

July 2022

H₂O - THE
REFRESHMENT
AND
CALM OF WATER



Presented by Stop Breathe Believe[®] & Dianne Morris Jones



This month as we reflect on the beauty of nature and the magnificence of water, I will be sharing images of water with you with a quote and a reflective question. Please join me in focusing in on the refreshment, the calm, and the nourishment to our souls that water can provide.

Water Drops

By Roger C. Jones

Say
you are
a drop of
water. Let's play
make-believe and pre-
tend that you have some
family/friend drops. Imagine
you're taking them on vacation, now
where will you go? The beach surf offers
endless opportunities to rise into a crest, curl,
and crash. You will mesmerize beach goers with the
steady rhythm of wave after wave. Now there's the
rivers and all those opportunities to run fast and free,
maybe launch headlong down steep waterfalls and join
the audacious chorus of crashing water. Then perhaps a
foray into some of the millions of mother earth's lakes—
each unique in character, boasting vistas of grandeur,
reflections of the shining sun & blue sky, & sanctuary
for marine life & waterfowl. For a diversion, we have
the majestic polar ice caps with their stark and
frigid icescapes; be careful, a stay there may
last several millennia. Of course,
let's not forget the seven
wonderful...

O-
ceans
covering the
vast majority of
this living planet
with their stormy
ways and end-
less span. Bon
Voyage!

Day 1

“Let your eyes water with compassion. Everything you see will be more beautiful when reflected through such Amazing Grace. Tears are not just a byproduct of crying. They are mirrors, windows, and lenses granted to us so we can see this world in a Holy way. When in doubt, open your heart and feel more. This will summon a river from your deepest place, a river flush with clear fresh water. Let your flood come. See through its clarity. See your life, anew and revived, through your looking glass soul.”

- Jaiya John

What refreshment and relief comes from tears—of grief, deep contemplation AND of grief. I recall a tear of joy rolling down my face on this day as the girls were playing in the bathtub... mesmerized with the bubbles, the giggles, the fun of every day. May our tears be a looking glass for our soul.



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 2

“All praise be Yours, my God, through Sister Water,
So useful, humble, precious, and pure.”

– St. Francis of Assisi

Where might we be able to observe water? Listen to water? Be refreshed by water? Maybe it is a stream, maybe it is a YouTube video of a river, maybe it is a fountain at a nearby park, maybe it is out of the water hose as we tend our garden.

May we slow down and be grateful for water sources in our life.



Photo taken at Beaver Creek Reservoir, Colorado.

Day 3

“May what I do flow from me like a river,
no forcing and no holding back,
the way it is with children.

Then in these swelling and ebbing currents,
these deepening tides moving out, returning,
I will sing you as no one ever has, streaming through
widening channels
into the open sea.”
- Rainer Maria Rilke

As Roger and I were hiking the John Muir trail, we were so very grateful for this frigid water to rest our hot and weary feet in. We still had a substantial trail to hike before setting up camp and were so grateful for the short time we took to rest and be refreshed.

May we find a time to stop and be refreshed today.

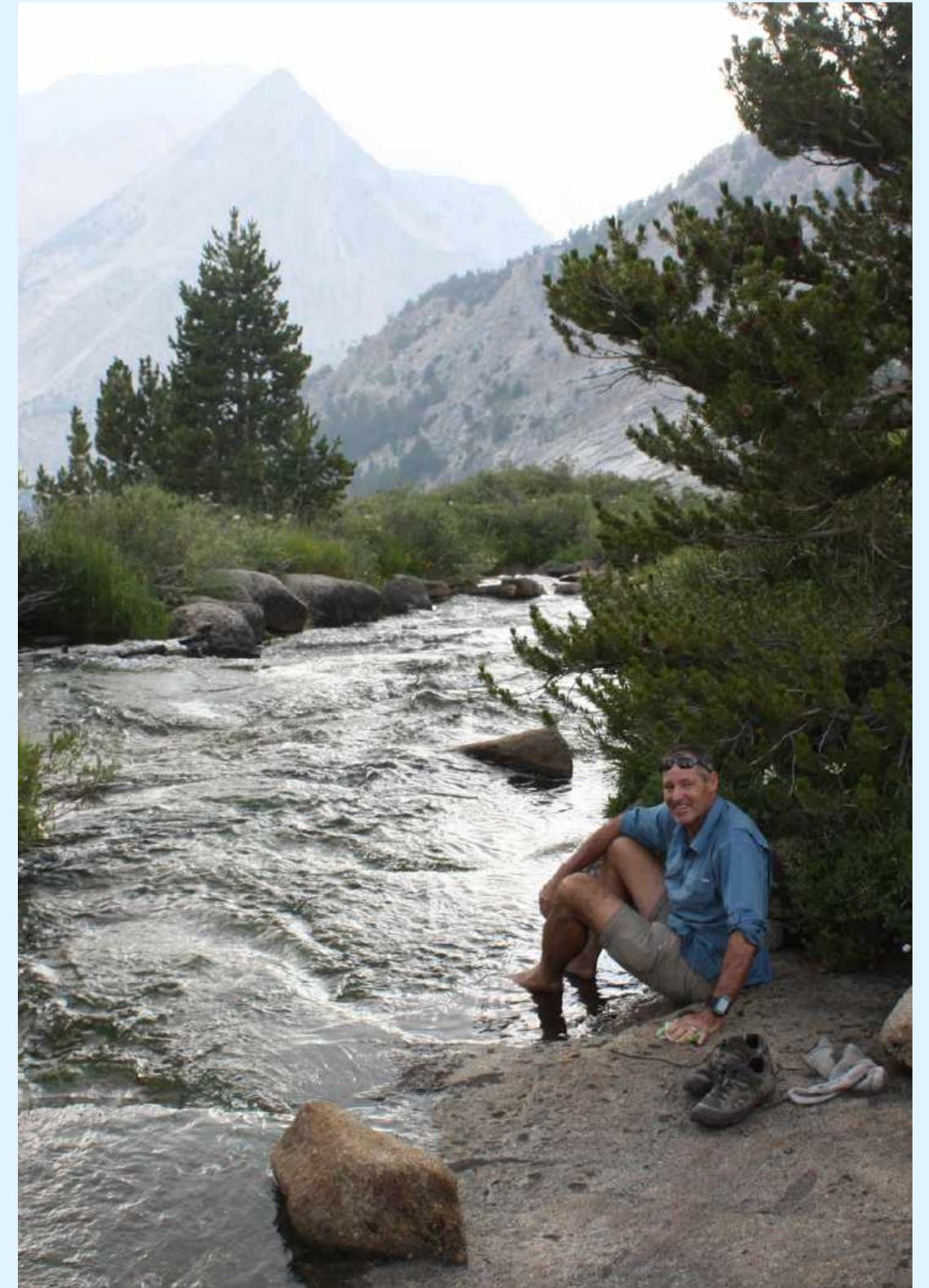


Photo taken on John Muir Trail, California.

Day 4

“The ocean is one of the delights for the human eye. The seashore is a theater of fluency. When the mind is entangled it is soothing to walk by the seashore, to let the rhythm of the ocean inside you. The ocean disentangles the netted mind. Everything loosens and comes back to itself. The false divisions are relieved, released, and healed.”

– John O’Donohue

How might we allow our minds to loosen? How might we let go—of a hurt, a grievance, a miscommunication? May we find a way to let nature help us dig deep in our hearts for healing.



Photo taken at Red Rock Lake, Iowa.

Day 5

"In time and with water, everything
changes."

- Leonardo da Vinci

May our reflections with water bring
healing change. May our intentions
turn our faces and hearts to
meaningful connection.



Photo taken at Boston Public Garden, Boston, Massachusetts.

Day 6

"I would love to live like a river flows, carried by the surprise of its own unfolding."

- John O'Donohue

In Fall City, WA you can stay overnight in a treehouse! It is so much fun! The nature surrounding the treehouses is gorgeous and a beautiful stream flows through the area. The cairns in and alongside the river invite you to join in—to participate in creating the peaceful reflections of others and play in the river.

May we join in with others in participation of moments of peace, quiet, and tranquility today.

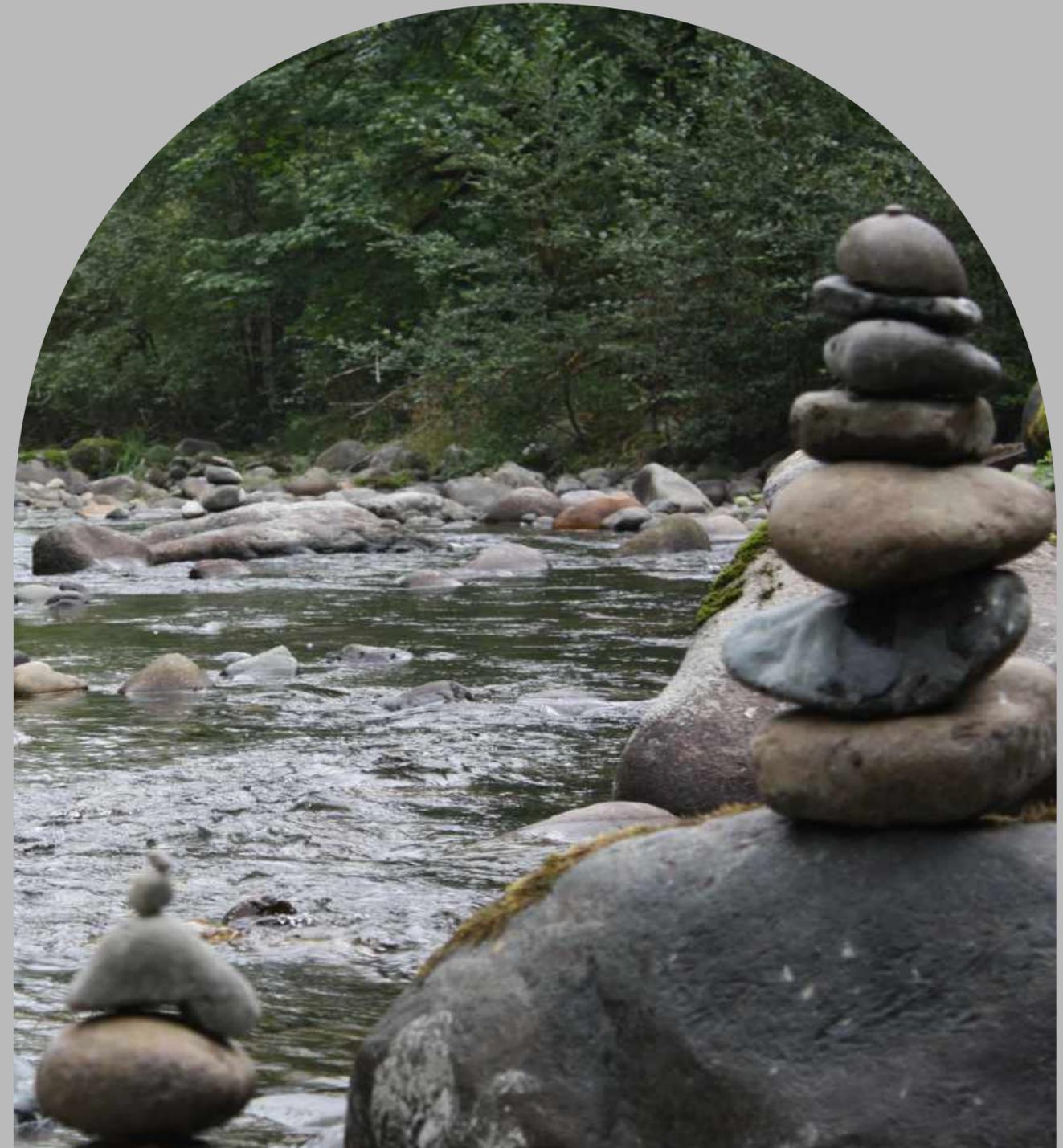


Photo taken in Fall City, Washington

Day 7

"The finest workers in stone are not copper or steel tools, but the gentle touches of air and water working at their leisure with a liberal allowance of time."

- Henry David Thoreau

May we learn from the gentle sense of time in nature. May we be patient...with ourselves and with others.



Photo taken in Anchorage, Alaska.

Day 8

"No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man."

– Heraclitus

May we celebrate life as we move amidst life's challenges, life's joys. May we recognize the beauty and challenge of change in ourselves and in others.



Photo taken on Middle Fork Flathead River, Montana.

Day 9

"Cry. Forgive. Learn. Move on. Let your
tears water the seeds of your future
happiness."

- Steve Maraboli

May we tend to our tears as we would tend a
garden.

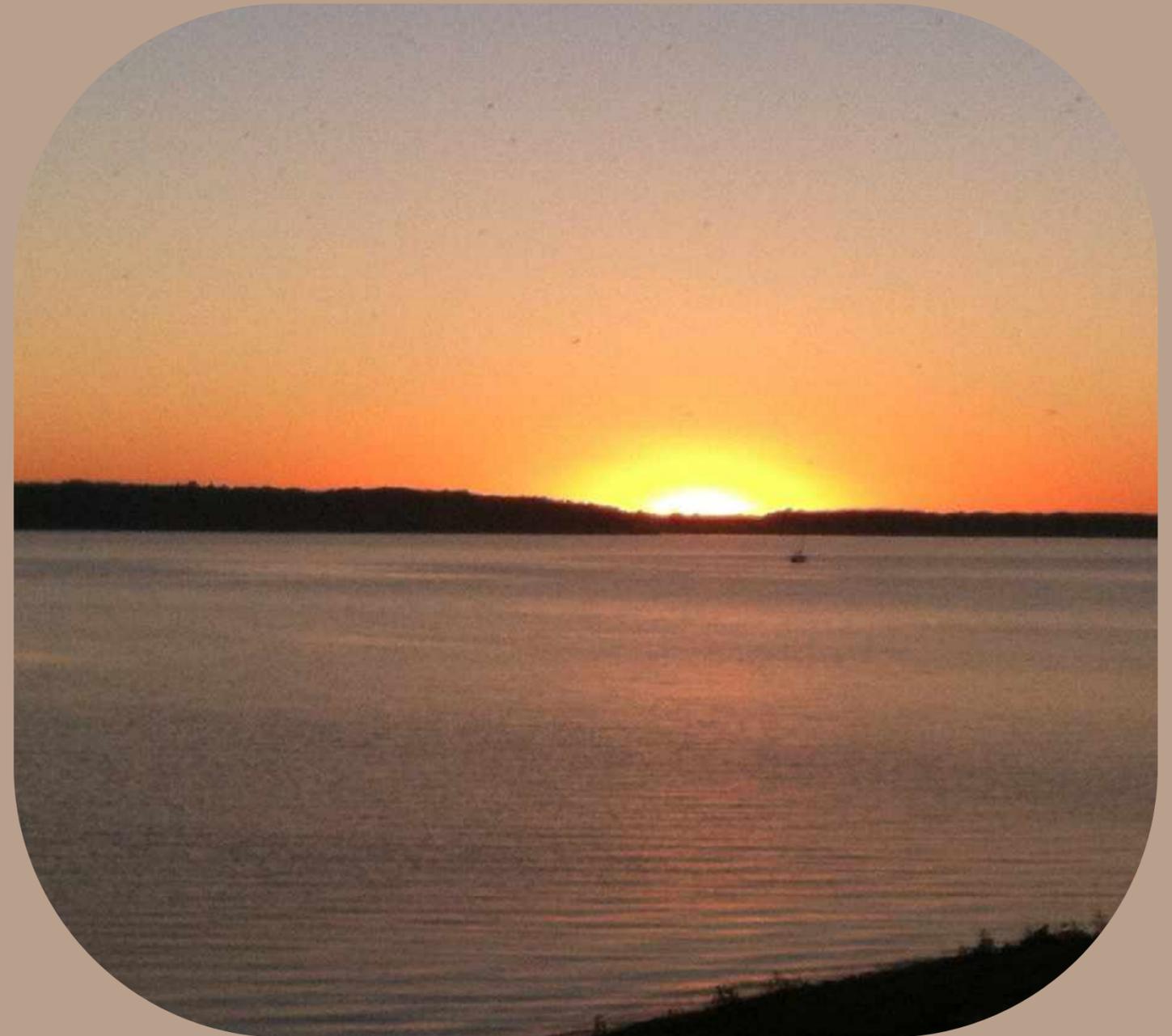


Photo taken at Red Rock Lake, Iowa.



Day 10

"We never know the worth of water till the well is dry."

- Thomas Fuller

Isn't it true? We take so many things for granted! May we cherish and care for our climate. We may think it is "too much" for our part to matter...it is not. Our habits, examples, practices and intentions matter in our world.

Photo taken at Maffitt Lake, Iowa.

Day 11

"We forget that the water cycle and the
life cycle are one."

- Jacques Yves Cousteau

How might we capture the sparkle of
water in our life today?



Photo taken on Anna Maria Island, Florida.

Day 12

"It is life, I think, to watch the water. A man can learn so many things."

- Nicholas Sparks

May we seek out and pay attention to the water in our lives today...the reflections, the shadows, the moments.



Photo taken in Lubbock, Texas.

Day 13

"Life in us is like the water in a river."

- Henry David Thoreau

The majesty and the beauty of the aqua water and the copper-colored rocks is spectacular in Nepal. The village on the edge of the mountain is a reminder of how difficult and strenuous everyday life can be. One village we stayed in had only had running water in their teahouse for less than a year. How might we embrace and cherish the life-giving parts within us that nourish another?

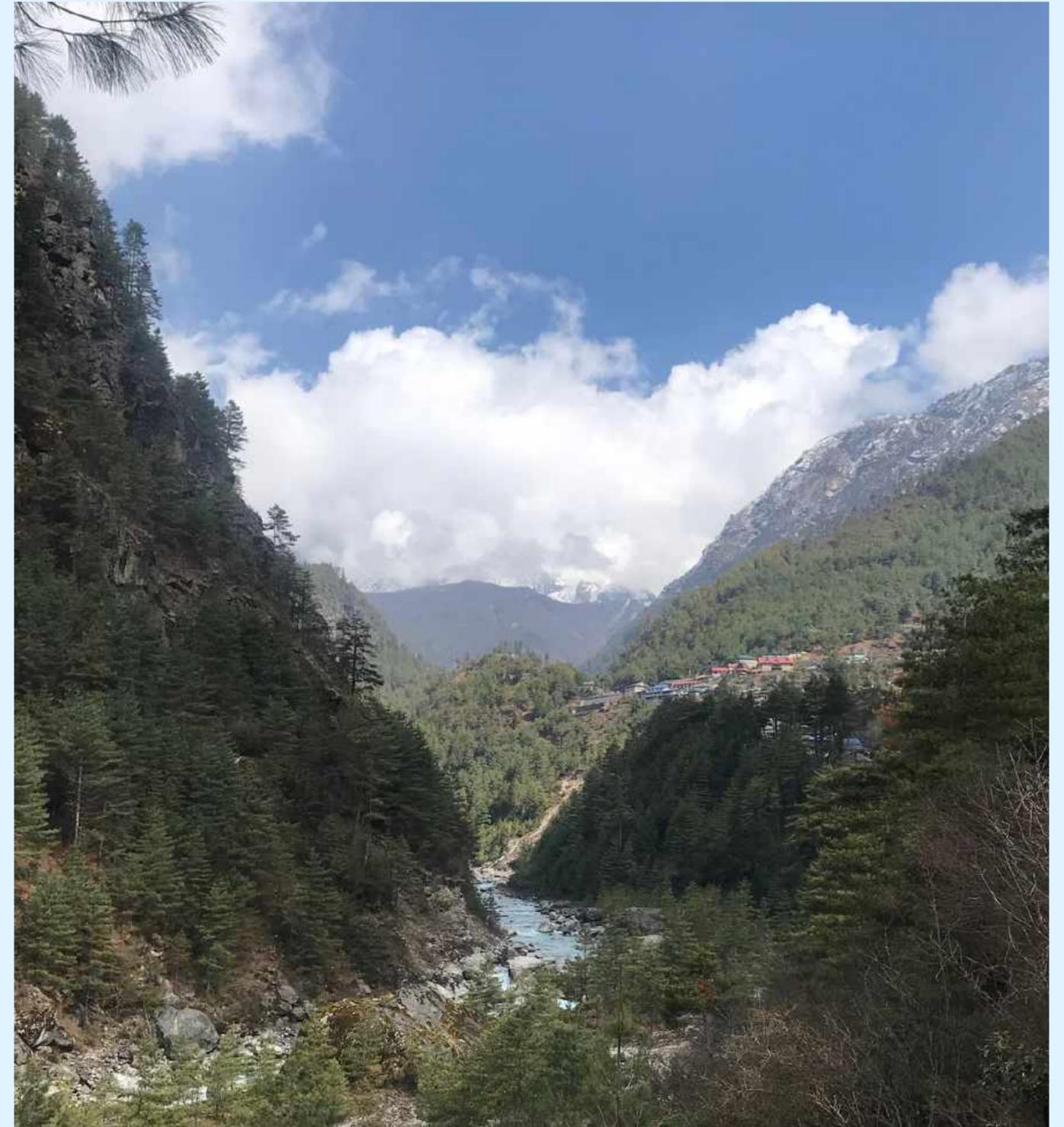


Photo taken at Everest Base Camp Trail, Nepal.

Day 14

"Like roots finding water, we always wind up moving towards what sustains us."

- Mark Nepo

May you be held in a way today that feels supportive. May you hold another in a way that might encourage and sustain their dreams. May we grow our roots deep in love today.



Photo taken at Caddo State Park, Texas.



Day 15

May this poem be a
meditative moment for us
today...

Photo taken in Dana Point, California.

Let us bless the grace of water:

The imagination of the primeval
ocean
Where the first forms of life stirred
And emerged to dress the vacant
earth
With warm quilts of color.

The well whose liquid root worked
Through the long night of clay,
Trusting ahead of itself openings
That would yet yield to its yearning
Until at last it arises in the desire of
light
To discover the pure quiver of itself
Flowing crystal clear and free
Through delighted emptiness.

The courage of a river to continue
belief
In the slow fall of ground,
Always falling farther
Toward the unseen ocean.

In Praise of Water

by John O'Donohue

From: *To Bless the Space Between Us*

The river does what words would love,
Keeping its appearance
By insisting on disappearance;
Its only life surrendered
To the event of pilgrimage,
Carrying the origin to the end.
Seldom pushing or straining,
Keeping itself to itself
Everywhere all along its flow...

Let us bless the humility of water,
Always willing to take the shape
Of whatever otherness holds it.

The buoyancy of water
Stronger than the deadening,
Downward drag of gravity,
The innocence of water,
Flowing forth, without thought
Of what awaits it,

The refreshment of water,
Dissolving the crystals of thirst.

Water: voice of grief,
Cry of love,
In the flowing tear.

Water: vehicle and idiom
Of all the inner voyaging
That keeps us alive.

Blessed be water,
Our first mother.

Day 16

“Not every lake dreams to be an ocean. Blessed are the ones who are happy with whom they are.”

– Mehmet Murat Ildan

How often do we find ourselves wanting to be another? May we learn from nature the beauty of being who we are—as we are—where we are.



Photo taken in Franklin, Tennessee.

Day 17

“So lovely was the loneliness of a wild
lake.”

- Edgar Allan Poe

Roger and I cherish the days and moments of watching the swans gather at the lake. Their beautiful landings and take-offs were a site to behold. The design of a swan is Holy. How might we embrace the Holiness of today?



Photo taken at Maffitt Lake, West Des Moines, Iowa.



Day 18

“Make your heart like a lake with a calm, still surface and great depths of kindness.”

– Lao Tzu

We learn a lot from our silver lab, Sterling. Her ideas to linger at the lake, her demeanor of calm, the gaze of her eyes, the steadfast love she exudes. May we allow our hearts to settle, for the surface to be still, for the depth of being to be rich in our lives today.

Photo taken at Maffitt Lake, West Des Moines, Iowa.

Day 19

“It is life, I think, to watch the water. A man can learn so many things.”

– Nicholas Sparks

May we learn from water today.



Photo taken on John Muir Trail by Brent Yontz.

Day 20

“A lake is a landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is Earth's eye; looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature.”

- Henry David Thoreau

May we linger and rest and reflect on the beauty and magnificence of a sunset reflected on water. May we embrace beauty around us—wherever we are—in this moment, for this day.



Photo taken at Red Rock Lake, Iowa.

Day 21

“Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Certainly one of the most majestic places in the United States is Crater Lake, Oregon...and what better way to experience the beauty than with a dear friend? Shared experiences are so valuable in creating meaningful connection.

May we find ways to share the magnificence, the struggle, and the everyday moments of life with another today.



Photo taken at Crater Lake, Oregon.

Day 22

“Water is the driving force
of all nature.”
- Leonardo da Vinci

May we be mindful of the
element of water in our life
today.



Photo taken in Des Moines, Iowa.

Day 23

"Let nature be your teacher."
- William Wordsworth

What might we learn from nature today?



Photo taken in Big Sur, California.

Day 24

“There's no better place to find yourself than sitting by a waterfall and listening to its music.”

- Roland R. Kemler

The Los Angeles Zoo does a beautiful job of creating habitats for the animals. To watch the elephant play in the waterfall is a lovely experience. To recognize the connectivity of all of life—the water, the animals, us....

So very much to be grateful for.

May we mindfully listen to the music of life today.



Photo taken at the Los Angeles Zoo, Los Angeles, California.

Day 25

"Waterfalls wouldn't sound so melodious
if there were no rocks in their way."

- Rishabh Gautam

May we stop to appreciate the rocks in
our way. We often want to move the
obstacles so quickly. How might we
reflect on the resilience, the strength, the
beauty that comes from having rocks
along our path?



Photo taken in Costa Rica.

Day 26

“As long as I live, I’ll hear waterfalls and birds and winds sing. I’ll interpret the rocks, learn the language of flood, storm, and the avalanche. I’ll acquaint myself with the glaciers and wild gardens, and get as near the heart of the world as I can.”

– John Muir

May we find one interesting piece or moment of nature that we can focus on and be curious about today.

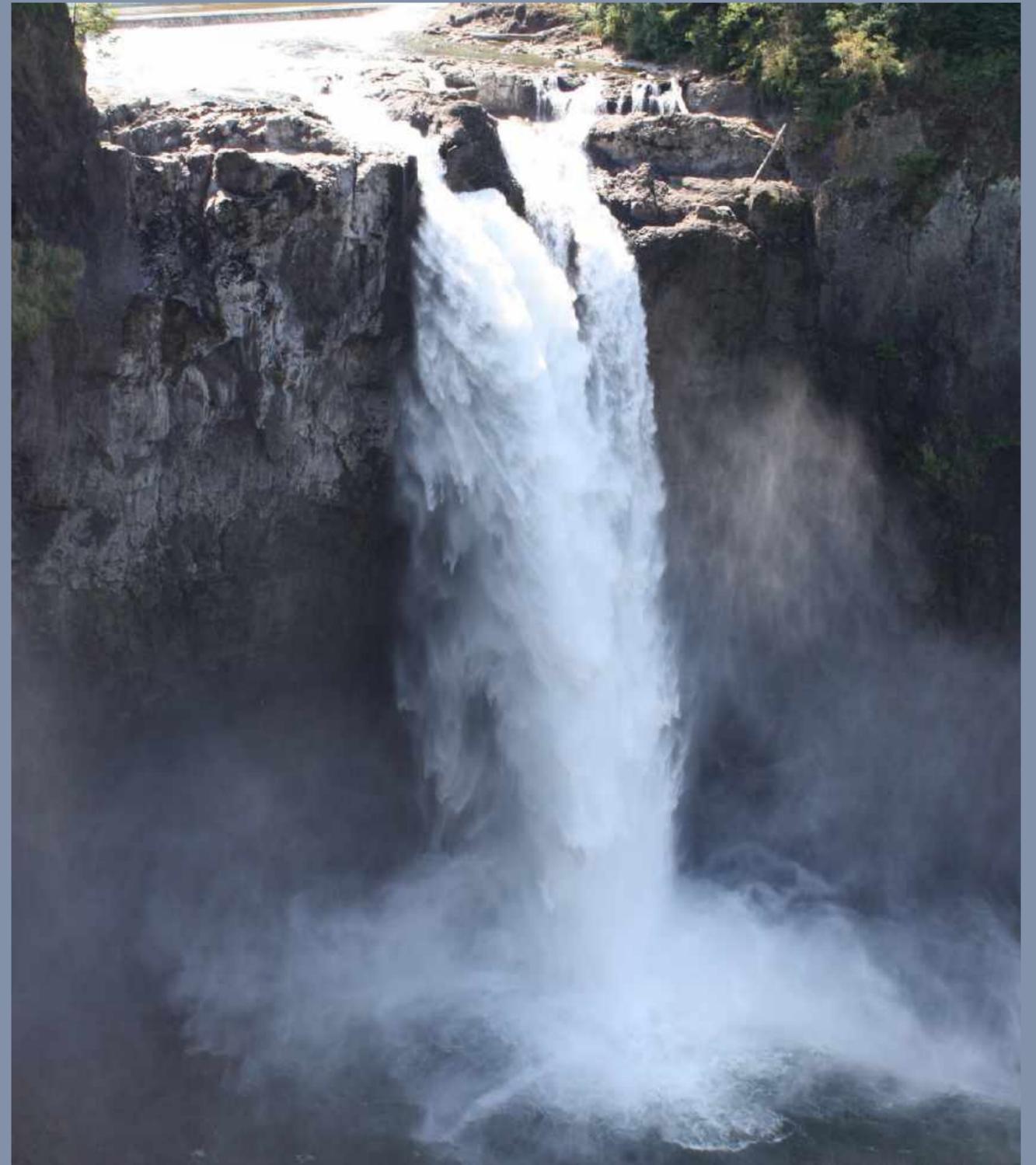


Photo taken at Snoqualmie Falls, Washington.

Day 27

“Another way to look at meditation is to view thinking itself as a waterfall, a cascading of thought. In cultivating mindfulness, we are going beyond or behind our thinking, much the way you might find a vantage point in a cave or depression in the rock behind a waterfall. We still see and hear the water, but we are out of the torrent.”

– Jon Kabat-Zinn

May we be still and reflect on this word picture of our thinking today.

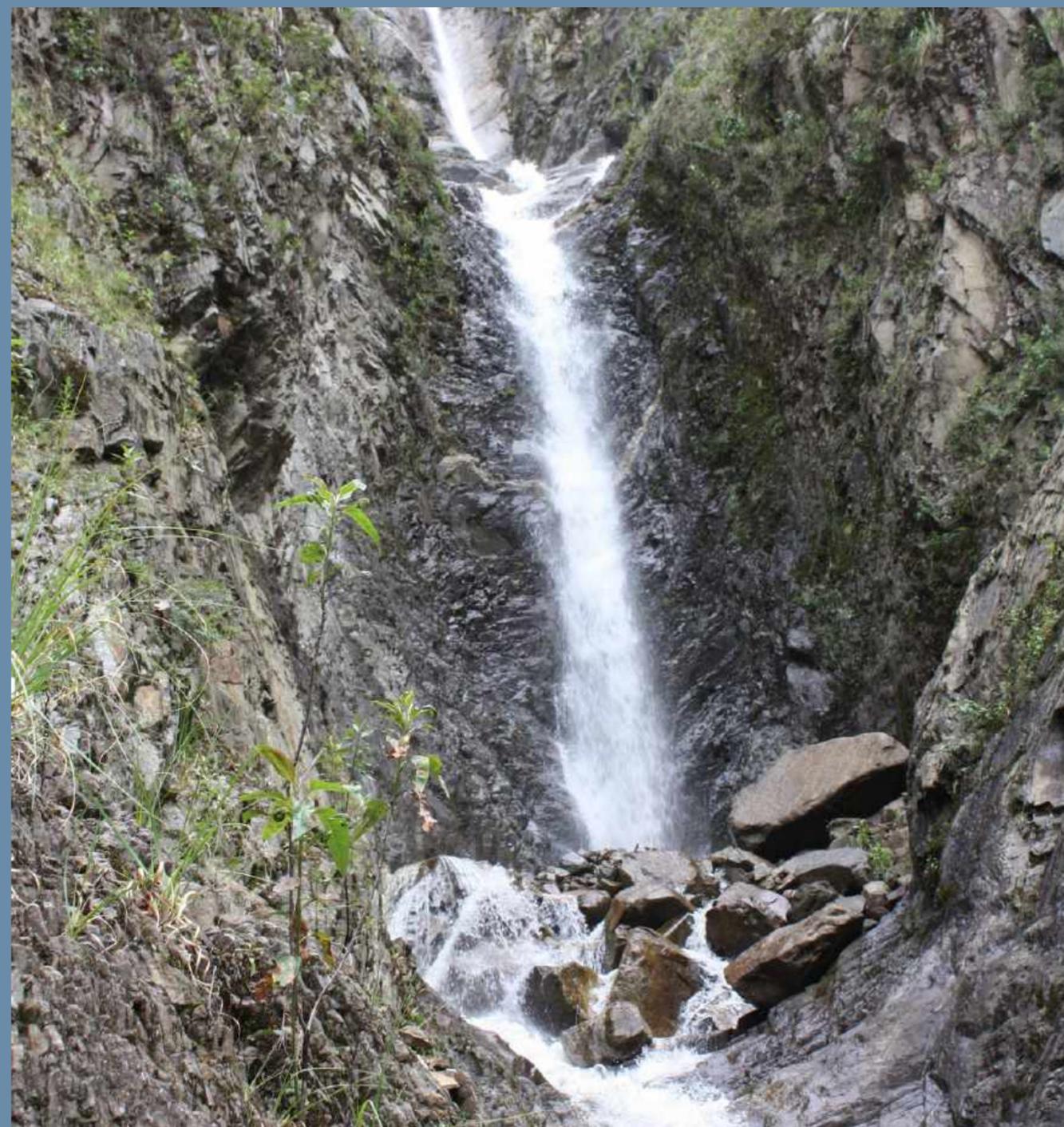


Photo taken in the Machu Pichu Area, Peru.

Day 28

“The great affair, the love affair with life, is to live as variously as possible, to groom one’s curiosity like a high-spirited thoroughbred, climb aboard, and gallop over the thick, sun-struck hills every day. Where there is no risk, the emotional terrain is flat and unyielding, and, despite all its dimensions, valleys, pinnacles, and detours, life will seem to have none of its magnificent geography, only a length. It began in mystery, and it will end in mystery, but what a savage and beautiful country lies in between.”

– Diane Ackerman

If you look closely, you will find me rappelling down a magnificent waterfall in Costa Rica. Thankfully the water was calm that day, as it was steep and scary enough as it was. What an interesting way to hear and see and feel the beauty of the Costa Rican land! Obviously, this is not an everyday experience. However, the thrill of life, the “love affair,” CAN be an everyday experience. How might we choose to explore life in a “love affair way”?

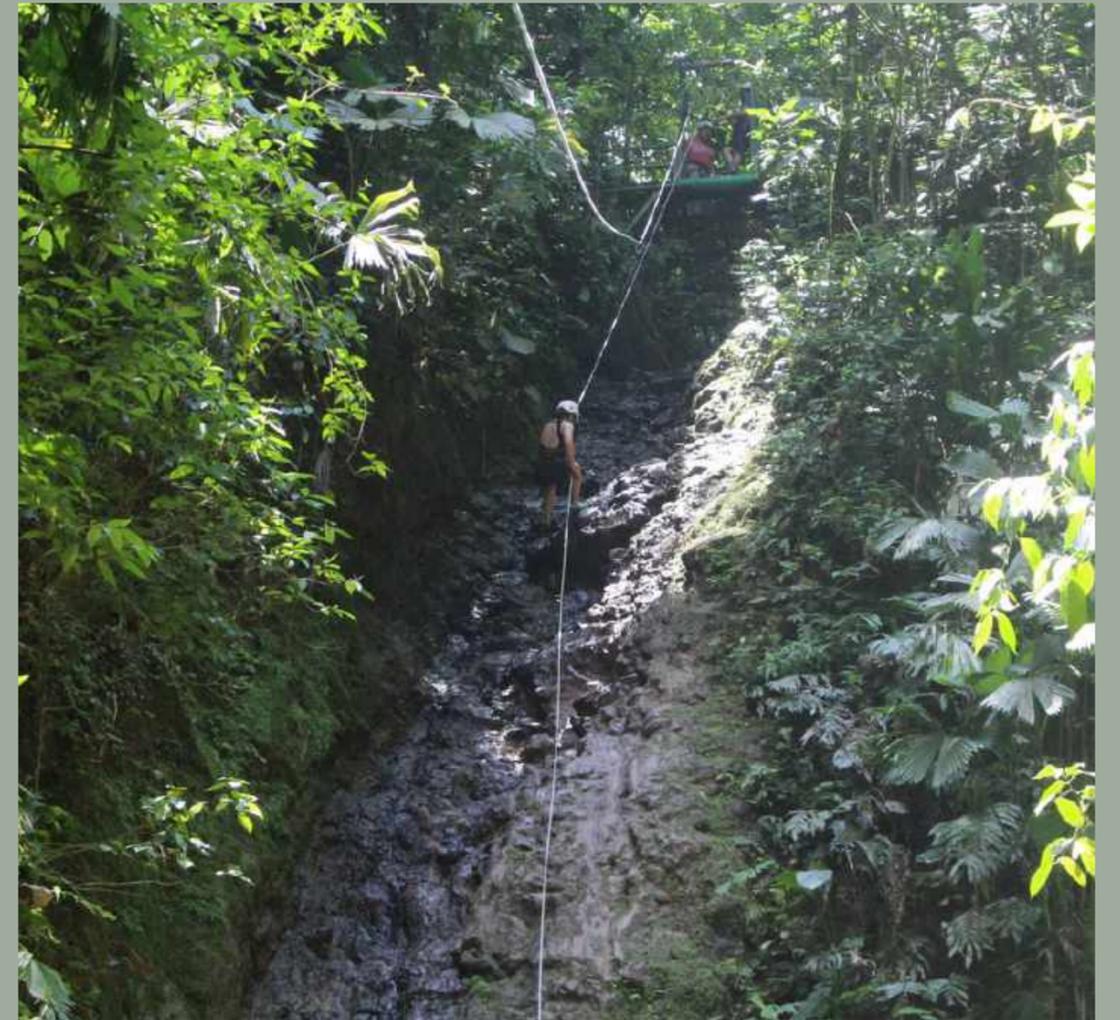


Photo taken in Costa Rica.

Day 29

“As water reflects the face, so one’s life
reflects the heart.”
– Proverbs 27:19



How can we lean into the adventure of life? How can we reflect the gift of life and love we have been given? Roger has always had on his bucket list to rent a convertible and drive down Highway 5 in California. It was truly a memorable experience. We had so much fun taking in the beautiful scenery on a slow pace, stopping to take in the views as much as we wanted, feeling the curves of the road and the cool wind in my hair. The pace was slower, the beauty was magnified.

May our hearts reflect our life story each day. May we seek for the intentions and reflections of our hearts each day to be loving and kind.

Photo taken on Highway 5, Cambria, California.

Day 30

“In rivers, the water that you touch is the last of what has passed and the first of that which comes; so with present time.”

— Leonardo da Vinci

We took a moment to pause and commemorate this hike—our first “real” hike after Roger’s cancer. We truly weren’t sure how it would progress. When would we have to turn back? Could we make it the whole way? Would he be able to carry the pack the whole way? How much time would it take? Was his stamina back?

May we be brave in looking out to what is the “first of that which comes” in life. May our vulnerabilities and courage be shared with another. May we bow in gratitude for the moments of embracing life for this “present time”.



Photo taken on Breakneck Ridge Trail, Fishkill, New York.

Day 31

“Water, thou hast no taste, no color, no odor; canst not be defined, art relished while ever mysterious. Not necessary to life, but rather life itself, thou fillest us with a gratification that exceeds the delight of the senses. By thy might, there return into us treasures that we had abandoned. By thy grace, there are released in us all the dried-up runnels of our heart. Of the riches that exist in the world, thou art the rarest and also the most delicate.”

— Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

May we delight in the beauty and sustenance of water today.



Photo taken at Grays Peak, Colorado.