

The Source of Strength

The death of my father refocused my health priorities.

Be tough!" "Hang in there!" That's what us guys have been told all our lives. That's what real men are made of, right?

Well, I have to admit, the things that make a hero in my mind ironically don't come from toughness. As we strive to be our best in developing a healthy body and getting our pectorals the size of Arnold Schwarzenegger's, it is vitally important that we look beyond what may be the least fulfilling single-dimensional viewpoint—being self-centered.

This is a valuable lesson I learned from my father before he passed away.

My father was married and raising four kids in the suburbs of Buffalo, N.Y., contending with frigid Canadian winds that swept across Lake Erie. He worked at Bethlehem Steel in Buffalo, facing challenges that I find almost impossible. But still, he pressed on.

He took time to teach me the basics in football and throwing the shot put. He told me stories of when he and his buddies from the military did one-arm presses with a 110-pound barbell. (And you wonder where I got it from.)

My father left me a lot to remember, but the manly accomplishments weren't the most valuable thing he left me.

The most valuable was his unwavering faith.

Much later in life, just before he passed on to be with Jesus, I was with him in the hospital. He was being released to go home after experiencing severe aftereffects from chemotherapy. This he-man hero of mine had dwindled down to a feeble-looking old man (before his time), and my heart was torn to see him in this condition.

At that point, I was forced to tell him the doctors could do nothing else for him. He looked at me with astonishment and asked, "When did it get this bad?"

I became a wreck as I saw his bewilderment. He looked away for a moment and looked back at me. Then he said with calmness and assurance, "It's all in the Lord's hands, Joe."

My father displayed trust in God while his health failed him. How much more should we trust in God while we still have our health?

Sometimes I need to refocus my heart's intent when it comes to all the health-related things I do. It is easy to ignore the true source of health.

Even us tough guys need a break from the bench press and the \$10 health drinks to remember what it's all about. Take a moment before your next workout and thank the Creator for health. Thank Him for the opportunity to leave your legacy to others.

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