

AoD ASSIGNMENTS 2007

--, I'm sorry to hear that you and your husband will be separated next year. Of course that's going to be a real challenge. When my husband and I had been married nine years (and had two kids!), we were separated for work-related reasons for two years. Although we saw each other most weekends, it was incredibly tough. What I found especially hard was adjusting to life without him – and then adjusting to life WITH him on a weekly basis. You do get used to functioning independently, and then it's a challenge to learn again to make room for this other person in your world. As you say, this kind of separation makes you stronger. Just remember that despite all the other demands you'll have next year, figure out ways of staying connected, phone, emails, occasional visits, little notes or surprise presents. We worked it out (we've now been married 37 years :-)), and you will too. Best of luck, Dr. Shapiro

Hi --. Thank you for sharing about the loss of your grandfather. The way he died sounds very difficult. Diseases like Parkinson's or ALS which impair or prevent our normal ways of connecting and communicating are just so painful. It must have been intensely challenging for your grandfather, your grandma, and your whole family, including you. I'm glad that you were able to continue to spend time with him, despite the pain. Sometimes we learn so much, get so much, – and can give so much – by just staying, not running away from things that distress us. I think you are absolutely right that by having the courage to experience your grandfather's decline and death with your family, you will have greater insight and compassion to share with other families facing loss and suffering. I am very sorry for your grandfather's passing, but I deeply admire that you can take your personal pain and think about how it can help others. Best, Dr. Shapiro

--, thank you for sharing this very painful story about X. I have an acquaintance whose son, a classmate of my oldest daughter, had a similar accident at a similar age that resulted in permanent brain injury and left-sided paralysis. In one minute, a promising young person in the flower of his life was left permanently altered. The random unfairness of this kind of event can be almost impossible to accept. I have great respect for your commitment to this family; and most of all for your willingness to see what a terrible tragedy this was, and not try to rationalize or minimize it, but just to accept and be with the suffering of the patient and her family. It is this quality that will make you an outstanding doctor. As a busy physician, you will not usually be able to give so much extra time to your patients; but you will always be able to give your presence and caring. Best, Dr. Shapiro