



Walk a Mile for Rod

Rod we hope you are recovering well. Upon hearing from Connie, we all decided to carry your message and work forward in your honor. Over the last month, individuals who were inspired by your compassionate action are going on walks and seeking spare change. This "package" is just another ripple of all those walks you and Connie have done over the years. I hope you enjoy reading the well wishes and heartfelt messages. Enclosed is a small spare change contribution to add to your spare change collection, we're positive you'll know what to do with it. Thanks for being the change! :)

Your CF Family



Paul vanSlambrouck wrote:

I took a long walk today in honor of Rod and being in a relatively poor South American country, there was little on the ground to be collected. As I continued, my eyes moved from ground to doorways and I found myself doing the most natural thing I could think of: holding open a door in an old Portuguese church. This simple act of service brought somewhat surprised smiles from the older folks that were entering, bundled against a winter wind. I felt barriers fall more rapidly than any of my fledgling attempts to speak Spanish. Thanks Rod for this gift.



Kanchan Gokhale wrote:

Day 1 - Walk 1

Filled with inspiration, after reading Rod's story, I decided to be more mindful while walking to work one day. The distance from home to work was 1.2 miles and so it was a perfect opportunity to dedicate this walk to Rod. As I started walking, I realized how difficult it is to walk making sure you are scanning the area in front of you for coins or something of value. I kept looking but did not find a thing! Do you know what I found in abundance? Cigarette butts! It surprises me to see

a) how prevalent smoking still is. I am living in a bubble in a community of friends who don't smoke and so was living a perception that "smoking" is on the decline :)

b) how many people there are who don't care about the environment and carelessly throw cigarette butts on the street - on second thoughts, it is not surprising because I cannot expect them to care about the environment if they don't care about their own health...

I kept walking...and my mind kept doing its thing. It started analyzing and questioning why I was doing this and how it did not make sense and if it

really was going to make a difference if I found a penny. However, I was not ready to give up yet. Being connected to the cf posse for long enough, I knew that it was about inner transformation more than anything else. So maybe the point was not to find something of value but to keep walking my path with clear intention...and so I went on ...the main motivation being, "I promised myself and Trushna that I will do this, and so I will not give up"....I reached work and did not really find any pennies or something of value that I could share with someone.

Day 1 - Walk 2

The same day, after work, I decided that I want to try one more time. I have a tendency to give up easily and so I thought - let me try one more time. The thought that Rod has been doing this for so many years, was very humbling. It was a different Kanchan that was walking the path this time. The transformation had already begun...I walked from work to home...same 1.2 miles, same route but with a different mindset...This time my heart was filled with humility and I was sending metta to Rod. Respect for him and his wife grew with every single step...and I kept walking. I finally reached home, with a sense of fulfillment for doing what I promised to do and tremendous respect for Rod. I took off my shoes and just as I was resting my laptop bag by the shoe stand, I noticed something!! Lo behold! There was a penny lying right by the shoe stand!

I am still not sure if technically this counts as a part of my walk since I was already inside the house.

I was thrilled beyond my wildest expectations. This inspired me not to give up so easily and if I keep trying, I will see signs, signs of hope, like this one. And the signs might appear at the very end of the walk..but I need to keep looking, keep walking and keep hoping.. Thanks Rod for teaching me this lesson...

Yet another day...

Several days later, I was shopping at a farmers market and while I was waiting in the line to pay, I noticed a penny on the ground, right under weighing machine..I had totally forgotten about the walk and seeing the penny reminded me of Rod and I picked it up beaming with a big smile!

Rod,

I have a long way to go before I start contributing and adding value to people's

lives like you do.

Thanks a lot for inspiring this inner change and sowing a seed of humility and persistence in me.

Hats off to you for doing what you do and being who you are. I am sure that every time I see a penny or a dime on the street, I will think of you. And it will remind me of the lesson I learned because of the few steps I took on your path.

I want to let you know that you have sowed seeds of inspiration in so many people like me! I am sure we will find a way to look for pennies on our paths and make sure that every penny is paid forward towards inner transformation in me and others who come in contact with me.



Pavithra Mehta wrote:

wanted to share a quote that I've long loved, and that I believe truly does capture the significance of all the Gods of our world.

"I've been thinking about seeing. There are lots of things to see, unwrapped gifts and free surprises. The world is fairly studded and strewn with pennies cast broadside from a generous hand. But -- and this is the point -- who gets excited by a mere penny? If you follow one arrow, if you crouch motionless on a bank to watch a tremulous ripple thrill on the water and are rewarded with the sight of a muskrat kit paddling from its den, will you count that sight a chip of copper only, and go your rueful way? It is dire poverty indeed when a man is so malnourished and fatigued he won't stoop to pick up a penny. But if you cultivate a healthy poverty and simplicity, so that finding a penny will literally make your day, then, since the world is in fact planted in pennies, you have with your poverty bought a lifetime of days. It is that simple."

- Annie Dillard



Francisco Pancho Ramos-Stierle wrote:

Last week, I dedicated a 2 hour bike ride to Rod -- being mindful of all the little things I saw along the way and thinking of ways that someone's waste can be helpful to the world in other ways.

As I was riding gently along, lo and behold, I see lots and lots of ripe apricots by this one tree ... so I picked them up, and brought them as Rod's offering for the 60+ people who were attending Wednesday this week. Everyone loved it!



Trushna Mehta wrote:

Thanks for being an inspiration and making the world a better place Rod! My mom always taught me that money is money whether it's a penny, a dollar or hundred dollars. For this reason, I have always picked up spare change whenever I happen to see it on the ground.

Every morning I walk about 2 miles to get to my office. I look forward to the walk everyday as it gives me time to reflect and connect with nature. Recently, I dedicated my morning walk to you. I kept an eye out for change while taking time to look at each person and say, "Good Morning" or "Hello", or flash a big smile. In honor of you Rod, I've also created a cache and posted it on geocaching.com. The cache contains short story of your compassionate act, a small trinket with a Smile Card.



Nipun Mehta wrote:

I took a walk for Rod today. He suffered a stroke recently, so bunch of us committed to doing something he used to do everyday -- walk while looking for lost change on the ground. In the last decade, Rod has found (with the help of metal detectors) over \$2500 and donated it to homeless soup kitchens.

At 5PM in New York, I start the walk. My head is facing down, looking for change. Few minutes in, I don't find any change but I get intrigued by the trash I see. Cigarette butts. Lots of them. Maybe New Yorkers are stressed out. I keep walking with my eyes downcast. I remember few months I had spent at a monastery, where you are mostly looking down. The idea is to live in the world but not be of this world. I wonder, "What would life be if you didn't get so attached to the external world?" It evokes a sense of humility. I remember a three-steps-and-bow experiment that 50 of us had done in India. And the "Hari-Naaaaarraayan, Krishna-Naraarraayan, Subme-Narayana" (Everyone is Divine) chant that we had done that day. I pass a mumbling homeless man sitting on the ground, who is outside the vision of most people; I look straight at him, he doesn't ask for anything, and I share my silent goodwill with him. Head still tilted down, I keep walking. Still no change. But lots of gratitude

and goodwill in the pores of my body. How did I even end up meeting Rod? How do we meet anyone we encounter?

It's almost 6PM. I arrive at my destination -- the reception of a United Nations event. A Saudi Prince is supposed to open. Important and powerful people are here, I'm told. And I'm chanting Hari-Naraayan in my head, sending love to Rod and holding a natural smile on my face. I never did find any change on the ground, but in the middle of a big gathering, I found the humble beat of my own heart. Thank you, Rod.



Dípa V. wrote:

I'm training for the Susan Komen 60-mile walk (over 3 days) so am walking lots. I'll certainly participate in this. I wish Rod a speedy recovery.

Yashesh Shroff wrote:

Namaste -

I was at a loss re: what to do upon reading Connie's email but this is a fantastic idea and a great tribute to Rod. Both Margi and I will walk the mile and also clean up whatever trash we find along the way. Wishing Rod a speedy recovery.

My work recently shifted to a place much closer to home (as it turns out, almost exactly 1 mile). This was a perfect opportunity to start on my promise to use less gas and walk more. For several weeks now, as much as I can, I walk the mile and look for coins. I was not lucky in finding any cash (bad economy?!) but I did find trash. It's a bit different than what Rod did but I hand collected trash and put it in garbage cans of houses in the neighborhood as I walked along. A couple of times even my wife, Margi, joined me.

The first time I held broken beer bottle in my hand, it was a bit weird and made me realize that I have actually never held one in my hand all these years.



Beyond all the folks that wrote in, lots of others are holding you in their thoughts.

Sam Brower - "What a great idea. I will walk a mile for Rod happily."

Guri Mehta - "That's a great idea! Count me in also!"

Richard Whittaker - "Happy to do this. Great idea!"

Mariette Fourmeaux du Sartel - "I've had two personal walks. I would like to have one with a deeper intention with the people that expressed interest in San Diego."

Rahul Brown - "I'm in! Wishing Rod a blessed recovery."

Bhoutik Mehta - "Would be happy to walk a mile or two." :)

Rishi Oswal - "I'm in!"

Parth Savla - "I'll walk a mile for Rod. Wishing him a good recovery."

Birju Pandya - "Thanks Richard! Glad to hear Rod is recovering well. :)

Amit Dunganani - "Let's do a collective walk! Rod would love to hear our stories."

MJ - "Looking forward to walking a mile for Rod!"