

Happy Father's Day: Mentors #5



CFUW made the connection between Mother's Day and the Sustainable Development Goals in a broader than usual fashion to celebrate womanhood. On Mother's Day, May 14, 2017, we sent an international note of appreciation to the women of the world. The Hong Kong Association of University Women participated with CFUW in putting a voice to our experiences with Motherhood and what it means to us.

Father's Day is an opportunity, to celebrate the other half of the creation story of women. We draw your attention to notation #12 in the Agreed Conclusions from CSW61 which highlights the importance of men in the realization of SDG #5.

12. *The Commission recognizes the importance of fully engaging men and boys, as agents and beneficiaries of change, for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. It stresses the role of men as allies in the realization of women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work and in the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls.*

The CFUW International Relations Committee is committed to educating women and men, who are not engaged in the 50/50 by 2030 conversation, on what the SDGs are and how individuals can play a role in accelerating the agenda. We believe that by making connections to personal experiences and cultural symbolism we can facilitate a conversation.

The following contributions highlights "Father's Day" from different cultural perspectives (Canada and Pakistan via New Zealand). We believe Enlightened Men around the globe are as invested as women are in finding pathways to achieving SDG #5.

The Question: "How do Fathers support the SDGs?"

Dad...

I was "your sunshine", the "apple of your eye", your firstborn
whose education you encouraged:

You would have been delighted for me to be an engineer or to have become a
Ph.D.

Neither were attained,

but I hope you would not be disappointed with what I have accomplished.

Your love of music was passed on to me:

Each time I hear trumpet solos I think of you with a tear in the eye.

You were heartbroken, I learned, when I came to Canada,

though I returned to England so you could walk me down the aisle to my Canadian
husband-to-be.

You made two visits to Canada and met your only grandchild with whom you had a
special bond.

We had a happy vacation, by car, exploring France before you were taken from us.

The youngest child of seven children, you outlived four brothers and older sister -

a family devastated by heart disease.

When Mum passed on, she was a widow of some 34 years.

As I prepared for her last rites, I felt your presence - a timeless familial bond born out of the well of experience.

Audrey Thomas, IRC Member

Spirit Father

What if Father was absent, unsupportive, not a protector, couldn't get his act together or was just plain suffering from mental illness? Do little girls who have wounded fathers become strong women to over compensate for the father figure gap? Do they spend their lives stitching up a broken heart? Are those disillusioned girls tougher, stronger, faster in running to safety?

I think they normalize independence in order to survive. They have no choice. When her spirit perceives the absence of her masculine self she will walk lopsided. The moment this particular kind of woman realizes the masculine energy does not exist outside of herself she is freed from a sense of lack. She stops doing the one leg hop.

Her life's journey becomes an embrace of her two spirits.

Her feminine energy must hold hands with her masculine energy and as they skip along they begin to dance.

She no longer requires acclamation. She acclaims herself. She fathers herself.

For you see Fatherhood is a divine spirit that is ever present as we become aware of who we really are.

I claim the father in me

I empower myself

I support myself

I protect myself from negative energy

I am present for myself

I am equal to the challenges that cross my path for I am strong

Thank you Spirit Father. I see you in the mirror each day!

Cheryl Hayles, VP International Relations, CFUW



Interview with Papa

Me: What did you dream your girls would be when they grew up?

Papa: I didn't have a dream for them.

Me: What do you mean Papa?

Papa: Well, I knew my girls were smart, I knew they could do anything they put their minds to so I didn't have to dream for them. They could dream for themselves. My job was to encourage them to dream for themselves.

Me: Thanks Papa

Cheryl Hayles, VP International Relations, CFUW

Dear Daddy,

Remember the summer you took the family on a car ride to the Darlington Nuclear Generation Station, in Durham Region? I was about 10 years old and Peter was 13. Mom wanted to know why we had ended up parked on the side of the road peering through binoculars at a concrete silo and its equally grey annex buildings when there was so much beauty in the country side to see or we could have had a panic by the waterfront instead. No, the waterfront was not developed at that time, for the town was too small back then but we could have spread a blanket on the bank of Lake Ontario and enjoyed the sun glittering on the water.

I can hear you saying to us in the car, smiling in the rear view mirror, "Brains built this and I want my children to know they can build using their brains too". The message was for both of us kids. Your affirmation made me feel I could build too.

Now that I look back I realize you were an uncommon man. You didn't have "girl" gifts for me and "boy" gifts for my brother. You had puzzles, building blocks, tool boxes, hockey sticks, baseball bats, word games and everything in shades of green so we wouldn't think there was a pink universe and a blue universe.

Peter is now a Financial Wiz and I am an Engineer in the middle years of my career. Everyday I think of your belief in me. The encouragement you gave my brother and I to be extraordinary no matter what we did. Your code of excellence

is still our water mark. Thank you for the lessons you taught us on gender equity. I pass that on to my own children and hope for them it's not an uncommon message.

Your Daughter Taylor

Cheryl Hayles, VP International Relations, CFUW

Rural Dad...

Wake up my daughter for you must shadow me today.
When I am gone you will become the Stewart of these green acres.

Wake up my girl and rub the cobweb out of your eyes.
The eggs need collecting, the cows need milking.

Wake up my princess for all that you see for a 1000 acres is yours.
The corn is ripe for the harvest and summer cannot wait.

Wake up my child the babbling brook has much to say.
Listen well and learn much.

Wake up your sister on the way for she must join us at the morning fire.
Her destiny also lies in this sacred space I have cleared for you both.

Wake up my children for you are grown and I must go to soar with the eagles.

Cheryl Hayles, VP International Relations, CFUW

**Graduate Women Manawatu/Graduate Women
New Zealand**

English Translation of Poem in Urdu

Ajar, the curtain from the window of the past,
Images from childhood reflection flashed
Those subtle words of my Baba (father)
Indelible impression from memories passed.
A palpable scene from the shadowy past
O my toasty bed, I have to wake up fast
It is before the crack of dawn,
And I am up to deliver newspapers to every lawn.
I then glance up at the sky
And ask my father with a sigh
“Why is this moon departing us”?
He smiles and gives an exquisite reply
My love! The sky moon shined all night!
The long walk tired him, but seeing you is his delight
Be attentive to those whispers of the moon.
I lent an ear and heard him say a word polite
“The moon of earth this is your time to shine
Be positive and optimistic which is, sort of, divine”.

عہد رفتہ کے دریچے سے سرکتی چلمن
وقت طفلی کے صحیفے سے امڈتی یادیں
کچھ انمٹ سے نقوش اور کہیں دل بے رقم
میرے بابا کی سکھائی ہوئی گہری باتیں
اب گزشتہ کے دھندلوں میں کوئی منظر ہے
صبح کے 3 بجے ہیں اور اس تاریکی میں!

اس گرم بستر کو چھوڑ، مجھے اٹھنا ہے
صبح کے اخبار کو ہر گھر میں پہنچانا ہے
میں نے اٹھتے ہی نظر آسماں پرے ڈالی ہے
اور ساتھ لیٹے ہوئے بابا سے یہ پوچھا ہے
رات کے اس پہر چاند کو کیوں جانا ہے؟
مسکرا کے ہوئے گویا کہ میرے محنت کش
یہ ایک لمبی مسافت سے واپس آیا ہے
اور اب تھک کر تمہیں اٹھاتا ہے
اور سرگوشیوں میں گنگناتا جاتا ہے
" زمیں کے چاند ہو اب تمہیں چمکنا ہے
نئی امید لیے ہر گھڑی دمکنا ہے "

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