

Meet Adam Wiener:

I wake up happy. I'm not sure what's wrong with me. This is just the way I am. I love my life and I have so much to live for. I married my best friend, sixteen years ago we met and it was love at first sight. We've been inseparable ever since. On our first Halloween she dressed us up as "Day and Night". We are total opposites but we complement each other perfectly. What's fun to us is going deep into the woods. We always try to push ourselves a little farther and are always woefully unprepared. Some of our greatest memories are being caught in the cold snow and rain, miles from safety, always wondering how we did this to ourselves again.

We have one daughter, Ella Joy, who is 12 years old. I never missed a field trip or an opportunity to volunteer at the school. When Ella was 1 ½, I had been working six 12 hour days per week and I was missing everything. I quit my job, cashed in my retirement and the two of us drove 2500 miles to the tip of the Baja Peninsula to meet her Mom who was finishing a certification class. There was no TV in the car. We talked the entire time. I kept a journal of the daily events and milestones. We rented a tiny house by the beach and played in the sand every day. I tried learning to surf but it was more like practicing drowning. The last day of the trip as I was floating on my surfboard, I watched the sun set and the full moon rise while Dolphins were jumping out of the water around me, Mo and Ella holding hands walking down the beach. The next day we all drove home. That trip and that time with my family changed my life and was the best decision I ever made.

Our house has always been a home for so many people. There was always a hot meal on the stove, a cold beer in the fridge, somebody to listen to your problems and stories while the kids are laughing and playing in the other room. We have always been there for everybody else and have never needed much in return.

I was diagnosed four years ago. It was important to me to keep my life as normal as possible for as long as possible. I asked people to respect my privacy and decisions. My body might be failing but my soul and spirit shine bright. I have an unbreakable great attitude. It will carry me far in this world. I don't need anyone to feel sorry for me, but I do appreciate when people recognize the tragic sacrifices my wife and daughter have had to make on my behalf. It is only because of them that I stumble through my life half paralyzed with a giant smile on my face.

There are no words to explain how grateful I am for the Keenan Van Foundation. They are the purest example of paying it forward. I am touched and honored to be a part of this program. They came to us when we needed them the most. I believe Dan's spirit is with us. He and I would have been great friends if we ever would have had the chance to meet. I take great pride in being part of his dream. Every day is a gift and a blessing and because of the Keenan Foundation I can continue to make the most of life.

Signed,
Adam Wiener
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