

23 August 2020

Dad

Hello. It feels awkward reaching out to you after all these years of silence (at least in the written word.) I don't know how to get this to you or where you are, but process here might be more important than outcome.

There is so much I want to say. While I know if you were to write to me it would be w/ the mundane details of what you had/have going on; I will refrain from that small talk. Emotions were never your strong suit and although I've always been emotionally intuitive, speaking about them has never been mine either. So let's just go there.

Do I blame you for my problems w/ commitment, avoidance, + anxiety? 24 years later, I can't; I have to have some ownership, so, no, I don't.

But I will ask you why you never sought help. Why did you never go to the doctor, ²even when you broke your foot? What would have been hard about eating a salad? What would have been hard about admitting discomfort? Why did you let your masculinity get in the way? Your independence pushed you to do hard things, to do them alone, and not admit weakness. Or at least that is how I see it. And because of that you died at 46; I lost you at 18.

And yet, paradoxically, you bent over backwards for your sons, your wife, your family. And for that, I am forever grateful. You never forced us into a mold that you wanted us to be. You never forced us to re-roof, pound nails, or sand drywall. You let us be kids + chase our

Bottom line reads: "And maybe I will eat more salads and less salt! Much love and gratitude, Jared"

own desires + dreams. Where did you and mom learn that? It has made me who I am today. You raised me in a household environment that had me openly supporting homophobia, newt gingrich, pat buchanan, and every straight ticket republican candidate. Then you took me to and encouraged me to attend the liberal, hippy, Unity College. Heck you even paid for a little bit of it. Before that you followed me on my dreams; we backpacked all over northern new england. When I schemed a trip you arranged work around it. 24 years later the love for us, the gently pushing us off into the world to do what we wanted, is clear. I can only hope that if I ever have children I can live to see them chase their dreams and like you did, push them towards their dreams, not my dreams for them.

Because of the support, I never felt like I let you down; I was free to roam + choose.

Life isn't always easy, you know that. The past few months have seen me with some of my highest hopes + lowest lows. As I try to decipher the roots of why I struggle w/ confidence, have security issues in relationships, and work on accountability, I keep coming back to the only trauma I have experienced: your untimely demise.

In that I have come to the other part of the story we wrote one that gave me support and the tools I needed to fledge, spread my wings, + follow my dreams.

I have often reflected that your death sent me on a rootless, wandering journey of discovery + experiences. Until recently I hadn't reflected however about how your care + unwavering support in me chasing my own dreams was a model for how I want to parent, how I want to teach, and how I want to be. And maybe I will eat more salads + less salt!

Jared -

23-August 2020

I greatly enjoyed our trip out to Lander to see your house + where you live. Indeed it was good to work w/ you on several of your projects.

After the trip life has been slowly returning to normal here. There are guests at the inn and i am constantly shuttling hikers up + down the Cobus Trail. The Inn is booked through the fall.

Are you planning to come home for your mother's 75th? We are going to have a get together, and yes, it will be socially distanced w/ masks. Not sure yet what the best place for the party is but maybe i will reserve the upstairs of the town hall. Most of the New York relatives are coming over but Mike + George still aren't talking nor are Leslie ~~for~~ and George/Sandra.

I really like the work you have put into your house and how it is coming along. I think your taste is it in your mouth, unlike your mother's.

Hopefully we can make it back out there soon and do some more work, but it is a long car drive + your mother is getting older; I am too!

It was good to see you. Thanks again

Love
Dad