



## GOING HOME

My Dad went home to Heaven this summer. He would have been 94 in October 2019. He was a safe place for my heart for 63 years.

3 years ago he lost his drivers license. It was a sad day for someone so independent. It meant changes in his life and in mine.

Learning to love is a lifetime journey. Loving through and when life changes is a choice I made. When you don't know how long the changes will last or how intense life might get, we can pull away in our own fear. I am so grateful that the Lord encouraged my heart to risk loving deeply and to continue to lean into that love.

My dad and I spent a lot of quality time together. Every week, 4-6 hours at a time, we would run errands, grocery shop and go to the bank. When the errands were finished, the conversation was always the same. 'So dad, what would you like to do now?' He would pause and then tentatively ask about my time. I had made the time. Often, as I would leave to go to pick him up, I would text my husband and say, 'I'm going to my Dad's and I don't know when I'll be back.' Once dad and I had settled the time issue, he would suggest a long drive, always off the beaten track and always the long way around. We would talk about life, Mom who had passed away 11 years earlier, grandkids and great grandkids and he would tell me stories or point out interesting facts about various things.

C.S Lewis said, "The pain I feel now is the happiness I had before. That's the deal."

To love deeply does open us up to vulnerability. The joy, laughter and depth of love we experience now may mean we endure pain later. But to love much is to risk much and that is worth it all.

So, this season, when you're laughing, loving, smiling and choosing to be present, know that leaning into those meaningful relationships with your loved ones is worth every bit of risk you take. May it be for you a season of no regrets.