

## Lament For A Knee, widow musings ...

*I*'m losing my knee in a few days. Oh, it's not an amputation. They call it a "replacement"... a "new knee," a "titanium wonder." I've tried the gels and shots and creams and sprays and Physical Therapy stints. I know I should be thankful to be living in an era when knee replacement is an option. And part of me IS grateful for that fact. But part of me is sad. Another loss, another transition, another reminder of time passing and body parts wearing out and things not how they used to be.

I think often of "how it used to be." Of how as a 6th grader I played after school jungle gym tag, was the second fastest runner that year (just a step behind Jimmy McCloud), my knees springing from bar to bar or pounding sturdily beside him, neck and neck as we raced across the playground during recess.

I remember "how it used to be" with a knee that water skied and snow skied and cross country skied, that swiveled on a tennis court, pedaled the ups and downs of Yellowstone National Park, hiked Colorado mountain trails to nearly 14,000 feet. A knee that knelt and gardened and cycled prairie paths and Fox River trails. A knee that supported taking stairs two at a time (both up and down) all the years I've lived in this stair-laden house. A knee I could count on, never worried about, took for granted.

Now I have a knee that no longer cycles, avoids long walks, wakes me up at night, is painful most of the time. It is still a

strong knee, stable, not wobbly, but it hurts. It is an arthritic bone on bone mess. It needs railings for stairs, ice packs for respite.

I know my sadness is directly related to “how it used to be,” when Bob was alive on earth, when hikes and walks and skiing and cycling and gardening were matter-of-fact parts of our lives. When he would skip up the stairs at O’Hare, two at a time, a sample case in each hand, just for exercise, or mow the ups of our front lawn at a run, pushing a hand mower to stay in shape.

And I’m sad most of all because, though life goes on, there will never be true “replacement.” For Bob, for my knee, or for “how it used to be.” Tonight I pray for courage, perspective, discernment, and grace for what’s ahead. Even in my lament I am aware of how much *rich life* has been mine to experience. And I am grateful. 🌿