

Dads in the Limelight (#limelightdads) – Chris Efessiou (@ChiefDaddyOfcr)

BY DADOFDIVAS – FEBRUARY 16, 2012

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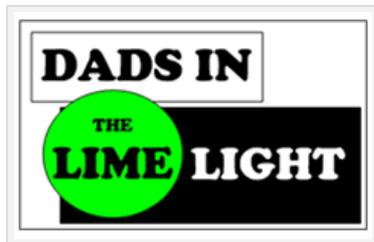
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Our 205th Dad in the Limelight is Chrus Efessiou. I want to thank Chris for being a part of this series. It has been great getting connected with him and now sharing him with all of you.



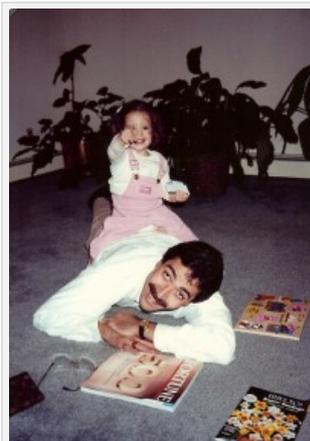
1) Tell me about yourself, (as well as how you are in the limelight for my readers knowledge)

I am an entrepreneur and business leader. In the past 20 years I have founded, co-founded, developed, and managed multiple successful enterprises in the healthcare industry—all the while being a committed and present single parent. I have built each company and my career as a whole on the belief that people need to be respected, consulted, mentored, and empowered to bring out the best in themselves. Presently I am the founder, president, and CEO of SRxA-Strategic Pharmaceutical Advisors, and I am also honored to be a visiting professor and guest lecturer at numerous academic institutions, including George Mason University's School of Management, and Northeastern University. As an entrepreneur I am also an advocate for small business, and serve as member of the Management Committee of the Small Business Council of the United States Chamber of Commerce, and I am a frequent keynote speaker on various topics, nationally and internationally. Of recent, I have been in the limelight as a result of my new book with the title **CDO**

Chief Daddy Officer which recently made the Amazon Best Seller List ranking on the top 7% of all Kindle Editions. **CDO Chief Daddy Officer** is the review, examination and application of transferable business skills to the business of parenting.

2) Tell me about your family

Until 3 years ago, I was a single dad to a lovely daughter who is now 24 years old and who plans to get married to a wonderful young man next year. Juliana, my wife and soul mate of 3 years, is the mother of 3 daughters ranging in age from 27 to 40. She, too, raised each of these fine individuals as a single mom. So I am delighted to say that since Juliana and I met 5 years ago, we have singly and collectively been able to enjoy life as we never knew it before; a life of love, respect and care for one another and for our children. What is more is that our four daughters, each of whom is a profoundly self-confident, loving, companionate, and successful woman refer to one another as their sisters and to us as their parents. It all happened on its own early on, but to this day each time I hear it, it takes my breath away.



3) What has been the largest challenge you have had in

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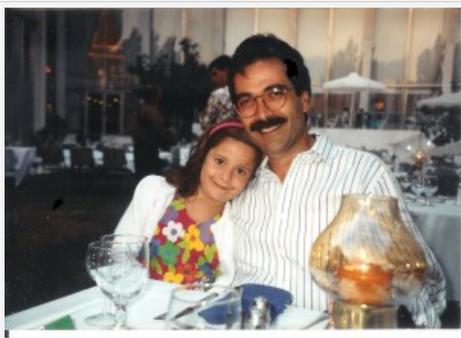
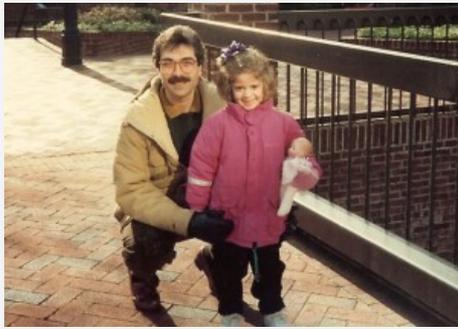
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being a father?

The largest challenge and even larger reward of my life has been raising my daughter. Her mother and I separated when she was 7-years-old. Two years later my ex-wife informed me that she was moving out of state and taking my daughter with her. I was devastated with the news since my daughter and I were incredibly close and in my mind I was gearing up for a potentially ugly custody battle to prevent the father-daughter separation from happening. When I explained to my daughter of her mother's impending plans and asked my daughter how she felt about moving away from me, she answered "she can move wherever she wants to but I am staying here with you." With these simple words I was launched into the single parenting of a young pre-pubescent girl with no experience or manual for the most important job of my life, I stuck with what I knew best which was developing and running a

business, and I discovered that the same skills critical to success as a business leader, seamlessly transferred to parenting. The results exceeded my wildest expectations. Today, nearly 17 years later, I see my parenting as the single largest success of my life. Last year, at the urging of my daughter and my wife, I set out to write this book in the hope that my experiences and the way with which I dealt with the challenges of fatherhood would motivate and inspire other fathers to do the same. Judging from the readers' reviews on Amazon, it does appear that the readers agree with my point of view on parenthood.



4) What advice would you give to other fathers?

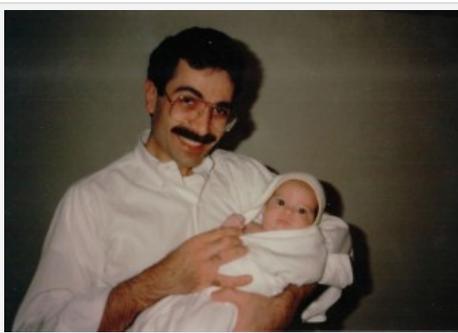
I must stress that my advice is not that of a professional or a parenting expert but simply the advice of a father who walked down the path least traveled and was met with a successful outcome. With that in mind, I offer the following in no particular order:

- Parent by Example. Show your children (don't just tell them) what to do or how to do it.
- Be an emotionally available and physically present father
- Understand that being professionally ambitious and a loving, engaged father are not mutually exclusive
- Communicate with your children. This means having a discussion not a monologue
- Demonstrate Leadership and Be the leader of your children and your family
- Demonstrate and Teach the value of Accountability
- Demonstrate and Teach the value of charity and anonymous giving to the less fortunate
- Demonstrate and Teach the value of fiscal responsibility
- Mentor, Mentor, Mentor

5) Seeing that you (or your position) are in the limelight, how have you come to balance parenthood and outside life? If you are currently not in the limelight per se, please still answer this in regards to how you balance parenthood and outside life.

I always felt that my purpose as a person and as a parent was to work hard to provide the best I could for my family. Many of us lose sight of the importance of this and are often consumed by our work to the exclusion of our family life. Too many of us get an "A" as professionals and an "F" as parents.

It is all a matter of priorities. I never wanted to be an absent father who was successful professionally, for I never wanted my daughter to know me as an acquaintance. I therefore made it a priority to be available for anything and everything that was important to her and that I considered my greatest success. Most of the times I was physically present, but I was always there emotionally. While I have been privileged to be able to regulate my own schedule most of the time, I understand that many parents are not afforded the same flexibility because of strict work obligations, travel or other factors. In these cases, use all means available to you to make your presence known to your child. If they are in a school play or soccer game and you are traveling overseas, send them a text message just before the walk on stage wishing them luck and telling them that you are thinking of them and you are proud of their accomplishment. And don't forget to tell them how much you love them. Believe me, they'll understand. Your text message will not substitute your physical presence but it will provide the essence of your emotional presence. Furthermore, in doing so you are part of their daily wants and needs. It is far better to do that,



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than to call them after the event and ask them how it went. Remember, children have very long memories.



6) What have you learned from the fathers that you have interacted with?

There are many fathers out there that are terrifically engaged in their children's lives. They know what is important to their children. They know what music they like, who their friends are, how school is going, what is causing them pain and what is making them happy. Every father I know who does this, undoubtedly has a close relationship with their child. That is not an accident. Unfortunately, I also know too many fathers that are aloof and detached from their children's lives. People who do not know details about what makes their children happy or sad. Those are also the same fathers who are usually most critical of their kids. They are the ones who would readily admit that they don't know what is going on with their children. Fatherhood and parenting take work. Closeness in a family does not come from sharing DNA; It is the product of loving, nurturing and caring.

7) What else would you share regarding your experiences as a father thus far?

far?

Like most fathers, I raised my family based on what I believed was right. I was a parent first and a friend later if that was possible. I remember many times when my daughter and I did not see eye to eye. In those cases I always explained my position and the reasons why I'd arrived at those decisions. When all else failed we agreed to disagree. I never had a problem not being liked by my daughter. Not being respected by her was unacceptable to me, and I never traded respect for popularity because that is always a losing proposition. Through it all, I always treated her with the respect I want to receive from her and as a result I earned it. She is now 24 years old. A thoughtful, loving, caring, unentitled young woman who is phenomenally successful professionally. What is more is that, she is a fine human being. What else could a parent ask for?



8) What have been the most memorable experiences that you have had thus far as a parent?

There are too many of them to mention. A great many are outlined in my book. If I had to name one however, it would have to be a "Thank You" note she gave me the day she graduated college, in which she thanked me for 30 things I'd done for her. Much to my surprise, I did not remember a great many of them but it is significant that she noticed things which I thought unimportant. I have attached it here for your perusal. Once again, this is proof that children have incredibly long memories, and it is incumbent upon us as fathers to make those memories count.

If you have any questions for Chris, please leave a comment here and I will make sure that he gets them so that he may be able to respond!

Also, do you know a Dad in the Limelight? If so, please email me their contact information so that they too can be a part of this series!

Dad of *Divas*

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About dadofdivas

I am a father of two girls who everyday works to regain control of my kingdom. Is this even possible in a divadom? This blog is dedicated to chronicling my experiences and challenges in being a father as well as providing some food for thought to other dads. History of this Blog - I started writing this blog full time in January 2008 prior to my second daughters' birth. Since then, the blog has exponentially grown and I have continued to find my groove through both reading and networking with other bloggers as well as writing on a myriad of varying topics. Outside of home I am a Student Affairs Professional who has been working in the field of College Administration now for 12 years with extensive experience in precollege planning, admission, advising, and other areas.

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