

## Sunsets with my Son

This past summer I went back to the Island that my son and I vacationed last prior to his death. It was our favorite vacation spot and went there many times. I had been with a close friend the year before and although I had reservations we both enjoyed ourselves.

This year I went alone because I wanted to make sure that I didn't enjoy myself last time just because I had company to occupy my time but still enjoyed the vacation spot and could enjoy memories of my last vacation with my son.

I did many of the same things that Jason and I had done back in May of 2006. I went snorkeling, Jet skiing, went to many of the places Jason and I had gone, and to my surprise, enjoyed all of the excursions. I tried to find some of the same memorabilia that we had purchased back in 2006 but much of what was around then was no longer available.

One of the daily events we enjoyed was watching the sunset. Each day we would make our way to Mallory Square to watch the sun fall into the ocean, we would take in the street performer shows while waiting. It was a time of reflection for Jason and I, and we would talk and make plans of the future, talk about the past, and reminisced about trips we had taken.

I had concerns that it would be a painful time and painful memories but it wasn't. Each day I would sit and watch the sun sink into the ocean waiting for the heartache to start, but it didn't. I thought it was strange at first why it wasn't. On the second day of my vacation, it occurred to me why it wasn't. Jason was there with me. Not physically but in my heart. I felt his presence with me. I also believed that he was watching the sunset with me. Just not sitting next to me. He saw it from above, where I saw it from here. I felt like he watched the sunset each day with me enjoying the moment. For me it was a gift. The thought of Jason watching the sunset with me brought me joy. Would I have enjoyed it more if he were sitting next to me? Absolutely. But he was there. At least I felt it.

I'm sure that some would think I'm crazy, perhaps I am, but the feeling of my son's presence to me was peaceful. At least at that moment. Life is about moments. Watching the sunset while in Key West was and always will be a moment for me. Some chose to see only pain and feel anguish when thinking about their children. Was the loss of my son painful? Only another bereaved parent knows. But I had 27 great years with my son. It was only the last year of his life that was painful. I know of many parents that focus on the pain of the loss. I chose to celebrate my son's life. Cherish his memory not clenching my fists in anger, or by being bitter about his death. I'll be the first to admit that it was tragic to say the least, and I don't ever want to minimize the pain of the loss. But I don't want to overshadow the 27 wonderful years I had with him, with the one bad year he had. Not remembering Jason's good years that I had with him would be more tragic than just remembering his last year. There were far more happy times than sad.

I miss my son every day. One day we'll meet again, and we'll have much to say to each other. But until then I live my life one day at a time. Enjoying good moments when they come, and getting through the bad moments when they come too. He's always with me, as sappy as that sounds. But the love I have for my son will never die. Nor will my memories of a wonderful little boy, a nice young man, a brother, a

father, and a person that many loved. A business man, A young man that was quick to help others in need, was thoughtful, and had a smile that could light up a room.

Was he a saint? Not even close, but he had far more redeeming features than character flaws.

By: Brian Ascì

In Loving memory of Jason Ascì

August 19, 1979 - February 7, 2008

BPUSA Tampa Bay Chapter

Tampa, Florida