



Those who know Andy think of him as a soft-spoken, gentle giant who runs into burning houses by day (as a fireman) but has playful water balloon battles with his sons and grandsons when he gets home. No one would have ever known Andy had to overcome a difficult childhood. Although Andy's dad was always present and provided for his family, he was harsh with Andy and his brothers. Andy tells the story of how his dad used to "elbow" his sons in the face when he played basketball with them in the backyard in an effort to "toughen his sons up." Then, he shares that, one day, it became too much and Andy finally decided to "elbow" his dad back to put an end to the pain. In this interview, Andy talks about learning to understand his dad and about finding it in his heart to forgive him. Interestingly, Andy remembers the precise moment, as an eight-year-old boy, when he decided he was going to someday treat his children better than his dad had treated him. He has stayed true to that commitment.

**The Desperate Prayer of an  
8-Year-Old Boy**