

Elizabeth Chandler Densmore's reflections on her father, William P. Densmore at the memorial service for his passing in 2013

Hello. I am the headstrong eldest who resides in Southern California...

My father believed that everyone & anyone has something to contribute and can make a difference, starting with his children. As my cousin Anne wrote, he was *"always interested in my thoughts about what to do next...so interested in what I was thinking, and then proud of and taking seriously what I had done so far, and repeatedly offering his help..."*

...Active listening—perhaps my father's greatest gift. I think his love for people was best expressed in the way he listened so keenly to what others said. He was always ready to learn something new, always generous in sharing credit—a demonstration that the best teachers are fully in the world of their students.

He taught us.....

How to play or make a game out of just about anything—even chores. Snowball fights, squirt gun attacks and other deviations from "proper" behavior were common in our household. Punishments for bad behavior might mean writing reflective essays, or a time out in the cellar bathroom -- which happened to have a world map and several hundred back issues of national geographic to read. If my friends stayed too late, they were accosted by a sheet-clad "Father Time" telling them it was time to go home.

Visiting children learned how to "sled" the front stairs with a flying mattress.

We all learned to his favorite sports. Chess- a game of strategy that I especially loved to play with him. Sailing, skiing, tennis... plus enough to get by about others. For example, when I was in HS, he once took me to Harvard Yale Football game—a forever favorite date.

And, we learned to manage our "Eccentricity Points". This was the idea that as we move through life, we acquire credibility by doing good work and getting along. Like 'Frequent Flyer' miles, these points be amassed and cashed in to stick your neck out... For example, having amassed mountains of credibility as a successful Norton executive, Daddy used his eccentricity points to push for rules changes to limit corporate abuse of power.

He also taught...

Deep devotion for family and community along with unfailing optimism that problem-solving and progress was always possible. This lesson he particularly shared and promoted with his best, most intimate friend and teacher, my mother.

Another thing that bonded them was their love of music—we were lulled to sleep at night with tapes of favorite musicals, or my mother’s piano and we learned to love singing with unselfconscious abandon.....

Other favorite quotes that distinguish the teachings of Daddeo-

“A life spent making mistakes is not only more honorable, but more useful than a life spent doing nothing.” ...What counts is not what you know but what you do about it.... Selfishness is not living as one wants to live, it is asking others to.

And finally, one from Robert Louis Stevenson...

“That man is a success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent men and the love of children; who has filled his niche and accomplished his task; who leaves the world better than he found it, whether by an improved poppy, a perfect poem or a rescued soul; who never lacked appreciation of earth’s beauty or failed to express it; who looked for the best in others and gave the best he had.”

Succeed he did and all of us are the beneficiaries.