

Adventure Must be Experienced

Everyone around the world is talking about the capabilities of artificial intelligence (AI) and what new possibilities it brings. Someday it may be able to replace certain jobs or complete some tasks more accurately and quickly than humans. I asked AI (Copilot) what a hero was. It told me, “A hero is someone who stands out for their courage, integrity, or extraordinary actions—often in the face of adversity.” While this seems to be a reasonable definition, I do not believe it is complete, and more importantly, I do not believe AI can replace a person’s heroes. My dad is my hero. He is “extraordinary” because he is adventurous and a risk-taker. These are qualities that cannot be replaced.

My dad says, “The best learning comes from adventure.” He has lived his life this way. My dad really did not have a strong father figure. His father left him, his brother, and my grandmother soon after they emigrated from Italy to Australia. Within a couple of years, my grandmother found another partner, but unfortunately, he died too early. Perhaps this gave my father his sense of adventure, which, when he was younger, was considered being a troublemaker. He had problems in school, nearly being kicked out of three, and always pushed his teachers and my grandmother to their limits.

But he turned trouble into something positive – and this took him around the world. After graduating from college, my dad had a one-way ticket to Europe with only \$1,000 in his pocket after gambling the rest away. He found himself in England, where

he met some new friends and ended up sailing around the world. He eventually came to the United States with no money and no plan. He was able to get a job that again took him to new places – China, Jamaica, and even the Middle East during the Iraq War. He encountered many different people and learned countless life lessons, all of which he teaches me today.

I am not a risk-taker, but this is why I find it to be a heroic quality. His sense of adventure has not only made him well-traveled but has also made him friendly, outgoing, and worldly. These are character traits that I hope to have. His eyes shine and he smiles when he speaks of his past, and he tells me that I need to make my own experiences, even if they are hard or uncomfortable. He tells me this is the only way to learn and grow as a person. I believe him. He is an amazing person and an amazing dad.

My dad is still adventurous today. He supports me, listens to me, and pushes me to do things I find difficult. He drives me to take risks. He cannot be replaced by a robot, and his teachings wouldn't be the same if I only read them on a computer. He is my dad and my hero – someone who is irreplaceable.