

Brittany

October 28, 2019

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Prompt: If you could live anywhere where would you live?

Dear Traci,

I know that when you all came up with the prompt, you expected an answer to be a specific place--somewhere adventurous like Peru or somewhere warm and gorgeous like Aruba. However, when I think of where I would want to live, there is no single place that comes to my mind. Unlike many people, I don't exactly have a desire to live somewhere different. Maybe this is because I was fortunate enough to be able to travel to places like Jamaica (my home country), Bahamas, England, Mexico and so on. I remember when I was high school and my first two years of college, all I wanted to do was move *somewhere*. I wanted to get away from home and have a new life all to myself--I loved my family, yes, but during this time my parents were going through a nasty separation and every day consisted of being alone. I wanted to be free from the yelling and tears that my parents threw onto me. I wanted to make new friends. I wanted to meet new guys, my future husband, possibly. I wanted to leave behind my negative thoughts and depression. I wanted to leave behind the people who knew me as someone who was a loner and would not go out. Inevitably, when I applied to colleges, the closest one I applied to was forty minutes away from my hometown.

From therapy and self-reflection I have since learned that moving somewhere new doesn't mean creating a new life. Yes, it would be new and exciting at first, but I would still have to deal with the inevitable fallouts from my parents' separation. I would still have to deal with my depression, moving would only subside for a moment because everything would be fresh. After the excitement wears off, that novel place would only expose my lingering

depression even more than before. Through therapy I realized that moving to some novel place was solely that, a place. I now see the "place" I want to live as more of a mixture of certain people and a certain mindset. I feel like every day I am becoming closer to the person I am meant to be; ultimately who that person is, I am not exactly sure, but I think being fulfilled by life and helping those around me are two important aspects.

I am learning that that which makes up your days is that which makes up your life. In this day and age, everyone is always waiting for the weekend, or waiting for vacation, or waiting for the holidays, but how you spend each day ultimately is what makes up your life. Right now, I volunteer in a letter exchange program with a partner from Everglades Correctional Facility. By participating in the ECI letter exchange I am learning about people whose experiences and backgrounds are different from my own and gaining a better understanding of diversity.

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Thus, I think it is not *where* I want to live, but *how* I want to live. I hope to be grateful, helpful and inspiring, kind to others, fulfilled by every day, challenged and changed for the better. I'm quite sure this is not the response you were expecting, but I hope it gave you a little bit of insight into who I am.

Have a great week,

Brittany