

Words From Diana

Ted was the most playful, mischievous, loving, romantic, appreciative husband! Every day he asked, "Diana, will you marry me? I promise I'll be good!" I remember on our wedding day, I spoke of how I was marrying not just one man but many...a man who was not easily defined.

He was first of all a spiritual being. That wasn't always apparent in his presence in the business world.

His daughter Kathy often referred to him as a force to be reckoned with.

As a trial lawyer, in practice for 53 years with his own firm, he was lead counsel in one of America's most prominent medical/human rights cases, a case that won the Pulitzer prize for the Orange County Register and Ted appeared on Oprah with his clients.

He was also an instrument-rated pilot who had flown his family through Alaska, He asked for and got special clearance to fly over Mt St Helens between explosions.

He was a passionate rancher who spoke hilarious broken Spanish with his team of ranch hands, who adored him. He loved boating, and we were married on a yacht he'd just had built in Taiwan.

Not many knew that in adolescence he was beset with blackouts, seizures that would last several minutes and have him wandering away and just standing somewhere until they passed. I can only imagine how difficult that made his youth. He was told he'd never be able to drive a car. That experience made him a loner.

He made up his mind one day to find and to go see a healer. Took a bus from Sacramento to the Long Beach convention Center where Oral Roberts was appearing. Threw himself into helping set up and made himself so useful he was rewarded by being one of the first in line for a healing.

He stepped in front of Oral Roberts who reached out and put his hand on Ted's forehead. Ted blacked out and came to with everyone cheering and applauding. He felt so disappointed he'd blacked out and missed the experience, left the building, got in a bus to go home. Within a few days he realized he'd had no seizures at all. He never had another one.

When he lost his wife Sharon to cancer after 22 years he was determined to find just the right partner and playmate for the rest of his life. He developed a strategy for doing that, and when he sat next to a literary agent at the Maui Writers Conference, she said I Want that book! We came up with the title, *Build a Better Spouse Trap!* It is full of hilarious New Yorker cartoons that he spent months selecting for the chapter headings.

Those of you who spent time with Ted, or read his second book, the Enlightenment Code, know he had a very unusual attitude toward death. He sometimes felt drawn to sit by bedsides of the dying, telling them, "You're going home. Death is perfectly safe."

He felt so strongly that he didn't want people to be afraid of death that a few years ago, we decided to take a certification course to become "end of life" doulas. You may have heard the word doula in relation to a person who helps a new mother transition into motherhood. Training as a death doula is something much more intensive than being trained in hospice. We learned to truly BE With the dying. The purpose is to serve the dying and their family to create the most beautiful conscious passage, including their ideal vigil scene. To deeply consider how they want to feel about their passage, and what memories of it they want their family and loved ones to have. We even wrote out our own ideal scenes.

In reality, Ted's was far more beautiful than even he ever imagined. A kidney stone and a lack of saline in his blood led to a 6 day hospitalization. A few weeks later he was there for three days again with pneumonia.

One day he said, "We have to talk. Will you be alright if I am not physically here anymore?"

A few days later he spent one more night in the hospital after I found him on his bathroom floor, conscious but non-responsive.

I called our daughters who both came to be with me immediately. We knew we wanted him home with us and needed hospice care. I didn't know yet how amazing that hospice team would be. The most gentle, supportive people arrived with everything we needed and just the right explanations. I remember a nurse with infinite patience for all our questions, and a man who came to bathe Ted on the last day and the reverence he treated him with.

What occurred was the most transformative experience of our lives. He hugged us, but couldn't communicate. The only two words he spoke for the next 36 hours were "Beautiful!" and "love!"

The three of us felt ourselves drawn into a bond we'd never experienced before. We devoted every second into creating beauty around him. We told him how we loved him and encouraged him toward the light.

I texted Robin what was happening and she said, "You are creating a cocoon of love." That is how we began referring to it and still do.

Ted worshiped the Divine Feminine, and, it just happened that Shree Maa, his beloved spiritual teacher of the past 24 years just happened to be in Palm Springs. We video taped her arrival at his bedside. His eyes lit up and he spoke his last word, "Maa!"

Kathy and Lexi have held me in that cocoon of love during these two weeks.

Yes, there have been times I haven't been able to get out of bed. One was when I was under the illusion that I had to write a traditional obituary. Suddenly, it dawned on me, Ted would hate one of those. He'd want to be remembered in the fullness of who he was as a multi-faceted, complex, man. He loved to say, "If we're not having fun, we're not doing it right! It's all a dance, Diana!

"When Ted was a child, when he was born into this plane of existence, his family admired him as a little child. He grew into a young man for all his friends and acquaintances to admire. Then he grew into a mature human being. No one cried for the baby when he grew into a young man, and no one cried for the young man when he grew into a mature human being.

"The same thing has happened now—Ted has just taken another step. The only thing that's different is that this time we cannot see his body. We cannot see him with our physical eyes. But we do have a different viewing point. We can see with our inner eye—that Ted, the soul that he is, just outgrew this body and outgrew these experiences. He has something else to do on another plane."

---- You will lose everything. Your money, your power, your fame, your success, perhaps even your memories. Your looks will go. Loved ones will die. Your body will fall apart. Everything that seems permanent is impermanent and will be smashed. Experience will gradually, or not so gradually, strip away everything that it can strip away. Waking up means facing this reality with open eyes and no longer turning away. But right now, we stand on sacred and holy ground, for that which will be lost has not yet been lost, and realizing this is the key to unspeakable joy. Whoever or whatever is in your life right now has not yet been taken away from you. This may sound trivial, obvious, like nothing, but really it is the key to everything, the why and how and wherefore of existence. Impermanence has already rendered everything and everyone around you so deeply holy and significant and worthy of your heartbreaking gratitude. Loss has already transfigured your life into an altar. ~Jeff Foster