

Synchronicity, Coincidence, God Winks?

The Hike

Bill Spach, CO Allison's Dad

After moving to Colorado last fall, I began hiking some of the local trails each morning and was fortunate to run into a group of hikers by chance. I learned that they hike every Wednesday and I joined their group the following week.

In mid-January, I was hiking with the group and we had a new fellow named Frank join us. He hadn't hiked much lately and was concerned he wouldn't be able to keep up. So, each time we stopped for a short rest I made it a point to check on him to see if he was still OK.

Frank and I talked for a bit after the hike and learned we live only about two miles from each other. I was telling him about a local hike, which he could actually walk to from his house. He had never hiked it before and asked if I could take him sometime. We met the following week so I could show him the route. During our hike, we learned that we grew up only about 25 miles apart in New Jersey!

Later on, he asked if I had any children. It's a topic I never bring up, because hearing my story usually scares people away! But when he heard I had lost two daughters, he shared that he lost a son to suicide in 2012 while they were living in Germany. He has a surviving adult daughter, but for whatever reason, she has broken off all contact with her family and they haven't heard from her in years. We spent the remainder of the hike and about an hour afterward talking about loss and grief. It seems that he didn't have anyone else he could talk to about what he was going through. I was so glad he felt comfortable opening up to me.

The following week, Frank signed up for a hike with a group I wasn't familiar with, and he invited me to join him.

It snowed a bit the previous evening so everyone else who had signed up cancelled at the last minute except for the hike leader. So, it was just the three of us on the hike. Maybe a half hour into it, the hike leader asked the inevitable question. I hesitated to answer, as sometimes it's just easier to say I don't have any children and be done with it. Frank answered by saying he lost his son to suicide, so I also answered that I had lost two daughters. Then the hike leader told us he lost his son to an accidental drug overdose, just a year ago! We spent most of the hike and lunch break discussing loss and grief.

It's absolutely amazing and a strange coincidence how people who have something so significant in common with you can come into your life when you least expect it!