

Dana's Tribute to Dave

It has been my blessing to be the wife of a very good, fun, open person, very honest about himself, his strengths and weaknesses.

Many have commented to me that they could feel the dedication we have had to each other, so I thought I'd share some about that.

It began with a response to my prayer for a life companion (Lauretta told more of that story) that I said silently when talking with him on a second interaction at Convocation. I felt a spiritual blessing immediately. A month later he shared he had a deep spiritual experience at the same moment. So, God blessed our dedication.

Jacob and I found a folder of Dave's called Marriage Notes. He had written down guidance given by my minister, Brother Anandamoy from Pasadena Temple and also from a 4-week course at the Hollywood Temple given by Brother Bhaktananda which he attended from San Diego every Saturday. A member of the Pasadena church asked during our courtship, "How should a householder prioritize his duties?" Brother Anandamoy gave the brief answer found in Dave's notes: "God first, spouse second, family third, work fourth and service to others fifth."

If we were challenged, we both agreed that if we got stuck and couldn't solve a problem together, we would always read our SRF wedding vows together. That reliably lifted us out of darkness into light.

I totally trusted Dave because he could face himself honestly. I think that is one thing that makes him both so human and so inspiring.

His honesty helped him overcome alcoholism with the help of AA and a tremendous spiritual blessing that happened a year before he met me. From that blessing, he never again had a desire for alcohol. When we knew each other just a month, he wrote me in LA to say he was an alcoholic. I was surprised and turned to Brother Anandamoy for guidance. He said, "That habit could return and make your life miserable. See if he will go to AA." When I asked, he went, dove into the program, worked the Steps with a sponsor and became a sponsor to others

He had a lot of anxiety at the early stage of our marriage, and could still get briefly triggered from time to time. But his spiritual life brought him great peace, and that is what many remember about him. Our Aunt Fran says he is the most peaceful man she knows. So that is quite a tribute to his persistence at meditation on God, and also his efforts to overcome anxiety through therapy.

One beautiful thing about Dave is his dedication as a father. I was thrilled to have him ask, as we were just beginning the discussion about marriage, "Well, what should we name the children?" We immediately chose Jacob for a first name, and wanted a spiritual middle name. We chose Kabir because he is a saint of Hindus and Moslems, and could help his followers learn

to harmonize. That seemed needed today as well. I was impressed that it was so easy for us to make decisions together.

But once Jacob did arrive on the scene, I had the joy that you have seen in the slide show. Watching a man turn into a father is one of the sweetest pleasures of life. I savor the joy and love between these sweet souls. Their play, fun, humor, and connecting through sports, camping, and travel were contagious. And Dave also helped Jacob any time he asked, in ways that promoted Jake's habits of discipline, success thoughts, and enthusiasm for his goals.

We had fun vacations going camping with devotees and family, including many weekend trips nearby. We had a super fun trip to Minnesota to see my parents when Jacob was 4. He caught some a fish that was the pride and joy of both Jacob and his Daddy. And Dave and I came to visit Jacob and Lauren in February this year – great fun. Dave walked across the Atlanta airport with a backpack!

Dave's approach to his illness inspired me and many. Though it would be listed officially as the cause of his passing, he did not identify with the disease at all in the last months. We went to the Optimum Health Institute together. He focused on the healing opportunity he had. We had many signs of improvement plus some signs of tumor growth in the last 6 months. That inspired him to decide to quit chemo and amp up his OHI protocol. It made him feel and look great, other than the continuing neuropathy which made it hard to walk, and we felt very hopeful.

Within a couple of months of getting cancer, Dave believed it was one of the best experiences of his life. Why? Because he learned how much people love him, and how many people love him. He had no idea. Friends came for a weekly healing prayer service at our home for 6 months until he told them to give someone else the blessing as he was doing so well.

And once he went on disability for the cancer, he devoted full time to his spiritual life and service to me at home by taking care of meals and cleaning. He meditated for hours, prayed and chanted, and studied scripture. He came to me with a radiant face once and said, "I just spent two hours bathed in the Comforter, the Aum vibration. It was so beautiful!"

So, he truly did turn the diagnosis into a great opportunity, the greatest blessing of his life. He's come to many people in dreams or calm conversations, and given assurances that he is enjoying his new life and that all will be OK for us as well.

Dave's support of my career and mission have meant so much to me. He completely believed in the ways I've been sharing peace with clients, researching and developing a new group Bowen and EMDR protocol to help people gain emotional maturity in their most challenging relationships. He called the book I'm writing on the subject "our book." And we had the joy of working together at my recent June Group Treatment Workshop in San Diego. He served as the emotional protection team member. He introduced himself by freely shared his own experience with EMDR therapy. Then he introduced me as a "world famous EMDR therapist". I felt

embarrassed because it isn't true, but didn't want to contradict him. So, I just said, "He is my greatest fan." The group burst into applause.

In his humility, he also wrote his own book very quietly, and finally shared it with me. It is called **"Knowing God Now" about the topic of practicing the presence of God**. We will honor the gift of his heart and soul by publishing it very soon as an e-book. Here are some excerpts:

"The self without soul awareness is a place I am avoiding at all costs now. The path toward God awareness is ultimately so beneficial that as I look back to what I was and what I am now, I cry tears of Joy, Love, Peace and devotion. What God has given to me is Truly almost unexplainable loveliness. It is the experience that is everything. That experience is now, or it is not happening at all in me or for me. So, God is here to know us now. He has waited patiently. Let us touch Him with all our heart now.

"God and his greatest gifts of constant growing Joy, Peace and Love are not in texts. They are not in conversations. They are not anywhere in the world. They are in you. So, in the ultimate sense, God and you are the only thing of importance that exists. The rest of it is just going to go away in the world or after we leave the body.

"These are just my words. It is not my mission to teach you. I only want to touch you. I want to empathize with you and connect with you on any level. Just to do that is enough for me. If you want to read this for fun, that would be great. If you want to practice some of the techniques, that is up to you. What you do, is just that. You are all walking to God. You have no choice, really."

CLOSER TO THE END OF THE BOOK he wrote:

"Perfection does not happen until God is convinced that we want Him more than the playthings of the world. Then, with his grace, all the strings that attach us to this material plane will slowly be severed. We do not do this. God does this.

"The journey to God is a fun one. It is filled with Divine Friends. That is the amazing part for me. The people and the fun are ever expanding. You will find yourself in this huge family of like souls that are searching for God. So, take it easy on yourself at all times."