



Growing up, I saw myself as an artist, rather than a writer because I loved to draw and I doodled whenever I had a writing instrument in my hand. I was graced with a very good grasp of proper English and I had a built-in spellchecker in my brain long before they became computerized. I loved reading from as young as I can remember and my grade 5 teacher, Miss Reid, a New Zealander, was such a fabulous story teller, my love of reading was even more enhanced. I was never a kid who kept a "dear diary" though when we had story assignments I always achieved pretty good marks. My first English high school teacher encouraged my writing but sadly I only had him for one year and my next English teacher was boring as hell so then I lost interest.

When Jim died, I was encouraged by a book I read on grieving to maintain a journal where I could record my feelings as I went through the whole grieving process. It was a wonderful outlet for me and I was amazed months later how I had progressed and all the different emotions I had gone through. I realize since starting this website just how important writing has been as a form of therapy for me as well as a historical record of our travels and life experiences.

A friend of mine, Murray Brown, who wrote to me this morning, lost his mother just a couple of years ago after having lost his dad several years sooner. We are near in age and he described my feelings so eloquently and I quote "I know the empty feeling that you must be experiencing now in having both of your parents gone and realizing that you are at the top of the chain." That's it! I am now at the top of the chain no longer having any "links" above me and it is a foreign, uncomfortable feeling, like taking my first steps as a toddler without a hand to hold or riding my two-wheeler for the first time without training wheels. And so life continues; we evolve sometimes without realizing just how far we have come to and are forced to get used to this new role we are thrust into. Wow! Isn't this time we spend on earth called life, amazing? (By the way, Thanks Murray, as you can read you put it in such a way that now I get it!)