When you take up role as 'parent' --- there are no time outs, sabbaticals or vacations from the job and there is no opting out if the going gets tough. If you think about it, how many times do we actually make a fuss of our parents and let them know how much we appreciate them and everything they have done for us and continue to do so. Not often enough. Advertisers would have you believe that Mother's Day or Father's Day is all about extravagant gifts and expensive meals at fancy restaurants. But in my opinion, Mother's Day and Father's Day, however gimmicky and commercialised they have become is the perfect opportunity to tell our parents how truly special they are. And I think most parents would agree that all they would like is to spend a day with their families and enjoy each other's company.

Today I am going to turn the spotlight away from 'mothers' and shine it on the fathers who so often get a raw deal. We somehow tend to view the role that men take in family life for granted and even at times downplay their part. If a mother is the nurturer then the father is the protector. If a mother is the foundation that maintains stability, then a father is the all-encompassing umbrella that protects us from the elements. What we forget is that from the day that a person becomes a parent, they assume the mantle of guardian and provider of their child. A man can spend his entire life working to give his family a sanctuary that shields them for the harsh realities of the outside world and offer them safety and security. They do not question their role, nor do they shirk their responsibilities. And for that, we should honour them.

As a mother of three, I sometimes find myself assuming I know my children better than anyone else. I have played the 'nine months in my womb' card more than once but every now and then I have to concede to the fact that there is one other person who knows my children just as well as I do. I know what I could and would do for my children and I only have to look to my side to know that there is someone else who would do exactly the same thing.

I sometimes wish we did celebrate Father's day when I was a child, maybe I could have told my father how much he meant to me. But the moral of the story might just be that we should take every opportunity that we can to give thanks to our parents and show them that we care and not necessarily wait for one day in the year to tell them. I think everyone needs to be told that they are loved and Dads are no exception.

Only a dad, neither rich nor proud,
Merely one of the surging crowd,
Toiling, striving from day to day,
Facing whatever may come his way,
Silent whenever the harsh condemn,
And bearing it all for the love of them.
Edgar A. Guest (1916)

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