

The Trapeze Artist

Erin Scherger, Herndon

There was a brief moment in time, when I was young, when I wanted to join the circus. I was terrified of the large animals and found the clowns to be more than a little creepy, but no matter—I wanted to walk on the high wire or swing from a trapeze; the circus was the place for that, so I wanted to go. (I also bet they wouldn't make you eat your peas there, if you didn't want to.)

Even today, seeing someone perform with a trapeze is mesmerizing. I can sit, enthralled, for hours. Watching their form as they initiate the swing, feeling the catch in my breath as they fly and twist through the air, and then exhaling with relief as they return to safety and prepare for the next swing. "Life is a balance of holding on and letting go," according to the poet Rumi. And when I encountered this saying again, recently, I thought of my childhood wish to try the trapeze and contemplated how that artist has to perfect the art of knowing exactly how long to hold on and exactly when to let go, over and over again.

As adults—though much more affixed to the ground—we, too, have to repeatedly practice this skill. We practice as our children grow through different developmental stages, choosing (sometimes daily) whether to hold them close or to let them explore the world without us. We practice as our relationships with family

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2019 VaHomeschoolers Conference and Resource Fair

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Voice

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Enjoying the snow!

Photo by Keely Noffsinger Massie

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