

825 Happy Birthday to Me *(this is an edited version of my blog 825)*

This week my family indulged me on occasion of my birthday. My five year old grandson sang me this (Steiner) song: "It was 70 years ago today, that Opa did come down from heaven to stay, he came to bring goodness and joy to the earth, good people and angels attended his birth, so let us all join in singing, birthday bells are ringing, happy happy birthday." My wife thanked me for "emotional and physical support; giving her permission to be herself; being engaged and always willing to discuss issues; upholding truthfulness at all times; being the best comfort in the world." My daughter Saskia often expressed her love to me, "I love you so much, daddy, and every day I am thankful to have such a loving, caring, honest and generous father/male figure I so look up to in my life; I know I can chat with you about anything; to have a relationship like that with my father is something I cherish so much and something that I know is far and in-between with families, so I will never take it for granted; thank you for being so supportive of me, adoring me and being my best friend in time of need. I am writing this on my last day before I jet off to Europe, to say I have truly enjoyed my time staying with you is the understatement of the century. I've always known I have a special dad - someone I look up to as a father, but also as a good human being: Centered, loving, peaceful, generous, open and always there for his children. I'm very proud to call you my daddy, I still and will for-ever-more want to be *'just like you'* and still look up to you in every way." To my sons I had issued a wish: On my seventieth birthday will you please let me bear witness to the speech you would hold at my funeral; Yani: "His weaknesses made me stronger; his strengths made me wiser. His wisdom guided; he always provided. He mentored, he sacrificed, he supported. As I take the honour of parenthood, he guides me, he cares for my son; he even walks besides me when I am wrong. He speaks the truth, he never lies; boy am I lucky, to have seen the world through my father's eyes. Happy birthday, dad." Rad: "Today we celebrate Dad's 70th birthday. Our father is one of the most giving people any of us know. He gave up working in his studio to be able to be there when we left for school and got home in the afternoon. Dad has always been selfless. As a child I remember he supported everything we ever wanted to do. The effort he put in to allow us to pursue our hobbies was amazing; we all developed amazing passion and skill in our chosen areas of expertise and so much of that came from dad's support over the years. Dad spent so much time and effort in teaching us about integrity, truth, love, wisdom and compassion. I always felt we were raised in a way that was teaching us an understanding of life on a different level than our friends. I'm certain of that now. What I was exposed to in the army was a rude awakening as to what happens when you aren't raised properly. The attitudes of my friends were often appalling and I used to think to myself how lucky I was to have been raised the way I had been. For me to be exposed to that mentality and come out the way I have, untainted by the hate & fear that the military instills in people, is due to my upbringing. Thank you, dad; thank you for everything you've done for us, but mostly, thank you for your love."