

## Warren L. Tomlinson

Author, Speaker, storyteller, poker player, father, husband, friend, lawyer, mediator, pal.

When someone goes,  
We are left merely  
Tracing the outline and proportions  
Of the empty space  
He has left in the world.  
Remembering the shape his life took,  
How it grew,  
Where it intersected with ours.  
Noting that, when seen through other's eyes,  
That shape was more. . .or less. . .  
Or sang a different tune  
Or knew a different purpose.  
We attempt to reconstruct the person he was. . .  
(Resisting the temptation to draw him too large)  
We want to remember more clearly. . .  
To make him real just one more time  
To feel the touch of his hand or  
See that mischievous glint in his eye. . .  
Watch him make those irritating hen scratches he called writing. . .  
(Could anyone besides his secretary, Panky, read them?)  
To ask him that question we never got to ask.  
Frankly, you don't have to work too hard to remember Warren Tomlinson.  
He's there on the tip of your mind.  
Nor do I worry about making him larger than life.  
He just lived large.  
Which is odd to say for such a seemingly quiet and unassuming man.  
Warren Tomlinson changed my life.  
He hired me at Holland & Hart in 1984. He saw nothing wrong with a marketing  
director in a law firm. He was, however in the minority. (Or shall we say the vanguard?)  
For years afterwards managing partners from firms across the nation called upon him to  
learn the ropes of hiring and keeping marketing staff. And, between the two of us, as  
Warren would say, we would "pretend we knew something." As if.  
Warren sought out and collected people who were smart.  
Had energy.  
Thought differently.  
People who could get things done.  
People who knew it was "better to ask forgiveness than permission."  
People who, like himself, were interested in giving back.  
Warren changed the lives of countless people.  
By believing in things we didn't know we had in us.  
By opening doors and convincing us it would be a favor to him if we'd just  
mosey on in.  
By sharing his knowledge of law practice management with anyone who asked. .  
.and doing it in such a way that folks believed they had thought of it.  
By not only liking people, but advocating for them.  
From Fruita, Colorado, to New York. From Chicago to Belarus. From Laramie to Pueblo.  
From Tucson to Vail. . . Warren made a lifetime of fanning the flames of possibility in

others in such a way that we would hardly notice until much later. And then we'd stop and say "Wait! How'd I get here?"

If ever you're looking for a good example of effective mentoring. . .of giving rather than taking. . .of creating opportunity. . .of just flat enjoying making good things happen for folks. . .I give you Warren Tomlinson.

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In the case of Warren Tomlinson, the space he left will never be empty. It is full to overflowing with the lives of those who were enriched by his presence. There will be no forgetting. For we - and the people we raise up - will merely be the continuation of his life.

. . . *Merrilyn Astin Tarlton*