

I've gone back and forth about whether to share this, but in the end, it feels important to share this deeply personal experience. Losing my father had been, without a doubt, the most difficult experience of my life. Our relationship was complicated, we never became as close as I'd hoped, and now with the finality of his death, it makes it even harder to accept.

My father was a private man, especially with his work with the govt. So private that I didn't even know the nature of his work until I attended his retirement party. I have vivid memories of visiting the Pentagon with him in his Colonels uniform, and watching soldiers stop to salute him as we passed by. Now I'm uncovering so much about him that I wish I had known or could've asked him about when he was still alive. He was a closed book. I guess this is why he was so good at his job. He was incredibly intelligent, on a level that I didn't grasp or understand until now. I miss him so much.

His death came suddenly, and I was not prepared for that call. In the days after, I did my best to honor him in the way he deserved. We buried him in his officer's uniform at our family plot at Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, NY. He received full military honors, and the ceremony was performed by Russian Orthodox priests and monks who had hand dug his grave that morning, in the snow. He was laid to rest next to his parents- whose grave we used to visit every summer.

1. Final moments with Papa
2. My sis and I with Papa
3. Early military career
4. Mama and Papa







