

Senior Advice: More than 1 way to observe Father's Day

by *Doug_Mayberry*

Q: My brother and I, both in our 50s, find it difficult each year to best-guess how to celebrate Father's Day. Both his and my family love dad, but we do not find it easy to find appropriate gifts for him.

Can you offer any helpful hints?

A: Yes. Fathers understand their role is to protect and provide for their families. Letting your father know how much you appreciate how well he has done his job would be perfect. Take this opportunity write dad a thank-you letter. Bring back those special and loving memories and events as you bonded, played together and enjoyed hanging out. No doubt you can enclose photos of those events. Creating a memory DVD is time-consuming but worth the effort. Remember, dads are sentimental, too. Let him know how important it was he loved and praised your mother. Thank him for all the time he shared by becoming involved in your school and sports activities, for being loving, patient, and understanding even when you did not agree.

If he's a gardener, buy him some plants or tools. New exercise equipment is a good choice, too. Baking him his favorite cookies, buying him a new wallet or paying for computer lessons could be a helpful experience. Sports tickets are always winners. Donating to a charity in his name could make him a happy camper.

A father's love always comes with a little bit of fear along his with understanding his children's needs for his love and protection. Let your dad know you realize what a wonderful job he has done for you.

As Mark Twain said, "When I was a boy of 14, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the man around. But when I got to be 21 I was astonished how much the old man had learned in seven years."

Q: Our grandson, who is now 20, has fallen in love and is considering proposing. We live at a distance and haven't had much chance to get to know his girlfriend. As loving and supportive grandparents, we want them to enjoy the successful marriage my wife and I have had for 33 years.

How can we share our advice without seeming to be interfering?

A: For guidance, write him an informative letter about your successful marriage. Begin with how pleased you are to learn he has found a partner he loves. Detail how your marriage attitudes and goals have worked so well. Tell them how you talked and listened to each other's feelings. Tell them you took time to learn the difference between words and actions. Remind them of the differences between love, intimacy and sex. Tell

them how important it is to be honest, to openly reveal themselves to each other before the ceremony as you learned good marriages become a partnership and not a power struggle.

Hopefully, they already accept the fact that none of us is perfect, and they are prepared to rank their marriage as their most important priority and are prepared to compromise, to apologize, understand dependency, and to know each partner also needs private time. Conclude your letter with the idea that scheduling an appointment with a professional marriage counselor could also prove to be a blessing as the counselor follows a checklist. If you are in a position to do so, offer to pay for this advice to encourage them to do so.

This heads-up letter would indicate to them how pleased you are to find they have each other and to show your support for their future!

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