Remembrance of things present - A poem with pictures

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This presentation is based on TEDx Talks given in the USA and Europe. “In prose, poetry, and photographs I celebrate my father’s brave, good-humored struggle with Alzheimer’s disease. My initial feelings of grief and helplessness ultimately lift with the discovery that as my father’s short-term memory erodes, his longer-term memory is sparked by pictures, poems, and music. We both come to accept dementia’s cognitive restrictions as simply new parameters for intellectual and emotional interactions, in the way that the restrictions of poetic rhyme and meter do not stifle creative expression, but catalyze it. In this way, my father and I move from a prose relationship into one of poetry, which is no better or worse, just different - less literal and more metaphorical - where we engage more in rhyme than in reason, freezing time initially but then melting it and coming together in that lyrical middle realm between what has gone before and what is yet to be.”

Biography

Peter Maeck is an American writer and photographer. He has spoken on Alzheimer’s disease at TEDx events in the USA, the UK, and Europe. His stage and dance dramas, including for Pilobolus and MOMIX Dance Theatres, have been produced in New York City, Europe, and Africa. He has been a US Government Cultural Specialist in Tanzania and Morocco. His photographs have been shown in American and international galleries. He has a BA degree in English from Dartmouth College and an MFA degree in Playwriting from Brandeis University.

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