



Mother's Day can become bittersweet as your Mom - that amazing person who if you were as fortunate as my siblings and I were, was just always there with support - advances in age. You'll find yourself drawing on your own memories of family restaurant outings and backyard barbecues to celebrate Mother's Day. Painfully, you'll have to remind her of those wonderful family gatherings that are lovingly etched into your memory but have escaped hers.

It's painful but somehow redemptive to be there to gingerly attempt to guide your Mom back down "Memory Lane." When she lapsed yesterday and told me that it was the last day of school and she had to come pick us all up so we could go and get ice cream she renewed a memory of my own, as perceived through her own frail and often fractured recollections. It pushed me to my own vague recall of construction paper and Elmer's glue, making a card that she cherished long after that year's special day in her honor.

I once lived in very close proximity to a shopping mall, the Cambridgeside Galleria. I would see lots of teenaged boys with their mothers. The mom's were so patient and affectionate and the kids were, as teenagers are wont to be, indifferent and disaffected. If I could have given any advice to those kids, it would have been this:

Embrace that time with your Mom. I know it might seem like the least cool thing imaginable in that moment but believe me - and I am not alone in telling you this, you can ask anybody - that time is absolutely irreplaceable.

She might hook you up with some kick-ass shoes, or the record you wanted, or even a little quality time at lunch, but believe me as much as it means to her in that moment (and it does) it is going to mean even more for you down the line when it's a memory you can't recreate. Please, embrace it. Those moments are never coming back.

My Mom's memory very much comes and goes. She will not recall something seemingly simple from a recent phone call and that realization and admission now is terrifying to her and heartbreaking to me. For her to occasionally share that acceptance that her mind has begun to

betray her, it's simply devastating to us both. But then she'll surprise me with something unexpected, as she did yesterday.

Years ago at some social gathering a family friend was commenting on the events I had witnessed, the people of note from the worlds of the arts and sports and popular culture who I'd had the opportunity to have met. My Mom smiled and nodded proudly, and I recalled the moment clearly as she delivered the punchline, just as she had all those years ago.

"Yup, Tommy has met a lot of celebrities," she said, clutching my arm with a warm grin and beaming pride in her green eyes. "But I never let him forget of all the people he's met, he met me first."

Happy Mother's Day.