

Sharing the Camino Light through Service



MT. TAM CHAPTER HIKE, 2017.
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The notion of walking the Camino first came at a time in my life when I was looking for a more meaningful way to travel and feeling the desire to serve. I became consumed with researching, training, packing, repacking, blogging, and chatting with pilgrims. This happened a few years before I turned 50—and to some of my friends and family, it appeared I was going through a midlife crisis! Perhaps I was, but I couldn't have picked a healthier addiction, because the Camino ultimately led to a variety of ways that I could serve.

Little did I know that when the Camino called, I'd become so involved. My first Camino, in 2016, inevitably led to two more Caminos over the following years. To keep the Camino connection here at home, I signed up for several odd jobs to help our Northern California chapter, such as cleaning up the email list, managing the Camino library, documenting events, and moderating the Facebook group. This kept me busy, but my wheels were turning on more creative ways to engage our community.

I organized Camino presentation events and conducted online chapter surveys to gather valuable feedback from our members. I created a NorCal chapter logo and stamp, and that idea paved the way to new T-shirts. I do this kind of stuff at work, but find it much more fun to apply it to a hobby I am passionate about. However, all of this takes time, and I was burning the candle at both ends (a common trap when volunteering for a nonprofit!). My dilemma: Could I keep the Camino flame alive without burning out? My new approach was to *let go*—a lesson I learned from the Camino. I began to let go of some activities and say “no” to other opportunities.

I may stumble, but I am finding my niche as someone who can turn ideas into action, collaborate with different tribes of pilgrims, and share love for the Camino on a variety of platforms. When I hear pilgrims say, “Thanks for all you do,” that encourages me. I feel that if I can help prepare someone, like some pilgrims helped me, I am giving back to the Camino in some small way. To share the light of the Camino is a blessing. As we say at UC Berkeley, *Fiat Lux* (let there be light)!