

A Dad's Reflection

I LOVE FATHER'S DAY.

I like to reflect on my own dad and the lessons of life he taught me. Not so much his words, but by his quiet example. Kids know the difference and really learn from the latter.

As a proud father for 28 years of two beautiful daughters, I hope my example as a dad will leave at least more positive memories than not. My youngest daughter, Emma, must feel at times she has not had the attention from me as she should. You see her sister, Laura, six years older, was diagnosed with a rare form of ovarian cancer at the age of 24. For 15 months my greatest attention was on her battle. As

Laura tried so hard to overcome this insidious disease, I focused all my energy and attention on being the typical dad and trying to make everything OK. A dad's job, right?

As Laura's health declined, I tried to help her prepare for life's next journey. I say life's next journey because I believe she has just moved along, outrunning me, as kids do, with giggles and smiles, to the next juncture in life. As I tried hard to hold her hand I know, that at times, I let my other hand slip from Emma.

Although I said I would not sermonize: "Dads, stay close to your daughters and sons. I've learned they really don't ask for much. Just being there is what really matters. Give advice? Sure, we all love to impart our wisdom to our kids — but let it be by your example." I try to focus on the wonderful gift of love

I had with Laura and have with Emma. I got to choose the song for my dance with Laura at her wedding reception that was three months after her diagnosis. I chose Lee Ann Womack's song "I Hope You Dance." I try to live that message every day. I know Laura did.

—JIM CRANDALL

THE LAURA CRANDALL BROWN OVARIAN CANCER FOUNDATION FOCUSES ON RAISING AWARENESS AND SUPPORT ABOUT OVARIAN CANCER. THE FOUNDATION SPECIFICALLY WORKS TOWARD FINDING AN EARLY DETECTION DIAGNOSTIC TEST.



Laura, Jim and Emma Crandall. Photo courtesy of Angela Karen Photography