

So my daughter and I were talking about my funeral the other day. Your kids don't like to talk about your funeral, but I made a good case that it is much better for me to talk about it now than after I die. They tell us we should have that conversation when we are seniors, but it's not the seniors who have a problem with this, it's the kids.

"Eeeewww, Daddy, don't talk like that. It'll bring you bad luck!"

Of course, I counter by explaining that at my age, death is absolutely the NEXT item on my time line ... it could be tomorrow or twenty years from now.... but not only is it the next item on my time line of life, it's the ONLY thing left on my time line of life.

As she settled into her seat with that pained look as if I were going to explain to her the tragic realities of losing baseball because of the DH and how the DH has taken so much of the strategy and excitement out of the game of baseball that it will forever more hold a mere fraction of the excitement that the game created many years ago, I push on with our conversation.

Actually going over the details of my passing does not warrant the pained look on her face, since my name and 'financial portfolio' have never appeared in the same sentence. She already knows that she is welcome to divide up everything I have to any and all members of the family tree, fully aware that most of the conversation will center on "I don't want it, you take it" which will lead to "Let's do a garage sale" which will then lead to dividing up a couple of hundred bucks between everyone.

So as we are talking about all this, a thought struck me that made me smile, which is what I wanted to talk about today, not funerals and what to do with all the junk I leave behind.

I was telling her that I didn't look at myself as an author, a writer or a songwriter. That all sounds a bit formal for me and what I was all about. I think my sweet spot in life was being a good story teller.

I love to tell stories and I love the stories I tell, be they in song, book, column or plays.

And as I was thinking about it, I realized that what I love the most about many of the stories of my life is that they are absolutely true.

There was *Sleeping Through Tornados*, when my mom called, or *Catch of the Day Blues*,

when I went fishing with my grandfather, or *Scoring Life*, when I use to go golfing with my dad, and many more of the stories I have documented through the years knowing that what makes them such good stories is that I didn't embellish them at all. They are great because I tell them just as they occurred.

There are many who tell stories and about half way through, you're pretty convinced that this guy derailed the truth a long time ago.

I think my story telling is so good, because I see the humor in the actual events without needing to embellish the story. It's just funny stories that actually happened in my life.

I've often heard people tell me that when they read my stories, they feel like I'm there talking to them.

I think that's a great complement for a writer. And I think it's because I am a very honest writer. Even in my books of fiction, yes I made the story up completely, but I'm also careful to make every character I create as honest and believable as I can.

So how is this information going to help my daughter as she deals with my passing?

Maybe she could use the money she gets from the garage sale and sit around with a couple pizzas, beer and wine and read the stories of my life and have a good laugh.

Because a good writer understands that the truth is many times way funnier than just making stuff up.

I hope they all have a good laugh.

Just A Though