

Thoughts on Len

By Mike Moskowitz



Len was my 1st cousin once removed, someone whom I didn't even know existed until 2013. But when I discovered him I decided to meet him, having visited in June of that year. During that initial visit, I found him to be a thoughtful, intelligent man, who was considerate, kind, concerned, and caring. In some ways he was like a Cheshire cat, reveling in the interpersonal events before him, but without a mischievous nature. Although he was born in 1931, I feel like his life really began in 1985, when he spent a year in China on a Fulbright.

I concluded this assertion by the noticeable change in his writing style in *Along the Way*, his autobiography. The first 53 years of his life were painted as drab, but his experience in China and afterwards was written with a flowery language. He confirmed my acknowledgment of this change in his writing style—it was intentional on his part. While his first 53 years on earth were not filled with happiness, he was nevertheless laying the groundwork for a successful remaining 35 years on earth. An example of this was his telling me that from his first marriage to Diane he learned how to live with a woman. Assuredly some of these skills must have manifested in his ultimate relationship with Shaoping.

He taught me two important lessons. The first was that he knew he needed to marry a woman who did not engage in “scenes” – expressions of powerful uncontrolled feelings. I never encountered someone previously who had this mandate, and it crystallized an example for me to follow in my own life. Second, he mentioned in his book and in person how important it is as a couple to “think as a team.” The partnership between Len and Shaoping was truly remarkable to witness; easy to tell that that's exactly what they did.

I visited Len and Shaoping once or twice a year every year since 2013. I tried to find any excuse to visit California because I knew that visiting them would contain a delicious lunch and engaging conversation. Len meant a lot to me, and I will miss him. He will *not* be forgotten.

New York, NY

June, 2020