

Life Transformed Through Movement

By Gregg Fuhrman, MPT, OCS, CFMT, CMTPT and Kathryn Zalewski, PT, PhD

The Image



Image 1: Walk by Gregg Fuhrman, MPT, OCS, CFMT, CMTPT

The image chose me. It invited me to bring together aspects of my life shaped by movement, literal and figurative. It is only through age and experience that I begin to see that personal lenses on movement—

physical therapist, parent, and teacher—are in fact anchored in the same understanding. The photograph invited those different perspectives to join on a single reflective path. This photograph is of a path in the fall, at dusk, when it's cold and the winds through the trees sound like voices. This story is told here as a personal chronology...

THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST

I am the voice whispering
what my patient cannot
understand, at least not now.
He is early in recovery,
focusing only on “getting better.”
One step in front of the other,
parallel bar sentinels,
a therapist's touch
holding him up as he begins
to walk.

**THE MOTHER OF A CHILD WITH
DISABILITIES**

I hear the whispers—

those that point out differences and

those that seek to understand.

I look at the path wishing it diverged into two,

a sign of independence.

We are forever bound to walk a single path,

transformed together by movement.

THE TEACHER

They come to me now, eager to know the “right way”
to walk the path.

I tell them they are Student Physical Therapists,

but they hear me whisper that they are students,

who will someday be physical therapists.

Many will see the sentinels, and will learn

to find comfort on a path, grey, dimly lit.

They will hear the whispers and learn to decode.

Their path, too, transformed through movement.

About the Authors



Gregg Fuhrman, MPT, OCS, CFMT, CMTPT specializes in outpatient orthopaedic physical therapy working with Body Mechanics, a private practice clinic in Pewaukee, Wisconsin. Gregg has been in orthopaedics for the majority of his 22 year professional career. Along with his regular clinical caseload, Gregg has been an Adjunct Clinical Faculty member in the Program in Physical Therapy at Marquette University. Gregg has had a lifelong interest in photography thanks largely to the influence of his father. In the past five years, the hobby has become more of a passion.



Kathryn Zalewski, PT, PhD, MPA is a physical therapy educator, currently providing consulting services to a developing program at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. The humanities were once described to her as ‘disciplines of memory and imagination’. Part of being a physical therapist is allowing others to tell their stories in a safe place, and part of being an educator is training others to listen with compassion to the stories being told. The humanities train those of us who can be biased by science to experience the transformative power of story telling.