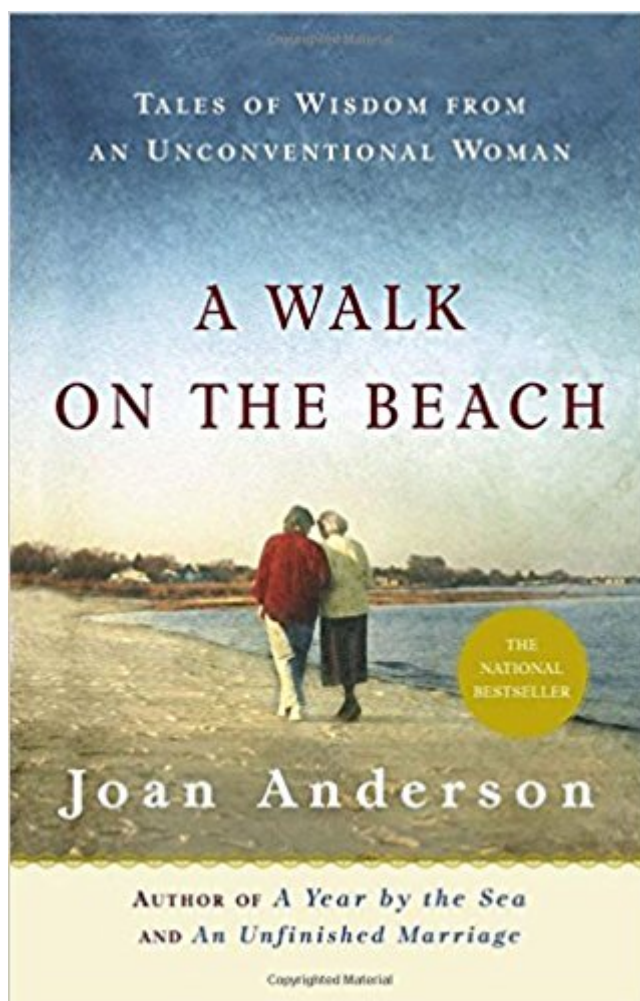


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# A Walk On The Beach: Tales Of Wisdom From An Unconventional Woman



## Synopsis

Shortly after arriving on Cape Cod to spend a year by herself, Joan Anderson's chance encounter with a wise, playful, and astonishing woman helped her usher in the transformations and self-discoveries that led to her ongoing renewal. First glimpsed as a slender figure on a fogged-in beach, Joan Erikson was not only a friend and confidante when one was most needed, but also a guide as Anderson stretched and grew into her unfinished self. Joan Erikson was perhaps best known for her collaboration with her husband, Erik, a pioneering psychoanalyst and noted author. After Erik's death, she wrote several books extending their theory of the stages of life to reflect her understanding of aging as she neared ninety-five. But her wisdom was best taught through their friendship; as she sat with Anderson, weaving tapestries of their lives with brightly colored yarn while exploring the strength gathered from their accumulated experiences, Joan Erikson's lessons took shape on their small cardboard looms as well as in her friend's revitalized life. In writing about their extraordinary friendship, Anderson reveals a need she didn't know she had: for a mentor to help navigate the transitions she faced as she grew beyond middle age. And when Joan Erikson had to face her husband's death and the growing limitations of her own body, Anderson was able to give back some of the wisdom she had gleaned. To this poignant, joyful account, Joan Anderson brings the candor and sensitivity that have made her an acclaimed speaker and writer on midlife and its possibilities. *A Walk on the Beach* is an experience to savor and treasure, a glimpse of the exuberant spirit that can be sustained and passed on in all our friendships.

## Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

Publisher: Broadway Books; Reprint edition (April 5, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0767914759

ISBN-13: 978-0767914758

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.5 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 108 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #91,627 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #19 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Regional U.S. > New England #35 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Social Scientists & Psychologists #1242 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs >

## Customer Reviews

In *A Year by the Sea* and *An Unfinished Marriage*, Anderson shared her account of taking a break from her marriage and spending a year of solitude at the beach. Now, she introduces the inspiring woman she befriended during that time: Joan Erikson, wife of psychoanalyst Erik Erikson. After a chance meeting in their Cape Cod town, the women found their stories "one woman was purposefully apart from her husband; the other was adjusting to her husband's deteriorating health and imminent death" resonated significantly. Erikson's enthusiasm for life prompted Anderson to re-evaluate her own marriage and her role as she aged through the life stages that were the subject of Erikson's published writing, coauthored with her famous husband. Erikson reminded Anderson of the importance of continuing to learn, grow, change and, most notably, play as one ages, to be surprised by life and where it leads. She explained, "[A]s long as we are alive, we must keep transforming ourselves." Through the death of Erikson's husband and the return of Anderson's, readers see the women cheer each other's efforts to view the world with a fresh eye each day. While Anderson's experiences may ring familiar to readers of her earlier works, this is much more Erikson's story and philosophy, and for readers, every encounter with her is as much a treat as it was for Anderson, who wrote of her friend, "it was [she] who made me new, or at least [she] pushed me toward the brink." Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Shortly after deciding to spend a year apart from her husband, Anderson met Joan Erikson, wife of pioneering psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, on a foggy beach on Cape Cod. The two women were at different points in their lives but struck up a friendship that helped sustain them through the challenges they faced: marital uncertainty for Anderson; the decline and imminent death of a beloved spouse for Erikson. Despite her grim prospects and advancing age, Erikson is full of life and energy and fond memories that set Anderson to wondering about the elements of marriage and friendship. Over the course of the year and for years after, the women sustain and inspire each other. After Erik's death, Joan completes their work on the stages of life. And Anderson, author of *A Year by the Sea* (1999) and *An Unfinished Marriage* (2002), finds the courage to accept changes in her own life, insights that she brings to this third book on renewal at midlife. Vanessa Bush Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Not one of my favorites

I just couldn't get into this. I found it boring to read and it seemed it was just all a conversation. I didn't even finish it

This book felt like it was written just for me. It encouraged me to begin a much needed path for "me". And I fell in love with Joan Erikson. Anderson's portrayal of her added wisdom and wit to the overall theme of self discovery that we women so neglect about ourselves. I recommend this for any woman who wants to open that place that you have had closed for too long. Your true self.

This is one of those books that is filled with wisdom -- one that you want to highlight and go back to time and again. Little tid bits of wisdom are scattered throughout the book. At the end of the book she lists "LIFE LINES JOAN ERIKSON'S UNCONVENTIONAL WISDOM". These are so good to keep handy and review whenever you think of it. We get so busy in our daily lives that we forget the important things. This also shows the importance in our own lives of having a mentor and of also being one to someone else.

a book every woman should read at any age

This is a good story of a friendship between two women, one acting as mentor to another who is trying to find herself post children. I enjoyed the read, but found it a bit formulaic. I still cried at the end, though, so it touched me in some way!

When I read "A Year by the Sea" I found myself wanting to read more about the things Joan had learned from her friend Joan, I was delighted to find "A Walk on the Beach". Another beautifully told story by Joan Anderson. Wouldn't we all love to meet up with our own Joan Erikson, but in the mean time thank you so much for sharing your very special friend with us.

In an era of quick-fix motivational workshops and buzz words like "Life Coaching", this wise and soothing book stands as a strong reminder that we need SO MUCH MORE than weekend workshops and spiritual retreats to regain our balance or redirect our life's course. We need real mentors and ongoing friendships with seasoned women who can show us the way. At some point in midlife, many women (and men) experience a career crisis or crisis of faith, and are desperately in

need of guidance. Joan Anderson was lucky enough to find an incredible mentor to show the way, demonstrating how "elderly" friends are essential to our growth. I believe many of us remain stuck with only peer relationships, and don't take time to seek out the untapped wisdom of older people in our communities and congregations. Joan's book is a marvelous blueprint for anyone who craves companionship with the older and wiser -- or women of experience. As we read this sweet book, we are also called to treasure -- or initiate -- friendships with real women of experience in our midst.

Thank you, Joan!

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