

Zoom Poetry Workshop, July 14, 2025

Teacher: Christopher Luna

Student: Mike Garofalo

Prompt 1: How Do You Practice Self Care?

Fourteen Acts I Do Every Day at 80 Years of Age

Get Up, Stand, Move; Plan

Eat breakfast; Think

Talk with my wife; Listen

Read, Learn; Reflect

Tend to our garden, Smile; Wonder

Write, Web Publish, Journal, Blog; Communicate

Enjoy Walking, Exercise; Encourage Others

Mind My Own Business; Work

Play Music, Dance, Art; Energize

Do Household Chores, Help; Contribute

Clean my Body, Drink Water; Purify

Socialize; Communicate for Peace

Eat Lunch and/or Dinner; Gratitude

Sleep; Dream

Prompt 2: Write a poem with an affectionate refrain.

Let's walk, Buddy

Bruno Dog and Mike Man --

Ramblers on the Road.

Reenacting a 30,000 year old

tradition of mutual trust and companionship.

We walked together thousands of days,

in the early morning, the coolest time of the day.

“Let's walk buddy” and I petted his head.

He would get excited, bounce a bit, circle a couple of times,

grunt his delight, bite the leash, hop with excitement,

head to the door.

“Let's walk buddy” and I petted his head.

We walked by the left curb facing the coming cars,

up and down suburban hills, along familiar routes,

by changing shrubs and trees, over snow, in rain,

in the warm summer breeze. We stopped, he sat, before

safely crossing a busy street.

“Let's walk buddy” and I petted his back.

We would stop and talk with other walkers, neighbors,

and ladies walking their dogs. Chatted with a finicky

lady pushing two cats in a stroller. Thanked a few folks who praised Bruno's fit looks, gentle manner, and walking poise.

"Let's walk buddy" and I petted his back.

Bruno was an excellent walking companion.

Kept my pace, never jerked hard on the leash.

Did not bark back at barking dogs behind fences.

Obedied my commands without a fuss.

"Let's walk buddy" and I petted his head.

We would arrive home safely.

Take off our walking gear.

Settle in. Sit. Rest.

"Good walk, buddy" and I patted his back.

[Bruno died of cancer in February 2024.]

Prompt 3. Use a metaphor to write about how you communicate hard truths to children or others.

Stay Cool Platitudes!

I said to my two lively children as I held their hands:

“Look twice both ways before you try to cross the street.”

I was responsible for their safety – for decades.

I did not encourage fear; rather wisdom and courage:

Be alert, be aware, and pay attention.

Be Smart! Be careful! Enjoy yourself.

Seek the company of decent folks, avoid bad guys.

Do Good, be kind, avoid evil.

Avoid dangerous acts that could injure or kill you.

Be Cool, be Hip, be Calm, be Right.

Be Safe; stay alive, thrive, and be well for decades.

Don't act irresponsibly by anger, stealing, or lying.

Most people don't care about you; a few want to hurt you.

Take care of yourself; only a few will care for you.

This world can be a dangerous place at times.

Be prepared for failures, and move on to improve.

Be brave, courageous, and loyal.

Avoid the stupid, the careless, the reckless evil ones.

Every living creature will die someday.

Be Cool, be Hip, be Calm, be Right.

[Good advice for a child's safety is grounded in a clear understanding of the reality of their place and time, the age and intelligence of the child, and the improved adult wisdom and patience in guiding the young.]