



Love Transcends Time & Dimensions

Amy B. Connor - March 23, 2025

I've always been a "Daddy's girl." I mean this to reference feeling understood and unconditionally loved by him. Each one of us has a unique relationship with our parents, and I want to be sensitive to this as I share my story. Some of you have been terribly hurt by your earthly fathers, have never known your father, or might feel confused about your relationship (or... fill in the blank). So, as I share my own story, I invite you to imagine context in ways that could apply with anyone you feel particularly close to. Each of our stories is important and diverse.

I had received terrible news: my Daddy had been diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer. I lived over 5 hours from him, and though we first thought he would go through treatment, a swift re-admission to the local hospital spurred another phone call. I listened, and within the hour was on the road to him, driving solo at 3 am as I left behind my then husband and wonderful local friends to take care of my kids while I rushed to his side.

He was to never receive treatment. Instead, he passed away 11 days post-diagnosis. 11 days gifted to me... time to lay next to him in his hospital bed and say what needed to be said, time to transition him to my sister's home for hospice, time to help him rush his affairs into order. The time was so short, yet just enough to deal with necessities, which I have always been thankful for.

As I traveled to him across state lines I had an experience I would not only never forget, but that would change my perspective and beliefs about how we can cope through, and even thrive through ... end of life transitions of loved ones.

Tears streaming down my face as I drove through the night alone, I tried to wrap my brain around how I could do life without this person in it. I was crying out from within me, which to me, was a conversation with my loving God. I was expressing my love for Daddy. I was grappling with what I would do with all this love for him if he were not here. My mind was racing about all the changes that would happen in my life and in the lives of my children because they would lose the relationship they had with their grandfather.

As I cried, something came over me. I inhaled and my tears paused because I felt an understanding overwhelm me; it took my full attention. There was a deep calm, one that just spoke truth. If you know what "felt sense" is... that was it. "Felt sense" is a bodily-based experience that encompasses a person's thoughts, feelings, and sensations. I didn't need words to explain it. It was a knowing, if translated into words, that would sound something like this:

"The love you have for your Daddy, is the same Love of my existence. All of who I am is greater than even the love you are feeling. There is no interruption in my existence, I don't miss a beat despite all that is happening, ever. There is a consistency in love that cannot be interrupted by earthly death... it is..."



*uninterruptible. I am the consistency amongst all the inconsistent. When those you love leave the body, it doesn't have to feel like an attachment tear. **LOVE TRANSCENDS TIME AND DIMENSIONS.***"

As a trauma-trained occupational therapist, this understanding was being spoken to me in my language. In a way I could understand, from a perspective of human connection and life principles, I would soon put to test what I was sensing through the impending death of my own father. I had yet to realize this something I would never choose, this deeply painful loss, was about to be a pivotal life changing experience for me that would forever change my perspective on life and death. I sometimes remind myself, just because something is or feels HARD, doesn't necessarily mean it is BAD. I remember telling myself, "Well... if what I am perceiving and feeling is true, then I will know as I walk through this - if I keep an open heart and mind through what I am about to face."

This journey was now, to me, a litmus test: one full of curiosity, courage, and also pain. It is a strange thing, how many important points and contrasting emotions can be true, all at the same time. I also think there is a lot to learn in not fighting this coexistence sometimes. Just... let it roll. And there will be reasons the feelings are there. BOTH-AND matters. (Theory of Dialectics - look it up if you are curious!)

It was a whirlwind, those next eleven days - living the last days alongside my Daddy. Gradually, the time finally came for his spirit to leave his body. These moments will stay for me forever even as more than a decade has passed. I can relive his transition in my mind and my heart as though it just happened. We are intricate beings, how we process deeply meaningful and highly emotional experiences, to whatever extreme.

What an intricately personal experience death is for each person. Every human believes something unique about the next steps from life here and on to whatever comes next. Even if we share common core beliefs there are so many elements of the unknown we remain curious about. I think most of us would agree that when a relationship is loving we often define the experience of death as a time of great separation, an end ... a disconnection of desperate need (love) from a place within where we never want to be separated from the care and attunement we know.

Following Daddy's passing, there has not been ONE time, and I mean - NONE - that I have not corrected each person who said to me, "Your Daddy sure DID love you." (What?!!) Think about this. How does this translate to you? So... in other words, death of the body means the love goes away? The safe attachment, the relational growth, the depth of love - all goes away because the body dies? Does it, really?! (I do not agree.....)

LOVE IS SPIRITUAL. There is a body connection to love while we are here, but LOVE ITSELF IS OUTSIDE OF BODY. Over and over again I corrected, "No, he LOVES me. He loves me in a greater capacity from where he is than he ever could when he was here. Daddy LOVES me. And I love him, too."

"Death of the body does not have to feel like an attachment tear..."

"Love is continual... uninterrupted..."

This translates into, "Loving relationship, spiritually, can continue between two people even after death." Could it possibly be true? (I believe it is...)



Would I miss him?

IMMENSELY.

Would I long for his hugs that were so tight they hurt sometimes?

There are none like them.

Would I sense a longing and sadness of all the times we are missing together?

Of course.

I don't hear Daddy's voice expressing his love for me, and he doesn't show up at my most important life events.

I'm not able to call him when I want to, and his phone number never shows up on my phone anymore.

And yet... If I feel a need to feel my Daddy's love, I connect with it.

If I feel a surge of love for Daddy, I express it to him.

If I feel a special need for him to know how much I love him, I ask my loving God to help him know.

And with all of this, still - there are so many things I don't understand.

I don't know what actually happens on that other "side," call it whatever you may.

I don't have data or statistics or viable, concrete proof that what I experienced in the car that night is actually one thing or another.

I only have my experience, completely incomparable to any other human's experience and therefore this is quite subjective, right?

And yet.... The experience itself might lead to actual truths important to understand, regardless.

Our BELIEFS MATTER.

I personally have new lived experience to pull on moving forward.

I look at death as a definite stage in life.

I embrace the truth of absolutes - that each one of us will die one day. So then... under the guise of sovereignty and "meant to be..." I believe we must have what it takes to navigate it.

If we believe that in death our love now has nowhere to go, then this experience will feel like an attachment tear. Attachment pain CAN feel like death itself. It is a deep longing, a survival strategy, a basic need for each one of us. When we are shaken from the place of attachment, we can feel lost. We sometimes feel like this when we lose someone we love, don't we? If we believe that our love can still flow (to and from!) after death - then our love remains fluid. We may not feel as helpless, as stuck, and as left behind.

The root of all traumatization is IMMOBILITY. Death feels traumatic as we are without choice when this happens. And yet, ready or not, it will happen. To those we love, and to us. ***We have an important tool here; we have the capacity to decide our love will stay mobile.*** We can continually share the love we have with others and we can receive the love they continue to have for and with us beyond death!

This can help, tremendously, with our healing.

Truth-based!

This is a truth-based principle we have the option to consider for ourselves in life - and in death.



And then, as our own lives come to an end, we will have the opportunity to continue on in this same thread of love with those who have passed before us, and with those we leave behind for the time being.

I want to take a minute and affirm another truth I understand: each relationship is different! I am sharing openly and from my heart about my experience with my own father, who, as I mentioned before, has always been a loving father to me. This is not everyone's experience. It is important to me that I acknowledge this from a sensitive place. My hope is that you will read my words, and think about my shared experience with a perspective that causes you to think about new ways to navigate this transition with those you care about and love.

I also hope that if you are going through a life threatening experience that you will receive some encouragement and hope when you read this. It is for you to consider, as well.

I leave these words with you as an opportunity to ponder. Not one that is forced upon you, or shared with you out of any expectation. I do not expect you to just "believe what I believe." Choice and free will is a foundational, empowering concept, and part of our true selves in a way that carries us through life, and I believe, into the next one. Again - My beliefs may not be yours' and I have great respect for your personal journey and your pursuit of Truth. Absolute Truth.

So, when you think of that person you have loved, and lost... Fill in the blanks.

"No, _____ LOVES me. He/she loves me in a greater capacity from where he/she is than ever possible when here. _____ LOVES me. And I love him/her, too." And as you do this, maybe sit in a swing, or in a rocking chair, or wrapped up in a furry blanket, or wherever your comfort / happy space is, and allow yourself to **feel** the giving and receiving of ALL that is still there to experience!

I recently stumbled upon a quote by Morrie Schwartz, "Death ends a life, not a relationship. All the love you created is still there."

I would add... Pretty sure that "life" just looks different once we leave these bodies. (I know, you may believe differently!) But... if you want to, keep up that relationship when a loved one passes on. While that will look different, too, there will be levels of understanding, peace, mobility and healing you did not know could possibly be there.

LOVE TRANSCENDS TIME AND DIMENSIONS.

In life.... And in the stage of life called death...

~ Amy