

Committed to My Dad's Comfort

Category: Cold

written by Roz Levine | February 25, 2024

When the phone rang at 4:30 a.m., my heart raced, expecting bad news from dad's assisted-care facility. Instead, I heard the stammer and slow, almost indecipherable words of my father, "Rozzie, I'm so cold. Can you come and help me?"

Dad's advancing Parkinson made it difficult, and now impossible, for him to move enough to reach the blanket and cover his scrawny frame. I called the front desk and told the night person to please get to my dad's room to cover him. His response: "I'm all alone here tonight, and can't leave the front desk." That pushed me out of my cozy bed where I quickly donned sweatpants and shoes and drove five minutes on Westwood Boulevard to reach my dad's place. I raced to his room, covered him, and kept saying, "I'm so sorry, Dad. So sorry."

I sat there past sunrise, watched him sleep, covered and now comfortable, and headed to the office on my way out the door. "This is totally unacceptable," I told the administrator. "You have to have a second person available every night."

I don't know how this was resolved since my dad deteriorated rapidly in the next few weeks, and we had to move him to a convalescent home. I visited him daily, brought him easy-to-chew foods he could readily swallow like chopped liver and his favorite Breyer's coffee ice cream. I made it a priority to make myself visible to the staff on a daily basis, brought them cookies and goodies to express my appreciation. Dad spent the last year of his life there, and I was his daily visitor, there to ensure he was well-cared-for until that last phone call that awakened me from a deep sleep at 6:00 a.m. "I'm sorry to tell you that your dad passed away last night."

It was goodbye to my pops, the man who loved me more than anything in the world, the man who became my lighthouse for survival, the man who still shines his light, levity and motto to always look for the silver lining through all the days of my living.

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