

The Aftermath #1

Dismantling Bob's Life

47 days have gone by since Bob's death.

So much has happened. The "to do" list when someone dies is long— notify social security, notify the banks, notify the credit card companies, notify the insurance companies, notify your friends and neighbors, and write an obituary to notify people that still get the printed paper. Every time I had to make one of those notifications, it brought Bob's death back fresh again. Yes, my husband died. Thank you for your condolences. Yes, I'll reach out if I need help.

I am an extremely organized person and I have a binder titled *"What to do upon our Death!"*. May sound a bit weird but it's full of contact information and guidelines to follow. Step by Step. Lots of lists. Do this. Do that. Be sure to remember to do this. Don't forget to do that. I'm not sure what people do when they don't have a binder with advice and all the information they need right there at their fingertips. Lists bring me comfort. As brain dead as I was (or still am), I needed all the help I could get to start on the process of dismantling Bob's life. Yes, that's what it feels like. Dismantling 83 years of Bob's life with phone calls and paperwork.

I was talking to one of our Credit Card companies to remove Bob's name from my account and terminate his Credit Card. The representative had to read me a disclaimer that said if I went ahead with removing Bob from the account, that it was irreversible, and I couldn't add him back on the account. I was a bit caught off guard and I assured her that his death was irreversible too and I would have no need to add him back on my account. Not sure if she thought I was funny or just a crazy grieving widow!

I've emptied out Bob's wallet and now I can't throw the contents away. I'm not sure what others have done with their deceased husband's ID card, Medicare card, Kaiser card, Covid Vaccination card, pacemaker implant card, SeaWorld pass, a picture of Kyle as a newborn, and many old business cards. There's nothing in my binder of *"What to do upon our Death!"* that tells me what is considered proper with all of that. Do I shred the contents or set them aside to look at every so often? I've chosen the set them aside route and I ponder every few days as to what to do. That's the same route I've taken with copious files, health records, and old paperwork from his years on the SDPD. I just touch them, move them, reshuffle them, and set them back down. I have a feeling I'll still be wondering what to do with many things for many more months or even years.

I was quick to clean out one of Bob's closets. Not sure why that happened so easily but I think it's a purely selfish reason. I wanted that closet space for myself. I kept three of his robes and I love wearing them. The blue plaid flannel one brings me the most comfort. Hardly a day went by in the last few years that Bob didn't wear that robe. I'd say it was the anchor piece of his wardrobe. Bizarre that an old bathrobe can warm my heart these days. But it does.

I parted with a few of his belongings—high school ring, police academy ring, engraved money clip, key ring, years of service pins from the SDPD, name tags, and a few of his favorite baseball caps. It felt good to give those items to Bob's children and let them have a tangible piece of their dad. They are of little monetary value, but they represent a part of their dad's life. It was great to see them take these little trinkets and look at them like they were treasures. I've kept his police shield and his \$10.00 Walmart watch. Those two things mean so much to me. The police badge makes sense as Bob LOVED being a police officer and he was so proud of his 30+ year career. I can't quite figure out why Bob's old cheap

watch means so much. I think it is because it represents who he was. Humble and unpretentious. An inexpensive watch suited him best.

I have so many other aspects of these weeks since Bob's death that I want to write about but for now I think I'll take a break, go put on his plaid flannel bathrobe, and sit in his recliner with my good memories.

Maybe I'll turn my binder into a guidebook for others about what to do upon a death of a spouse and I'll put "wear their bathrobe and sit in their favorite chair" at the very top of the list!









James and Susan Manis Family

What to do upon
our death!!!

Important paperwork and information

(Actual Trust is in a separate Binder)

