

# The Times They are a-Changing or Should I Stay or Should I Go?!

Our walks became strolls and then our strolls became stroll/sit. Then they became sit/stroll/sit with the emphasis on sit. Now our walks are nearly nonexistent. Bob's so tired and quite often just refuses to get out of the car. He's been using the rolling walker for quite some time, but he doesn't connect with the reason he needs it. Instead of realizing that it's giving him support, he thinks it's a burden because he has to push it. He shoves it at me and says, "you push it"! I think the next step will be to try using the wheelchair. I think he'll fight me on that and just prefer to not go anywhere but we shall see.

That will be a story for another day.

I had three times in a one-week period where I decided to leave Bob at home with someone "Bob-sitting". I went off on my own. Just me. It was crazy just how guilty I felt to not include him in what I was doing.

On the first outing, I took great granddaughter Aubri (from Texas, visiting family in SD) to SeaWorld. It's always been a special place for us three—mainly for her and her great grandpa. Bob used to ride the rides with her, and I wouldn't! But I knew that Bob wouldn't be able to walk or enjoy a long day there, so I went without him. Aubri and I had a great time but still I felt like I was cheating or sneaking out!

On the second outing, I went to a dear friend's memorial service at Miramar National Cemetery followed by a luncheon. Knowing that I really wanted time to visit with my friends and knowing Bob would get restless, anxious, and need my undivided attention, I opted to again get someone to stay with him. I

went on my own. Every time someone asked me how Bob was doing, I choked up a bit and probably had a few tears in my eyes. Guilt Trip.

Lastly, I attended a funeral and a reception. My decision to not take Bob was based mainly on his current social skills. I really didn't want him yelling or being disruptive in their church or taking out his false teeth at the luncheon. Call me uptight but that just wasn't how I wanted to spend the day—being on edge over his behavior.

So, all in all, I had three nice days spending some time on my own. But I also felt thoughtless about not wanting to take him. It's hard to take him places and just as hard to leave him behind. Or maybe ALMOST as hard to leave him behind. I'm still glad that I made the choices to go alone.

So how did he do with me being away? GREAT! My sister Christie had the "Bob-sitting" duty for the SeaWorld Trip and for the day that I went to the memorial service/luncheon. She also did triple duty and did the morning of the day I went to the funeral. She stayed until Bob's son Steve could get here for the rest of the afternoon. I'm so very grateful to them both for helping us out and holding down the fort while I was away from home. No sure why I fretted over it as I don't think it troubled him at all! Bob did just fine with both of them and except for a few funny stories there is no drama to report on. Whew...

So, the times they are a-changin. More and more, Bob won't want to go anywhere, or I will choose to not take him some places. We've been attached at the hip for so very long that any separation seems foreign and uncomfortable. I know that I should give myself permission to have a little free time and self-care, but it feels a bit wrong to leave my hubby behind.

This might tell you just how happy (or delirious) I was to be out and about on my own—when I saw my good friend at her mom's

funeral, I told her ***“There is no place I would rather be”***. What a dumb statement! It wasn't at all what I meant, of course. What I meant was I was happy to be able to be there with her and happy that I didn't have to bring Bob along with me. I'm sure she thought I was a bit off my rocker with how I phrased my thoughts! Thankfully she's a dear kind friend and understood my craziness.

So here we go on a new chapter of our dementia journey.

And the question remains. Should I stay or should I go now.



Great Granddaughter Aubri and myself~~~~SeaWorld~~~~June 2021