



JUST DRINK THE GOOD SCOTCH, ALREADY!

*HOW XAVIER TAUGHT US ALL THAT LIFE IS TOO
SHORT NOT TO DO THE THINGS YOU LOVE*

If you are reading this right now, you knew, you loved, and you laughed with the truly incomparable Xavier Sequeira.

His sudden departure from our lives can be hard to comprehend. To even use the word “was” in a sentence about him seems wildly off-course - how could a man that larger-than-life, someone who pulsed with equal parts charisma and spirit, ever be referred to in a past tense? It boggles the mind.

His life touched so many others that there is no doubt, had illness not stuck at a time of global pandemic, visitor line-ups would stretch through hospital hallways and you can be assured that his service would be standing room only!

But while our hearts are heavy with loss for the brother, uncle, and friend who lit up every room he entered, there's inspiration to be found in the lessons he taught by example. No, he wasn't the preaching type. Xavier didn't tell people how to live their lives; he was simply always there to support, never to judge. (His friends can probably confirm that this "unconditional encouragement" likely led to plenty of good pranks throughout the years!)

It's hard to think of a better tribute for Xavier than to remember just some of the ways he showed us how it's done.

Drink the good scotch, already!

We're all guilty of it. Someone has gifted us a beautiful bottle... that we immediately tuck away in the cabinet, waiting for a “special occasion” that never quite seems to materialize. Xavier enjoyed a glass of good Scotch - and he wasn't afraid to bust open a fancy bottle. Every occasion in the company of those he loved best was a special one and he never took that knowledge for granted.



Travel wherever you can.

Get on a plane. Hop on a train. Take a bus to a different part of town. Whatever you decide, just get out there and see someplace that's new to your eyes, giving yourself over to novel sights, sounds, tastes, and smell. Xavier loved to get away, especially during dreary Canadian winters, and you'd be hard-pressed not to find him chatting up hotel staff and locals. His love of Cuba and its people brought him back time and time again and, to the people whose lives he touched there, Xavier was not a visitor but a long-distance friend. From daring cross-continent moves early on to sun-soaked vacations with friends in celebration of later milestones, Xavier made sure to fill up his passport with stamps and stories every step of the way.

Kiss the pretty girls. (Actually, just kiss all the girls!)

This one's pretty self-explanatory. If you never found yourself on the receiving end of one of Xavier's intentionally silly, sloppy pecks to cheek, you're probably also missing out on the big grin that comes with the memory! Xavier would do anything for a laugh and this one did it every time. His playful fearlessness probably made for some great ice-breakers in his younger bar days - and maybe also earned him a slap or two - but it also goes to show: no risk, no reward!



See that person standing off to the side of the party? Talk to them.

Xavier had a natural radar for noticing quiet wallflowers. If anyone was ever sitting alone in a corner, he'd introduce everyone nearby before launching into one of his famous stories. Thanks to his gift of the gab, no one ever felt like a stranger in his home and he was a wonderful addition to parties, always bringing together the most divergent of guests. His intuition and sensitivity for putting people at ease is perhaps one of his most memorable traits and one that we could all work harder at to help make the world a friendlier place.



Fill your memory trunk with adventure - and fill it to the brim!

Too often, it's easy get caught up in all the wrong things. Fixated on ticking off the boxes prescribed for us by society, we rush to settle down, work to the point of burnout, and busy ourselves trying to collect all the markers of traditional success. Somewhere in the process, we can forget about really *living*. Xavier always knew there was more to life than wedging himself into a mold. His entire life he said “yes” to every opportunity and dove headfirst into uncharted adventure. He raced rally cars, climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro, moved from Dar es Salaam to London with a suitcase and nothing more. Every moment formed a chapter of the beautiful book we now know as his legacy, a real-life page-turner, full of colourful characters and unbelievable stories.

In his last weeks with us, it is comforting to know there was no shortage of accomplishments and adventures for Xavier to reflect on and be glad for. There's also no doubt he would have felt every thought, every prayer, and all the love being sent his way from all those he's met along the journey.

Xavier knew that to live was not to wait. Life isn't about arriving at some magical destination down the road, when we've finally achieved our constantly changing goals. It's about looking around and being grateful for every minute we're allowed to inhabit this big, beautiful world of ours. He taught us to take chances, to love big, and to laugh often - and if we take those lessons to heart, then we honour him daily.

There's a perfect quote by writer Hunter S. Thompson that reads as though it was written with exactly Xavier in mind:

“Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside, in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming, “Wow! What a ride.”