

After my transplant, I want to give something back

By Elaine Keogh

A MAN whose life was transformed when his son donated a kidney to him says he now would like to donate bone marrow 'to give something back'.

Farmer Liam Martin, 52, received a kidney donated by his 26-year-old son Darren last year, after years of dialysis.

Liam was 24 when he was told that he would eventually need a transplant. He managed the condition for decades, raising a family with wife Kathleen, and working the family farm at Templederry, Co. Tipperary.

But five years ago, he said this week, he 'started to go downhill'.

He went on dialysis, and was placed on a waiting list for a donor organ. Then Darren rang to say he would undergo tests to



Donor: Darren Martin, left, and his father Liam

see if he could be a donor. 'I was overwhelmed,' said Liam. For Darren the choice was clear. 'I was in a position to help,' he said. 'I do not see any difference in my life after donating my kidney.'

Liam says the improvement in his form was apparent immediately. 'I felt great energy straight away,' he said. 'I would love to give bone marrow. If I can I'll give it so I can give something back.'

Dr Mark Dooley



MORAL MATTERS

Savour every day of 2017 and put every second to use

ALL death gives birth to new life. Each day, something is carried away by the tide of time. Each day, the old gives way to something fresh and beautiful.

We make such a fuss of the New Year, lamenting what might have been but never was. We regret our lost chances, our fears and failings. And then, as the old year dies, we commit again to the better angels of our nature.

I have never thought in terms of years but only of days. It is too much for any person, no matter how strong, to commit to anything for more than a day. The human will may be willing but the ceaseless pressures of life make us all weak.

Each night, the sun declines as we wrap up the day in peace. Each night, we experience the death of the old and the birth of the new.

A unique day has passed and, from its fading embers, a fresh dawn lies on the horizon.

As the new sun rises, we receive yet another chance to climb higher than before. The morning light is our invitation to begin again, to seize the moment and make it matter. Why wait until tomorrow when today is all we have?

All we possess is this new day and to gaze beyond it is a futility we can ill afford. Who can tell what will happen in 2017? The new minute is the only thing of which we can be fully certain.

Children are endlessly joyous because they live like this. They rarely look back and think of the future only when someone like Santa is on his way. Theirs is the present time and from it they get the best out of life.

My youngest boys cannot comprehend the idea of a New Year. For them, the real gift of life is getting out of bed each morning. For them, this very second contains everything they could want and more.

Imagine what life would be like if, every morning, we greeted each other by saying 'Happy New Day!' Sadly, it is only when tragedy strikes that we see how precious each day is. That is why there is nothing 'normal' or 'ordinary' about life in the round.

All time, no matter how seemingly insignificant, is the most valuable thing we have. To waste it in the belief that tomorrow will provide yet another chance, is to look a gift horse in the mouth. The only time we can make a difference is here and now.

Easier said than done, you might say, especially if people are facing a bleak future. Whether rich or poor, healthy or sick, this very day is all we have.

In confining our cares to this day, we limit the scope of the future to rob us of our serenity.

It is so easy to become complacent about life or to squander the present in a haze of anxiety. We all do this and so many live to regret it. Making the most out of each minute is the only way to lift the haze and to savour the true joy of existence.

And so, my wish for you in 2017 is a simple one: may you take each day as it comes, delighting in each second as the gift it is. May you see that what you have done in the past is of no current significance. The only thing that matters is what you do now.

May you wake each day and give thanks for the miracle of your breath and for the beautiful life that flows through your loved ones. May you watch the sun rise as if for the last time. May you break bread with your family as though each day were Christmas Day.

May you see each moment, not as a burden, but as an opportunity. May you never cease to ask: 'What can I do to make this present time happier and more joyful?' May your time in the car, on the bus or on the tram be seen as an end in itself, a time to chat, listen and learn.

May you take your time, avoiding the rush that leads only to worry. May you do every task in poise, knowing that nothing counts more than what you do now.

May you use every opportunity to celebrate your loved ones, for each life is limited to the present.

May you greet each evening not simply as a time to rest, but as an occasion to give thanks for the day that was. May you raise a toast to the dying sun, to the gift of your family and to the fact that you had this day together. And then, as the moon lights up the night sky, may you sit, eat and make merry.

May you extinguish the lamps in a spirit of gladness, never mourning what might have been but simply what was. And as you lay your head down, may you cast an inward glance across the day. May you drift away with a smile, knowing that you lived each and every second to the full.

The past is comprised of years, but we can only live from day to day. We can only really see from dawn to dusk. This new day, this very moment, is where life begins and ends.

May it be for you the time of your life.

The Sunday Business Post

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