

Gray's Eulogy at David's Memorial Service

A few years before my mother passed away... she returned from a memorial service for a friend and began "gushing" about how beautiful the service was... how beautiful the music was... but especially... how wonderful it was that her friend's son had spoken at the service... and had said such wonderful things about his mother. My reaction was, "Well, you can forget that... there is no way I would ever have the strength to be able to speak at a service for you!" And that was always a standing joke between us.

But, after her stroke... as I sat with her at the hospice... I began to get strength... from somewhere... to be able to stand up and speak at her memorial service.

That same strength... from somewhere... is allowing me to speak to you today about David.

Some of you are here today because you knew David as a friend. Some of you are here today because you knew David as a co-worker. And some of you, who didn't really know David, are here today because you care about me.

So let me tell you about how I knew David.

David was a wonderful, musically-talented, loyal, gentle, nourishing person -- and he brought so much joy into my life over the past 37 years. **David, I just can't believe you are gone.**

As the song says... "he was the wind beneath MY wings". He always allowed me to be the "star" in our relationship because my ego required it more than his did. And... since I was ALWAYS talking... David didn't have much of a chance... but when he did say something... it was time to listen. I know some of you experienced those, often hilarious, moments, too. As I have been getting older, the "love handles" at my waist have become an obsession for me. Many times, as I would pass a mirror after a shower or in a bathing suit, I would place my hands on the love handles and give them a gentle lift to minimize them. David would always roll his eyes and give me one of those looks. Lucky me -- he loved my body just the way it was. But one time I happened to say, as I was lifting my love handles, "If I could just lift everything up an inch!" David, with a gleam in his eye said, "Don't you mean three inches?" Oh, David, you were so funny... and so to the point when the point was being missed by everybody else. I will really miss that about him. **David, I just can't believe you are gone.**

David took care of me... I was never out of toothpaste or milk or toilet paper or clean clothes or food or any of the essentials I needed. David liked to go "Kroger-ing" almost every day. He knew where everything was in the store and could quickly move through the aisles to get what he needed. He would always grimace when I said I wanted to go to the store with him... because he knew I liked to "browse" the aisles searching for things that we never needed but looked interesting or tasty. Without David, I am destined to eat saltines for dinner for the rest of my life. I will miss the way he always took care of me. **David, I just can't believe you are gone.**

We were so lucky to be able to travel... and we were such great traveling companions... or, should I say, David was a great traveling companion... because whatever I wanted to do was always fine with him. He was so easy. He was so awed by... and interested in... everything. Since I had traveled so much for business, I was often ho hum about hotels and places. David, on the other hand, loved the "pleasure" of hotels and was never disappointed in any place we stayed... fancy or not... because, quite simply, I was there and that was all that was important to him. A simple, loving man who was happy to be with me and to let me be the director. David was a rare find and I was so blessed to have him as my partner. We traveled to England, to France, to the Caribbean, to Mexico, to the west coast, to the east coast, to Disney World. So many places, so many trips... and so much fun. I know that traveling will never be the same again. I will miss our travels together... but I have memories... so many memories. **David, I just can't believe you are gone.**

David and I always had at least one beagle during our 37 years together. He loved the beagles... and he took care of them like he took care of me. They ate at the same time every morning and every night... and if they had not been fed... and it was more than 15 minutes after the time they were scheduled to eat, David would move heaven and hell to feed them as quickly as possible. To me 5:30pm or 6pm was about the same... but to David, they were depending on him and he was letting them down. The beagles loved David because they knew he loved them. Our beagles, Otis and Lucy, and our cat, Phil, remain here with me... missing his care of us. **David, I just can't believe you are gone.**

David loved our beautiful home where we lived for more than 33 years. Other couples sometimes asked me what David and I ever argued about... and I always said, "David vacuuming too much". Not bad... considering all the strife so many couples have in their

lives. Our home is so empty without him. I already miss the sound of the vacuum. **David, I just can't believe you are gone.**

Whether standing right next to him or from across the room or from across a pool, I would always let David know how much he was loved... by stretching out my arms as far as I could, saying, I love you THIS much. **David, I just can't believe you are gone.**

37 years is a long time to be together... but it seems like only an instant... and it is gone. I am so, so fortunate that we had our time together and our true love for each other... and I wonder how I will spend the rest of my life without David. I just cannot grasp that I am here without him. I am so sad and miss him so much. I know that I will never get "over it"... but I will, in time, get "used to it". But I really don't want to get used to it. I just want him here with me. I will always miss the joy and comfort David brought to my life. I'll never forget the absolute pleasure of knowing and loving him. **David, I just can't believe you are gone.**

Thank you, David, for your personality... for your support... for your love... and, especially... for picking me as your mate here on earth. The world has certainly changed over the past 37 years and our relationship, once often hidden, is now accepted by everyone who really matters. Our life together was beautiful, fulfilling and never needed to be hidden. Today, I am so ashamed that I ever hid anything from from anyone. I am so proud of what we had... and I physically ache being here without him. **David, I just can't believe you are gone.**

It's important for us all to remember that the loss of David is only to us here on earth... because at the moment when we had to say, "He is gone", there were souls on the other side... his mother and father, his Aunt Bea, my mother and so many others... watching him join them... and their voices were shouting with joy, "Here he comes"! Aren't they lucky to have him with them now? We are sad and they are happy. **But, David... I just can't believe you are gone.**