

Tim Quinn

A painting is never finished. It simply stops in interesting places.

Paul Gardener from Strength to Love, 1963.

He was funny. Not funny like amusing, oh isn't that clever, but funny like lightning speed as if he knew the punch line, the absurd observation, the joke within the joke before it was even set up. His wit was the first thing you noticed, but it was just the surface. He was Irish through and through so more times than not his sense of humor had a bit of depreciating disclosure about his own life and follies, which drew you in and made you like him more. Spending time with Tim meant spending time in the world of laughter.

He was honest. I remember once talking to him about services and he told me The Arc that he led did not have it right yet, and he was becoming impatient. I challenged him and said but you are the Executive Director, why can't you just push it forward quicker? In typical Tim fashion he said, "I am, well then that must be the problem!". Tim did not self promote as so often is the case of those doing this work in a more progressive manner, it's an easy trap because so much of what happens in this industry is just not right yet. Tim resisted that role consistently and embraced the opportunities to learn much more than to teach.

He was smart. Though he often hid his intellect it was always there hitting on all four cylinders. He could grasp easily the budget, the legislative agendas and the complexities of solutions that on the surface looked easy. He had a uncanny ability to promote others ideas, work and accomplishments while at the same time understanding what was next, after this. There was a genius in his ability and impatience in his approach, together these traits moved mountains. I remember so often hearing about a fantastic initiative or change within his organization that he may spend two minutes conveying and the next half hour talking about what was on the horizon that had not been tackled yet. A ball of energy would be an understatement he was a combustible planet.

He was love. Tim much preferred peacemaking to fighting, compliments to criticism and friendship instead of opponents. He never felt that listening and understanding a totally different viewpoint compromised his principals, in fact he found this type of communication to be invigorating, like a good run. He was a romantic at heart as evidenced most clearly by his relationship and marriage to Gloria. He believed in their love more than anything else and he told me on a long plane ride once that he was sure glad that the universe was out of sync and not paying attention long enough to capture her heart.

He was wisdom. I asked Tim what he thought about having cancer and he answered "not too much", which was just like Tim, but upon further discussion he told me that at times with each new test or revelation that the cancer would not stay at bay he would make promises and agreements with himself about how he would live. This was a fascinating conversation and of course I wanted to know more, so I asked what kinds of promises what kinds of changes? Tim shrugged and said they don't really matter, because though you think you are going to be so different that only lasts for a few days, weeks maybe, you then just get back to your life, your work, your friends and your family.....there's no mystery. Pride in your children, love of your wife, passion for your work and respect from you colleagues and friends was what was left when all the fears sit in front of you in full view.

Last May Tim and I travelled to Qatar together for a conference, I am so very thankful we had this opportunity and though we both agreed that the ride in business class was our favorite part I know now that mine was spending time with someone I had know for over two decades half way around the world. One particular day we were on a break waiting for the next session to start and I was talking with a couple of attendees when Tim came up to me and said"

come on let's go in and get our seats". I told him that the session had not started yet and so what was the rush? Tim said come on Lynne; let's get in there so we can get out of there. We both burst out laughing because that again was so Tim, let's get going so we can get going.

He was a man who wanted to stay but in the end left too soon, I will never forget him and remain grateful that he was my friend.

The first duty of a revolutionary is to get away with it.

Abbie Hoffman (1936 - 1989)

Lynne Seagle

Executive Director

Hope House Foundation