

Best tip for a great Father's Day...

I don't think a day goes by when I don't think of my father. I'm 47 years old and he died 21 years ago when I was 26. He was a good man, but a workaholic. He was never around, but we enjoyed a charmed life. I was an angry kid and none of my teenaged misbehavior seemed to bring him closer, as I had secretly wished.

It wasn't until he took ill, seriously ill, that we really got to know each other, that we had a place in each other's daily life. After his near death and many operations, I was trained as his nurse to drain his wounds and freshen his bandages. It was far too gross for mom. I appreciated the job though. I was finally close to my dad.

Taking care of him during his demise seemed to lesson the pain of his absence from my younger life. I enjoyed his company and attention and through a sad circumstance I was getting my fill. My attitude to life lightened over those three years of caring for him.

Now I'm a dad, but not a workaholic. Both were conscious decisions. I work from my home and have always enjoyed my meals with my family. One child, a son, and we share a close relationship. I am available for him and to a great extent this is taken for granted. Goal

met. My son only has to concentrate on school, work and friends.

Father's Day is coming. I still have the pencil holder made from a decorated tin can sitting on my desk – this from a son who seemingly takes me for granted. Each year it is something else and each year I couldn't care less. You see, the gift I enjoy, day in and day out, is the pleasure of my son's company and knowing he is secure with our relationship and my place in his life.

At heart, all men know dads are important. We just have to remember to act that way for our kids. The rest will take care of itself.

Want a great Father's Day? Tell your dad you love him and give your kid a hug today – before Father's Day actually arrives.

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Gary Direnfeld is a child-behaviour expert, a social worker, and the author of *Raising Kids Without Raising Cane*. Gary not only helps people get along or feel better about themselves, but also enjoys an extensive career in public speaking. He provides insight on issues ranging from child behaviour management and development; to family life; to socially responsible business development. Courts in Ontario, Canada consider Gary an expert on matters pertaining to child development, custody and access, family/marital therapy and social work.

Buy the book:

To order Direnfeld's book, *Raising Kids Without Raising Cane*, send a cheque or money order in the amount of \$12.00 to:

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