

# A Hole in My Heart



By Patricia Bubash for [Hope After Divorce](#)

A June wedding invite came in the mail for my husband and me this week. Ahhh, I think June is still the month for weddings, although I have read that October is quickly matching it for the month chosen by brides.

I met the groom-to-be a couple of years ago at a film festival where the documentary produced by him was being previewed. Dan and the other two creators of the film *Give a Damn* had decided in their mid-twenties to travel to one of the poorest countries in Africa. This film was to bring awareness to the world, to encourage those who saw the film to be proactive, to become involved in whatever manner they chose to be involved.

The three filmmakers would make their way from the Midwest to

Europe feeding themselves on only \$1.25 a day for each. When they could, they hitchhiked; flights to Europe and Africa came out of fundraising money. Once there, they shared lodging, food, living arrangements with the poorest of poor, constantly filming, telling a story for the world. I watched in amazement, awe, and great respect what they had documented, their immersion into extreme poverty.

At an age when most young adults are just beginning their careers, these three chose to live in uncomfortable, unpleasant, inconvenient, and even horrific circumstances and conditions. I wanted to hear more of their story, so I arranged to have breakfast with the two who were available. Dan arrived before David, and as we chatted, we discovered that he had attended a school where I had counseled part-time. He told me that he had also attended Rainbows, a divorce group for kids within the school. It was a program that all the counselors in the district utilized.

He went on to share that he was an only child, and in the fifth grade, his parents divorced. Not an unusual story, but what has transformed a first time meeting, a casual relationship, into an ongoing friendship, a wedding invite, is Dan's following words: "I was very close to my mother, and when she divorced my dad, she just left, went away. It left a hole in my heart."

Although Gwyneth Paltrow has been getting a lot of publicity with her "conscious uncoupling" approach to divorcing when children are involved, it does not take away the pain and sadness that kids feel when their parents breakup. They have feelings too, and their feelings are often not considered nor are their voices heard.

**Related Link:** [The REAL Reason that Gwyneth Paltrow and Chris Martin Split](#)

I have listened to many children's stories, wiped their tears,

and reminded them that “things would get better” as they coped with their parents’ divorce. Dan’s words reached such an emotional cord with me. Before me sat a young man who had been part of an extraordinary project, was way past fifth grade, did not know me, and had shared something so personal.

I felt that I had been gifted with his openness. He went on to tell me that he had participated in counseling beyond the Rainbows into his adult years. He had found his niche through church and his church friends. They were his support and his family.

Finding a faith, friends, a church family, and a cause had been Dan’s personal “hope after divorce.” I have always been bothered by adults who express that kids are resilient, that they will be just fine with the divorce, remarriage, or blending families. No matter what age, children are emotionally affected by the end of family composition as they have known it. It shakes their sense of security and stability.

They often fear that one parent will no longer be in their life. They worry that they will have to move, lose their friends, will have to change schools, and like Dan, feel a hole in their heart.

**Related Link:** [To Move or Not to Move? Why This Decision Is Tough on Kids](#)

I have often reflected back on our conversation, as a counselor and a divorced mother. I wondered if my kids were in conversation with Dan, would they share the same feeling of loss at the time of my divorce from their dad? What I do know is that I am so grateful for my relationship with Dan and for the compliment of an invitation to his wedding. I think Dan is quickly – and effectively – filling the hole in his heart.

The sharing time I had with Dan really did touch my heart so deeply. He is marrying a young woman who has a child – and I

think he will be good at filling her little boy's heart.

For more information about Hope After Divorce, click [here](#).



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