



Chris & Aedan

FATHERS & SONS

How the Years Go By

By: JAMES LADD

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The month of June and the year 2010 are turning out to be **very** special for me and for my two wonderful sons, for two great reasons; Chris and Aedan are both graduating.

Chris graduated from the University of Winnipeg on Friday, June 11th with his second degree and Aedan will graduate from St. Paul's High School with honours on Tuesday, June 29th.

It is of course special because I love my boys very much and because it represents a significant accomplishment in both of their young lives.

Chris's choice to go to university came as a pleasant surprise to me and his decision to work toward two degrees was a gift to himself and a wonderful gift in my life as his father. Needless to say, I am very proud of the man he is becoming and his accomplishments. In the larger scheme of things I would have never expected this going back a

number of years. But then sometimes life is full of pleasant surprises!

I said **'very'** special but in its way a bittersweet time for me too because not so many years ago the odds of me being alive to see my son Aedan graduate from St. Paul's were slim at best.

The fall of 2001 was when I first became ill. Aedan at that time was 9 years old and in grade 4. By February of 2002 I was no longer able to work and found myself confined either to home or a hospital bed as I began in earnest the greatest struggle of my life, the struggle to stay alive long enough to receive a double lung transplant. It finally came in August of 2003 and just in time. For all three of my children; Chris, Marnie and Aedan it was a very difficult time, more so for Aedan because he was so, so young.

My struggle to stay alive required me to muster all the emotional, spiritual and physical strength I could and too lean on family, friends, community and the medical profession for support along the way to keep me going. Part of my process and something that helped me considerably was to set goals. One of the goals I set was to stay alive long enough to see my son Aedan graduate from high school. It is bittersweet because it is a happy and joyous time but also brings back memories of a dark and difficult period in both Aedan's and my life. I have with Aedan's help achieved that goal! Chris was a bonus!

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If you are interested in investigating the possibility of having your own personal coach, please contact me for a one hour exploratory session at no charge!

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How the Years Go By



Many of you have children who have just graduated from university or college and/or who are about to graduate from high school this month. And I say to all you dads and moms, congratulations for all of your perseverance and hard work in getting your kids there! They would not have been able to do it without your support and guidance. I am sure it has been a labour of love for each of you. Their success is your success and in addition to it being their celebration it is yours as well, so enjoy and bask in the warmth and the glow of a job well done.



My main reason for sharing some of my personal experience and proud moments is to draw your attention too and remind particularly all of the dads around this; "Fathers Day," that these are "the moments of our lives." These are the moments that should be

reflective of what we value and cherish most that define us, that are a part of our life's purpose and journey. For our children of course, graduation represents a significant milestone in their early personal growth and development.

It is a thoughtful time in our lives too as it brings into sharp focus how quickly the years are slipping by and how life's true meaning can get away on us if we are not paying attention. Think about this, by the time your son has reached his graduation most of the time spent living at home will have passed and that is a scary thought.

Don't wait to make your son a great man - make him a great boy. ~Author Unknown

He will have along with your help and his mothers, lived through some very significant events in his life; beginning of course with his birth it seems now so long ago. You have witnessed his first words, first steps, his learning to ride a bicycle, kindergarten, going off to grade school, playing on his first sports team, music lessons, starting high school, turning sixteen and driving, dating for the first time, finally graduating high school and reaching drinking age at about the same time, than on to university or college.

Yes, you would have been there or around the periphery to change his diapers, wipe his nose, bandage his wounds, feed him, teach him to dress himself, tie his skates when he began his hockey, drove him to practice at



5:30 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday morning, froze to death cheering from the stands, soccer, basketball, volleyball, football, helped him with homework, played catch, sat through Christmas plays and pageants, taught him to drive, picked him up from parties in high school when he was drinking and didn't want to drive, you reminded him of his chores, sent him out to cut the grass, shovel snow, clean his room, the list goes on. You remember it all as if it were yesterday and you also remember the purpose behind the way you parented was all intended to pass along your values, teach responsibility, discipline and a strong work ethic, although he probably perceived your behaviour at the time as madness!

During this time dads often ask themselves these questions; "Did I do the very best I could while he was growing up, was I there for him at critical times, did he feel like he could count on me when needed? Did I tell him I loved him enough, did I set a good example?" Tough questions when you reflect





The Personal Coach BULLETIN

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COACHING POINT

back upon time you cannot recover especially if your personal evaluation brings you up short.

Well, my money is on all of you and I bet that in spite of all the distractions along the way you were never far away when needed and that your son knows that about you and respects you for it.

Your son at five is your master, at ten your slave, at fifteen your double, and after that, your friend or your foe, depending on his bringing up. ~Author Unknown

There is of course some wonderful times ahead for both of you as your boy moves on to his first official job after finishing school, marriage, buying a home, grandchildren, birthdays and special occasions as life begins to inevitably repeat itself.

Yes, the relationship between father and son is a special one and any man who makes the decision to have a son and to be a father is taking on one of the most important responsibilities of his life so he needs to get it right at least most of the time. Just be patient your children will show you how it is done.

And with some luck perhaps one day your son will say; "I am my father's son," and say it with pride. You will know then that you did something right for him and feel that same pride with just a twinge of satisfaction!

I hope that all you dads had a great Father's Day this past Sunday.

A Final Note

I have been blessed with many things in my life, and yes amazingly, have made some very good life choices. The very best decision that I ever made was to be a father and as it turned out a father to three children; two sons and a daughter. Over the course of 40+ years they have taught me an unbelievable amount about parenting but perhaps most of all about myself. I can say upon reflection and unequivocally that my kids have played a hugely significant role in the man that I am today. No question at times being a parent has been a challenge but has never come with any regret.

They have taught me to be more patience and tolerant, they have taught me the true meaning of giving and unselfishness, with no thought of anything in return, although what comes back at times is indescribable. I have become a quieter and gentler person, I learned to notice the simpler things in life, especially when they were younger and too find a place of calm when all around me seemed in chaos.

In trying to understand the needs and desires of my kids as they grew, I learned that I did not have to know it all and that at each stage of my children's growth I was learning from them. Finally and within the last seven years have learned that I often communicate my best lessons to them by the example I set and by my ability to just listen.

When You Thought I Wasn't Looking

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you hang up my first painting on the refrigerator, and I wanted to paint another one.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you feed a stray cat, and I thought it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you fix my bicycle and I knew that little things are special things.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I heard you say a prayer, and I believed there is a God I could always talk to.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I felt you kiss me goodnight, and I felt loved.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw that you cared, and I wanted to be everything that I could be.

When you thought I wasn't looking, I LOOKED....and wanted to say thanks for all the things I saw when you thought I wasn't looking.

Author Unknown





A TRIBUTE TO JOHN WOODEN (1910-2010)

www.coachwooden.com

Coach John Wooden died on Friday, June 4, 2010. He was 99 years old.

A couple of years after beginning my amateur football coaching career in 1973, I began to search for ways to become a more successful coach. In that process I developed a new appreciation for and definition of what defined success and I can thank two coaches in particular for what they taught me. It was through their example; their personality style, values, philosophy and coaching methods that I developed my understanding of what coaching was truly meant to be for me! What I learned from both of them was that I was there to use football as a vehicle to grow young men. To help my players become the best that they could be as a whole person to the degree that the football environment would and could allow.

Coach John Wooden was one of those two coaches.

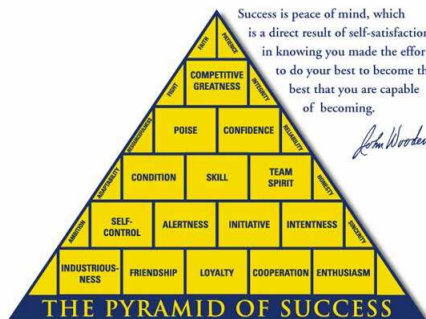
The other was **Bud Grant** who after playing for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers from 1953 to 1956 became their Head Coach.



In just ten seasons as Head Coach (1957-1966), he appeared in the Grey Cup on six occasions winning in 1958, 59, 61 and 1962.

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Coach Wooden of course is famous first for winning more NCAA basketball championships than any other college basketball coach. But I'm jumping ahead. After playing basketball for Purdue University, Coach Wooden began his coaching career as a high school basketball coach while also playing professional basketball. For 11 years he coached until joining the armed forces during the Second World War. Following his discharge he became Head Coach at Indiana State University where he coached from 1946-48. It was during these first 14 years of coaching that he developed what perhaps he is most famous for his; **Pyramid of Success**.



In 1948 he moved to UCLA in California, where he coached for the rest of his career retiring in 1975.

Between 1964 and 1975 he won 10 NCAA championships that also featured an 88 game winning streak.



Like most everyone else it was his winning record that first got my attention but the one thing I admired most about Coach Wooden was that he never spoke to his teams about the importance of winning rather he talked to them about preparation and about the process of becoming a great team.

It turned out that as I really began to closely examine my values, values passed to me by my parents I realized that what Coach Wooden taught was what I saw as meaningful and important in my life.

John Wooden the man was married to his high school sweetheart Nellie for 53 years. He described her as his first love and his last love. She died in 1985. They raised two children together.

May you rest in peace knowing that your contribution went far beyond just sport.

