

Moving away from home

Elementary school, a time remembered as pure nostalgia and a stressless time full of joy with friends, was just finishing, and personal life was becoming less enjoyable, with constant moving around the same city¹ — summer was starting, and plans to make a greater move than the rest were settling in as if there was no other choice. Being so young, in the fifth grade, I couldn't hold a grasp on the deeper meaning of the decisions my family was making, so moving almost felt normal but also against me somehow. I always questioned why choices were made by my parents but of course, it would always end with a lie² that I needed to believe.

Well, although moving around the city wasn't too hard to handle, it didn't seem right and just created a build-up of questions inside my expanding mind. I very much enjoyed the life I lived back in my old city, creating a friend group that kept on changing shape and building a trust bond that won't be able to form with any other person I meet. This life was becoming increasingly harsh to handle with each move being worse than the last, which is impressive to look back on how my family including myself handled a grim situation so efficiently. One particular move to live in an RV³ was one of my worst experiences — waking up to wet, cold raindrops landing on the center of my forehead as I tried laying asleep or cramming my family into a compact probably 20-something-foot vehicle with the same old same old foods — not a good experience. Every move set me further and further from the ones I wanted to be with, my friends, these were the ones that pulled me into wanting to stay since I had built a hand and soul forged relationship that won't I won't ever, ever forget. It shows that even at a young age kids are able to form great bonds that they can't just forget about since even today my parents are surprised by the number of friends I connect with when we revisit.

Compared to my great trip⁴ to Los Angeles, those small moves are incomparable. Small moves around were easy to handle, although hard to understand, and still kept me in close touch with what I would say was my, not only favorite, greatest formation of friends I will ever construct. Well, with my forgetful memory of things like small detailed conversations I find trouble picking up from the past, but I do remember my deep emotion of loss — a separation from my friends I still can't handle, I know, pretty crazy. At first, it didn't hit me as a little child, I couldn't comprehend that I wasn't doing a short move, but rather a somewhat larger scale trip to find myself around 7 hours away from my precious friends. This left me in the heart of Los Angeles, smack dab in the middle, Venice Beach. Now there is a rotten golden egg metaphor⁵ for Venice Beach – a beautiful perspective from the outside, with a mushy inside – where this view of a gorgeous place with a nice beach and perfect living is mostly a lie at least from my experience. I mean from that RV experience I felt like it couldn't really get too much worse until

¹ This place of enjoyment was truly what I see as my home, with all my childhood memories being contained in the small town of Santa Cruz.

² Many lies had to cover up the true reason for my family's moving spree through town, eventually finding out made things fall to place but also made me feel a lie wasn't necessary.

³ Honestly, this was played off as a fun idea but was truly a bad experience to live in one of these, at least it kept me outside.

⁴ This great, not so great, trip was to Los Angeles to start up again and although pretty trashy was just the start of a great build up of improvements.

⁵ My made up metaphor for Venice just to explain the true view I have on the trash-hole that seems so great to people.

you realize the struggle of living off of your dad's free managed apartment. Any regular living space would be fine compared to this, but when moving to Venice my first experience was living in a building – smelling of drugs, dirt, and everything filthy – where mostly everyone came from the streets or from drugs.

Now the trip was a very – since it was my first long trip, I mean a very – long and boring journey to a new area I didn't even want to be in. This trip to Venice was just my dad and me at the time so we could settle and wait for the rest to come down since I had school starting. So my dad had to strike up conversations since I was most likely feeling down about the whole move away from my hometown and all my friends. He and my mom just had to hype the whole move up to bring a mood of joy and a gleeful look on my face for this drastic change in my life – my mood was a cover-up⁶ for my true feelings about the situation. Now lying about the situation is all they had in order to make me comfortable and unstressed but the real reason for moving is to not be shared. Most of what I remember on the car ride was me sitting in frustration, but also a slight – slim – thought of happiness from what my parents had said about this new location.

Settling into Venice, I have to say it was a decent upgrade from the RV. It was an ordinary, basic living apartment with every basic furniture item – just the reek and living conditions I had to get used to. Now on arrival, the most stressful and heart-pounding topic was school. In a completely unknown area with a total change of environment, I was not ready for the start-up of living hell, I mean middle school on a blank slate. Not knowing anyone, not knowing my surroundings, not knowing the school, and not fitting in was a complete blockage from my comfort zone when in Venice and in school.

A hard pill⁷ that was necessary to swallow – even if I had to struggle – was the break away from the place I knew and the friends I wanted in my life. The once enjoyable place I knew and loved was to be forgotten and left behind to start a new life in a place I couldn't handle – a place too different. It all went well in the end, but the journey there was rough – spiked on all sides and rigged against me – the journey I think I needed to take head-on. Although I left the place I remember as my place of enjoyment and friends, I find myself collecting back to a new era of enjoyment that will make up for the adventure I went along on.

⁶ Ah yeah, of course a cover-up because although you may not be happy about a decision there's not much to do so make the best out of it.

⁷ Leaving my truly amazing friends was something I consider a hard pill to swallow because the amount of time it was on my mind wishing I could somehow get it all back.