

Walking with My Mother

Cecilia Runkle, PhD

Perm J 2014 Summer;18(3):42-43

<http://dx.doi.org/10.7812/TPP/14-059>

We awaken at the same time, enjoying the sound sleep and abundant breakfast ahead. After eating, after taping feet and fitting into boots, after gathering our walking sticks, we join the group, stile after stile. Good company, good conversation, eye-popping scenery, pictures from the past to remember these travels together walking, walking in companionable silence.

Mom does not walk very much these days.

Old age, hips not quite mobile any longer, desire lost to the comfort of a home and good books.

Walking. So long ago. And yet we both share this beautiful vigorous past. An activity done together. Mother, daughter, companionable silence. Who knew there would be a time that silence would include not walking?

Mom doesn't walk very much these days.

Sharing a love of books, of conversation, of good food and beautiful places for the eyes to drink in. Still mother and daughter but more equals now in companionable silence on the phone.

The daughter continues the legacy of walking in beautiful places, eating great food, and sharing companionable silence with others. But not with Mom, who doesn't walk very much anymore.

Fear of not walking anymore keeps the walking current each day—gotta walk—not so much for view, good food, and companionship but for walking. It's the walking that drives the walking, keeping old age at bay. Gotta walk no matter what. Walking for a different reason. Walking to walk. Movement, power, vitality, heart races. Race walking to keep thoughts at bay. To dissipate those fears through walking. Walking that Mom doesn't do much anymore. Some day. Not at all. ❖



Walking
8.267" x 11.692"
mixed media

Damien Webb

This illustration is a direct interpretation of the story by Dr Runkle. It is mixed media with additional digital manipulation. The artist was searching for a way to depict the melancholy beauty of a solo walk.

Mr Webb is an artist and graphic designer based in Nuremberg, Germany who primarily works in mixed media.