

First Coach

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Here I am with my first Coach in nineteen-fifty-something.

I'm lucky enough to still have this guy in my life, and I still learn things from him. I've learned from his example as a solid business success, and as a man who is about to enter his sixty-second year married to his best friend, still having fun. And I've also learned from his style.

I remember one summer evening a few years after this photo was taken when we collaborated about a big moment with another vehicle in my little life. Was it time to remove the training wheels? Did I want to? If/when I fell, he knew I could manage it. He explained the process and I don't remember worrying, or over-thinking things. I do remember what happened next.

I remember climbing onto what would soon be the new normal. I was ready. And I was in what I still recognize as "The Goldilocks Zone" for taking a risk: not too big, small; hard, soft; hot, cold—but just right.

I remember my Dad running beside me and holding on, as I experienced the dynamics of balance and pace and movement. And I remember when he invisibly let go of my seat and then cheered as I rode away from him. And I remember that perfect visceral blend of risk and success as I joined him in the whooping, speeding through the warm summer air.

Maybe you're remembering your own training-wheels moment. In mine there are lots of coaching metaphors, and not a day passes that I don't use one of them. My Father's style still helps me to grow and learn and move into my "new normals." Happy Father's Day Dad—and to all of you other Father-Coaches. Your influence is lasting.

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