow your own path no matter what the naysayers may say. Never be afraid to express yourself remembering that you are unique and those who begrudge usually do so because they cannot compete with what others may be doing.

“I can’t wait until tomorrow. . . because I get better looking every day.”

Daddy had a wonderful acronym: C.A.N.I. which stands for Constant And Never-ending Improvement. He strived to better himself in every aspect of his life every day. He loved to tell this joke to everyone he met as both a reminder to himself and a cryptic message for others to become better versions of themselves on a daily basis.

I do hope you find this advice as useful as I have throughout my own life. Daddy may have passed on, but his advice and wisdom will live on in all of us. He has passed his light onto us and it is our responsibility to use that light as best we possibly can while also passing it onto others who never had the pleasure of meeting him. This is the best possible way to pay tribute to such a great man, one that this world will never see the like of again.

Happy 70th Birthday Daddy. We miss you so much. Love Always.

Paddy xox