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A Few of My Annual Father's Day Reflections

By Ted Smith

To all the dad's out there, Happy Father's Day! Every year around this special holiday, I like to think of my father and father-in-law for how they impacted, guided, and taught me the right way to be a father myself.

I feel so fortunate that I married Missy – the most fantastic person there is to be the mother of our children. Although people try to give you helpful advice, nothing can prepare you for the immediate changes that lie ahead when you become a dad. Raising a family is not easy. I'm so lucky to have the steady support and partnership of a committed life partner in Missy.

If there's one thing I could wish for all children in our environment, regardless of background, is that they can become well-educated members of society, and be raised in a loving way. My hope is that people continue to be open to having children. Our five kids are an incredible blessing to Missy and me, and we're proud each of them is their own unique, special person.

A piece of advice for all the fathers out there – if you have the opportunity be involved with your children and their friends – jump at the opportunity! I was fortunate to get involved in their lives by coaching all our kids and their friends for years. This type of involvement was a way to naturally instill values, and to get to know the types of friends they had. To this day, I can't help but smile in seeing the growth of these now adults that I coached during their adolescence.

More recently, Missy and I were blessed with our fourth grandchild, and there is nothing more satisfying than seeing your sons becomes fathers themselves! They do such a great job raising their children, and they've chosen remarkable life partners to be by their side. Seeing their commitment and love for one another, Missy and I can't help but feel a sense of fulfillment in a job well done!

So, for me, more than anything else, it is about appreciation for my family. With humility, I thank them for the honor of being Dad!

Happy Father's Day!
Ted Smith

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Being a Father Makes Me a Better Person

By Dan LaNasa

Being a father has helped to put things in perspective for me, and it has made me a better person for it.

It may sound cliché, but fatherhood has taught me that family, above all else, is the most important part of my life.

Little, insignificant challenges, and setbacks throughout the day no longer bother me like they once did. At the end of the day, as long as my family is healthy and safe, everything else can be worked out.

It has taught me the absolute necessity to practice patience and empathy throughout my daily life. These are some of the perspectives I will continue to hold onto well into the future:

- Watching my children learn and grow through their endless curiosity and energy.
- Even during the challenging times, I try to remind myself that someday I'll miss the days when Maggie and I endure while our children were so little.
- I'm able to relate with other parents as they work through the same highs and lows that Maggie and I go through every single day.

In the end, I think fatherhood is about being thankful for something that although it isn't perfect, it is oh so joyous!

Happy Father's Day!

Dan LaNasa