

An Amazing Family (21 September 2009)



To those of you who read the Sunday Sun article, 20 September 2009 – thank you!

I hope you enjoyed it – Patty Winsa of the Toronto Star did a fantastic job of writing up the story!

The article covered many aspects of my life, my adventures, and my family (my mother and sister). I was very happy when I read the article, and yet, I immediately realized that my dad and stepmum, sisters and brothers were not mentioned. Had I failed to provide Patty their contact info? I think yes – and for this oversight, I felt quite terrible that I had not recognized the important contribution of my whole family.

Please allow me to take this opportunity to acknowledge the significant impact that my dad, stepmum, brothers and sisters have also had on shaping the person I am today. In order for you to get a sense of who they are, I have included a short description below.

My dad (Ken) is a character – no doubt about it. If you've met my dad, then you'll remember him – he's just that kind of guy. I think everyone of his kids has acquired some of his eccentricity and fortunately, we're all putting it to good use! He's smart and adventurous and he's taught me some of the things in life that others sometimes miss: the body is meant to be worked - hard, that working outdoors will provide peace and health, and to respect the outdoors.

My relationship with my stepmum (Jo) will always be beyond special. Jo has been crucial in developing the positive side of my personality – a quality that I am so happy to possess! Through the down times, Jo was always there to help me see the light at the end of the tunnel – now, things are awesome, and Jo was inspirational in making me see life as an exciting adventure! As if these gifts were not enough, Jo has been a mother, a friend, and a confidant. She has a heart of gold and she loves a good time – laughter, fun, and wine! She's a wonderful person to me, and I'm so grateful that she is in my life.

My sister, Caitlin, is a talented artist, and an extremely hard worker. She's experienced more things than I will ever know, and she exudes an air of wisdom that I will never be able to convey! Her heart is huge and I'm so happy to know I'll always have a place in it. She'll always be in mine. Caitlin is joyous and generous and filled with love. I am a lucky person to have her in my life!

Shane, my brother, is into health and fitness. He's strong, good looking and a driven young man. He is strong willed and will make difficult decisions to better himself. He is focussed on his future, knowing that with hard work and effort, he will attain the goals to which he aspires. He also knows how to have a good time, laugh and just chill. He's really mastering the balance required to excel in life.

Devon, my youngest sister, is smart and sassy. She's not at all hesitant to say what's on her mind, and she doesn't back down from a fight. These characteristics make her stand out in a crowd, and I am proud that she has the guts to say what's on her mind. I'm excited to see where Devon ends up – she has a strong personality and I can't wait to see what she will experience in her life!

Celton is my youngest brother, and when I talk with him, I forget that he's quite a few years my junior. He's exudes a sophistication years beyond his age. With this common "old soul" trait, he and Caitlin hang out a lot. Being around them, I feel like I have a lot of growing up to do! Celton will do just fine in life – he's calm, cool and collected. He really goes with the flow, but don't let his mellow demeanour fool you – he's a strategic thinker, and always has a plan for a few steps down the path.

The one thing about all my brothers and sisters is their ambition to get out into the world and start experiencing things! I am really astounded by the adventures they pursue – these kids love life and want to experience as much joy from it as they can. Watching them grow into young adults has been

exciting for me – I have no idea where they will end up – but I am optimistic that they will all lead successful lives.

My mother and sister (mentioned in the Toronto Star article) also deserve some further description. My mother (Deborah) is a strong personality. From her, I learned that if I committed to something, that I should not quit, and that often in life, I'll be required to fight for something I really want. This lesson of determination has been invaluable in making my dreams come true. My sister, Kelly, is a unique young woman. She's certainly had her share of challenging experiences and has blown my mind in her ability to excel. She is very intelligent and is keen to work hard. An employer would be fortunate to have her dedicated disposition and her eagerness to achieve high quality work at their employ. I have experienced her loyalty first hand, and this is one of her greatest qualities.

Many people wonder how I was turned onto climbing and what factors shaped who I am. The truth is, many events and many people were involved. I hope that by introducing my family to you, you have some idea of the people I have been surrounded by. My family is only a selection of the people who have helped shaped me – I have had difficult experiences, dear friends, and extended family that have also influenced the person I have become. In the end, I am who I am because I chose to learn from challenging experiences, to learn from the people who are in my life, and to make the tough (and hopefully correct) decisions that shape the course of my life.

It is with the greatest appreciation that I thank all of my family and friends for their care and concern for my wellbeing in the adventures that I conduct.

Sincerely,
Meagan McGrath, Adventurer
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