

Dearest Evy, Peter, Rebekah, Hannah and Sarah,
Dear friends...

Thank you for this very real honour to share a glimpse of this incredible man, and the wonderful loving friend that we've all had in Charles.

As many of you will know, this gathering would be perfect for Charles - for him to be with his family and friends all together. For Charles, the family always came first. And if you were lucky, as I was as a friend, you'd get included in some wonderful family event... sometimes as simple as a weekday meal!

In almost every conversation Charles and I had over the past 35 years there would always be a quick review of how great Evy and the kids were and what they were all up to. Or, inevitably, his phone would ring and it would be Peter or Rebecca or Sarah or Hannah or Evy! You (the family!) were with him constantly and he was with you, and you could tell he LOVED it that way. He was so very proud of all of you.

Then, next to his family, his world was all about the opportunity to love and help other people like us, to learn and to enjoy a more interesting life. And as we all know, Charles loved sharing his views about life!

But despite the craziness of our world, Charles always seemed to find a way to have hope. He was never soured by the world around him. Or at least it didn't appear so.

Maybe it was part of his physical makeup to be optimistic? Just like his upright stature, that large imposing frame and that great voice! I heard it so often booming over the phone, or appearing suddenly at my office door...., Or - over the past few years - when we would meet for coffee almost weekly to solve all the worlds' problems... I'd hear "PETER P" from this big handsome guy walking down the street... and it could only be Charles.

Over our coffee (and maybe the odd muffin if the truth be told!), we'd rehash the news, sometimes his work, then often talk about the craziness of his youth and university and early teaching days...

Especially in the last few years he'd share his frustration at being less active.... He loved remembering - and I know he'd want to be remembered - for his days on the basketball or squash court ... Or for the great times like those when he and I were working together in the Caribbean - a rough assignment - when we'd sneak out of meetings with our tennis rackets... like bad little boys!

I'll miss so many things about Charles. But perhaps mostly his constant questioning. He always wanted to get to the core of whatever the issue. Whatever the topic in a universe of conversations, Charles would invariably say something like "But the question you really have to ask is..."! Or "there is a better question!"

I loved his wonderful probing mind..... But I have to admit, his constant questions could be a tiny bit intimidating or even a little annoying at times.

He loved recounting how a Canadian Government big whig threatened to blacklist him because of the questions he needed to ask or the results he found on one of his many evaluations. But for Charles it was a question of truth and doing the right thing. And there was no stopping him.

I'm sure that we would all agree that Charles gave, and then gave some more. Yes, he gave us lots of those questions... But then he helped us all work out our own answers too.

He helped me in so many ways and in so many situations I can't even begin to tell you. And I know that for me, Charles will somehow always be around helping... full of his zest for life.. and he'll always be making me think. And he'll always be reminding me that life is one big, beautiful, amazing, joyful, opportunity to share and care, and to learn about!

I will always be so grateful for his friendship.

Peter Paproski