

connection

The Newsletter of Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. Vol. 37, No. 3, March 2013



TRANSITIONS

Kampmeeting

Board Meeting

Rehoboth mini-Kampmeeting

European Kinship Meeting

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WHO WE ARE...

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International, Inc. is a non-profit support organization. We minister to the spiritual, emotional, social, and physical well-being of current and former Seventh-day Adventists who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex individuals and their families and friends. Kinship facilitates and promotes the understanding and affirmation of LGBTI Adventists among themselves and within the Seventh-day Adventist community through education, advocacy, and reconciliation. Kinship is a global organization which supports the advance of human rights for all people worldwide.

Founded in 1976 the organization was incorporated in 1981 and is recognized as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in the United States. Kinship has a board made up of thirteen officers. There are also regional and population coordinators in specific areas. The current list of members and friends includes approximately 1,550 people in more than forty-three countries.

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship believes the Bible does not condemn or even mention homosexuality as a sexual orientation. Ellen G. White does not parallel any of the Bible texts that are used to condemn homosexuals. Most of the anguish imposed upon God's children who grow up as LGBTI has its roots in the misunderstanding of what the Bible says.

SUPPORT KINSHIP

Seventh-day Adventist Kinship operates primarily on contributions from its members and friends. Help us reach out to more LGBTI Adventists by making a tax-deductible donation to Seventh-day Adventist Kinship International. Please send your check or money order to the address below or donate securely online at sdakinship.org. (You can also donate using your Visa or MasterCard by contacting treasurer@sdakinship.org. You will be phoned so that you can give your credit card information in a safe manner.)



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From the Editor



We teach best what we most need to learn. I hate transitions. Some of my professional specialties include working with grief or trauma, the development of benevolent systems, and the transitions that change our lives. I may be somewhat of an expert at them but it doesn't mean I like them. I should be more specific. I don't like leaving. I don't like moving from one house to the next. I don't like leaving the house for long trips. I don't like leaving the house to go to work, and once I get to work I don't like leaving my projects at the office. Ask anyone who knows me; they'll tell you I am late to almost everything. I see it another way. Each day and each adventure I precipitously leave my point of departure. I do it with such pizzazz that I usually make it to my destination without disrupting the lives of more than twelve people or missing an inordinate number of international flights. Once I actually manage to leave wherever it is that I call home at the moment, I am up for whatever the safari brings. I prattle on to the dogs I meet on my walks. I could delightedly organize tea parties at tollbooths. I tool around the metro systems of several large cities. I bicycle the dunes of Den Haag by myself. I cannot wait to see Lisbon at EKM this year. And, before that, have you seen Kampmeeting 2013's great place on the beach? I just cannot wait, as long as someone pushes me out of the house to get to the car that will drive to the airport that will....

All of this said, I am delighted to introduce our issue on transitions. Wonderful writers have been kind enough to share their thoughts on relationships, retirement, coming out, traveling, making choices, surviving life changes, becoming chronologically gifted, immigrating within the same country to another world, shifting spiritual foci, experiencing churches in transition, building love, and learning to flourish. As always, editing this issue has been an honor. I hope you enjoy what you read. I hope you find some gifts here. I hope that in the stories you will find ideas to make your path a little easier. I hope you will find more reasons to take good care of yourself .for you are infinitely valuable.

Catherine

Contributors to this month's issue



Andrea Roth (p5, p6)



David Coltheart (p7, p8)



Elvys Pereira (p6)



Carlton Williams (p4)



Larry Hallock (p10, p11)

TRANSITIONS



Lessons

Dave Ferguson

⇨ I recently changed jobs. I was promised lots of things. They never materialized. The new job started well but there have been lots of disappointments. I have found that transitions are stressful, even when they are something I really want. When several transitions happened at the same time, the stress I felt was enormous. I have been married. That was a good transition. But it meant that I moved, left my family, and changed jobs. I have been divorced. That change came with a new career, moving, and losing daily contact with my child. You can imagine what that was like. In my personal life and in my work I have learned a few lessons along the way. It's important to have a friend or friends with whom you can talk. It is helpful to have a loving family who will support you but not treat you like a little child. A spiritual support network is valuable. Counseling and/or grief recovery groups are also valuable. I have learned to look for the positive things in life that fill the holes of what I have lost. I am grateful that through both major and minor transitions, there are good things that remain stable. I choose to focus on those things. ⇨

Coming Out

Carlton Williams

⇨ In 1975, at the age of 16, I came out in junior high school. There were no support groups. There were lots of bullies who thought they could beat me up because I was gay. Fortunately, I was able to defend myself and the tables were turned. The fight was something the bullies would never forget. I had one friend, Joel P. Simon. Even though he was heterosexual, he didn't care that I was gay. One thing changed with the rest of the group. After winning the fight, I was never bullied again. ⇨

Life in Transition

Crystal Joyce

⇨ In the last month my car was totaled and I decided to buy a condo and get out of a toxic living space. I

have found reading the Psalms. The poetry transcends my daily trials. I enfold myself in an attitude of gratitude. I am glad to be alive. In music I find God's whispers and God's shouts. I need a vision that is larger than myself. What has occurred in the past is not the yardstick for what will happen in the future. I believe in the unlimited power of the Divine to create a new life. I am working to build trust and to have faith in the changes that lie ahead. I picture myself as a butterfly in a chrysalis, reassembling to take flight. ⇨

Leaving "Home"

Thomas E Durst

⇨ All transitions involve leaving our comfort zones. If I don't change, I stagnate. My body and my mind suffer. In Ellen White's writings my fourteen-year-old self found Jesus as a personal Savior. From her I learned to love the Bible and the Spirit of God I found there. However, after being a devout Seventh-day Adventist for 29 years, I decided to leave the church. In 1980, as I studied the writings of Desmond Ford and Walter Rea, I began to question and then discard the pillars of Adventism, particularly the sanctuary doctrine. I realized I no longer wanted to be a Seventh-day Adventist, and I began to enjoy the fellowship of other Christian denominations. This change was simultaneously traumatic and liberating. I never looked back. I currently attend a mainstream church that accepts all people as well as my gift of playing the organ. I keep in touch with Adventist friends and encourage them to stay within their denomination so they can work toward spiritual renewal and improvement. I don't want to take them away from their church. I have never regretted my decision. I see the body of Christ as a diverse garden of flowers that makes a beautiful picture. I would like us all to support each other in our spiritual journeys. ⇨

Finding Peace

Keith Paulusse

⇨ I cared for my parents in their home for two years. After my dad died of Parkinson's in October 2011, I had to put my mum into a nursing home because she suffered from Alzheimer's. We rented my parents' home. We had been a close-knit family. I felt like an orphan.

While caring for my parents, I had continued working with the School of Languages, housed in my local Seventh-day Adventist Church. As the project grew and blossomed, it also gave me some respite, sanity, and social connection.

In April 2012 Australia was considering same-sex marriage. As a protagonist for equality, I was having robust debates on my Facebook page. The elders of my Gate Way Centre Adventist church read my statements and closed down the School of Languages. They said that a director of the school was not to express any public opinions that did not bear the imprimatur of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The following Sabbath, many students from the school asked the church elders for an explanation. The elders called the police and pressed the evacuation alarms. When the police arrived, the elders told the officers to remove all non-Adventists from the premises. No arrests were made, but the police did ask what kind of cult the Adventists were. They said they had never witnessed such hate and anger in church leaders. The press reporting this incident described the Adventist church as using neo-Nazi mind control. Two months later I received a letter saying that, based on my support of LGBTI rights and gay marriage, I was disfellowshipped and told not to attend that church or to socialize with its members.

For a period of time the meaning of life became foggy to me. On top of the loss of my parents, my church had violated my trust and become an institutional bully as well as the antithesis of God's love and character. I had to recalibrate my own relationship with God.

20 December 2012 was a turning point for me. I spent that summer day with my journal in Fitzroy Gardens, my favorite park. I wrote down all remembered acts of kindness shown to me over the previous twelve months. I listed the occasions when I had received affirmations and the people who had given them. I noted the way the School of Languages had grown as private paying students increased. I realized how many friends I have made because of the television and press coverage of our expulsion. In one week I even made 325 Facebook contacts! I continue to be grateful for the SDA Kinship friends and leaders who have been very supportive of me.

Of the many books I read that year three stand out to me: The Bible, Viktor Frankel's book *A Search for Meaning*, and Doris Kearns Goodwin's *Team of Rivals*. That last book's story of Lincoln's work to free the slaves resonates for me because our own LGBTI strug-

gle for equality. It restored my positive outlook and mental energy. I felt so blessed that my own book might be published in Mandarin, Dutch, and English. As I wrote, I realized how happy I am with my body-building workout and the results of my vegan diet. I like turning a few heads 😊.

By the end of the day I felt blessed, enriched, and reminded of how much God loves me. I could no longer remember the disappointments and failures. I want to do some specific things with this new awareness. I plan to be more loving to my friends and generally kinder. Along with the language school I want to work with the homeless, refugees, migrants, and people with AIDS. I would like to find a partner with whom I can share my love and journey in life. What would it be like to share a cup of tea, fix dinner, and enjoy special intimacy?

I have regained life goals. I am a work in progress. But now, at least, I am back "in progress." What a blessing! ⇨



Transit Ticket to the West

Andrea Roth

⇨ When I was around seven, part of my family immigrated from East to West Germany. One cold February morning I found myself sitting on a transit train with my mum and older sister. I had no idea where we were going or what was happening. I only knew we were leaving grandma behind and we were going to meet my dad. It was a really long journey, the kind where I lost one part of my life and myself and grew into another. How could my seven-year-old self understand the mix of feelings connected to losing my grandmother at the same time I met my dad?

For many years I wasn't able to integrate my reactions to this loss and painful journey. Finally a personal crisis drove me into counseling. I had avoided therapy because I thought it was not an appropriate process for a health care professional. I am a nurse who can handle stressful situations at work. In Germany, there is a cultural attitude that nurses and doctors don't need talk therapy. I also had not realized how important it is to work on the wounds of my childhood. I was ashamed to need a therapist. Why me? On top of these issues, I wanted to find a therapist who is gay-friendly and, perhaps, even gay or lesbian themselves.

In therapy I realized how much I was trapped in the past. I still struggle with issues around people I love,

that stop me from enjoying the present moment and from making decisions based on my present life. I am working on accepting events of the past that I cannot change and on ways to keep my reactions to those events from controlling my present choices. It is so hard for me to let go. This has been a painful and difficult transition. It has also been one of the most enriching experiences of my life. I hope I will continue this process of growth for the rest of my life. I feel like a toddler who is learning to walk again. I am grateful to the wonderful people who told me that therapy was really "OK." In therapy the one most helpful sentence was, "You are normal. You are not alone." I am grateful for this bridge from the sadness of my childhood to the opportunities in my life today. ⇨

Not a Vacation but an Outing

Betty O'Leary

⇨ My trip back home to North Carolina went well. I had lots of fun. It was well worth taking time off from work. I got to see lots of people I love. However, instead of calling it a vacation, I named it "an outing." This was the time I chose to tell my brother, sister, niece, their spouses, some close Seventh-day Adventist friends from my home congregation, colleagues from the raptor center, and my former neighbor that I was a lesbian. All in all I spent my time in the south coming out to twenty people. No one rejected me. Everyone said learning about my orientation wouldn't change our relationships.

My brother, sister, and close friends from the Adventist church told me they still believe that the Bible says clearly that it is a sin "to act on it." I gave each of them a copy of Eden's Gifts as part of my coming-out package. Those who did read the pamphlet said it had not changed their mind about what the Bible says. We have agreed to disagree about what God said. After all, it took me eighteen months to go through the process myself. I can certainly give them more than one day!

Butterfly Perks

Elvys Pereira

What if you had been born a caterpillar and had to become a butterfly in your lifetime? Imagine. When I was younger I lived in a very big house that had a giant back yard filled with trees, birds, and tons of bugs. I don't know if all the caterpillars I saw there turned into butterflies, but I like to think so.

We humans don't need a chrysalis to change. Our equivalent is attitude or choice or will or determination.

I needed to make a choice in 2010 to become a Seventh-day Ad-

ventist. I needed to make a choice to become vegetarian and, later, vegan. In 2012, I needed to have determination to accept my sexuality. In every case, I have had to have a spark that turns into a fire to make these major changes in my life. Once I make the choice, the rest is just a process. Many of us think of the chrysalis time as "a bad period." It seems like winter to us. Transitions are difficult, but they offer us new opportunities and new options.

Life is a huge box of surprises. Some of us don't like to be sur-

Even with her opinions, my sister did say she would welcome me into her home with any future partner. She surprised me by saying that my mother had once told her she thought I might be gay. Neither one had ever informed me of their observations.

My friends from the raptor center have no issue with my orientation. Some were surprised by my announcement. Others had suspected I might be gay. Others said the thought "had crossed their mind."

One unexpected part of this "outing" was the reaction of my totally accepting niece. "Why didn't you tell me? We talk about everything! You could have told me!" I told her that when she was staying with me, I had not even come out to myself yet.

"Well, you could have at least told me you were wondering about it!"

I wanted to be more open to these twenty closest people of my North Carolina life in case I ever move back home. It's so nice to know that, even where there are disagreements, I have a welcoming place there! ▼



prised, but I suggest you take a chance! I have been through some difficult times and, even as young as I am, I really do think it is darkest before the dawn. The morning light shows how many opportunities tomorrow has saved for us.

It is a pleasure for me to be here in the Connection each month. I would like to hear from you. How is your 2013 going? Have you had good changes? Do you have amazing resolutions? I'd like to hear from you!

Contact me at fb.com/imelvys or elvyspereira@aol.com. ▼

A Church in Transition - Belgium

Dear Elodie,

Thank you for your letter. You are right, our congregation includes a woman who is legally married to another woman. At her recent baptism our church was full, and the baptism was a very happy and blessed event.

The majority of our church board consented to this baptism. The only two people who opposed it are generally quite critical of everyone. One of them is a retired pastor who wrote immediately to our conference and to the General Conference. Before the baptism I had a meeting with the president of our conference, Reinder

Bruinsma. His strong encouragement was reassuring. The woman who was baptised gave an emotional testimony, saying she felt at home from the first time she had set foot in our church.

This baptism has helped to open dialogue and reflection in other communities in Belgium. In Bruges, we try not to talk in general terms about gay people but try to get to know LGBTI people in person. Many of the people we meet are very friendly and involved in their faith communities. We distance ourselves from the concept that homosexuality, in itself, is

a perverse choice. We know that there is always evil in relationships, heterosexual and homosexual.

Even though we acknowledge that heterosexual marriage is the norm, we reject any notion of stigma, exclusion, or marginalization. Personally, I am very happy that this woman is fully accepted and respected. I will pass your message along to our new member.

Sincerely,

Johan Delameillieure

A Church in Transition - Australia

Hi Catherine,

Today is 26 January and it is Sabbath. Australia is celebrating the landing of our first settlers at Port Jackson (now Sydney) on January 26, 1788. I say settlers loosely. Most of the people were convicts sent out from British gaols, very much against their will! The day is celebrated with beach activities, barbeques, community events, marches, parades, and speeches. Traditionally, thousands of people from other countries take their oath of allegiance at various public locations and become Australian citizens today.

Because it is a Sabbath, our little church group decided to make it an Australia Day theme. We decorated the hall that we hire with Australian

flags (about 20 of them), some big, and some small. Other people brought Australian stuffed animals—a koala and kangaroo. Some of the folks wore red, white, and blue outfits while others our national sporting colors of green and gold. The colors are taken from our national flower, the wattle, which has dark green leaves and gold flowers in August.

I organized the program. My participation is, in itself, a measure of the respect and acceptance been given to me by my church group, who know my story. I would have loved to preach, but that would have a bridge too far at this stage. Although I think even that could change.

After the service was over, we had

drinks and all ate lamingtons, a special Australian dessert of sponge cake squares about two inches long and two inches wide and about an inch thick (preferably quite firm, made several days earlier and not fresh), dipped in chocolate sauce and then rolled in desiccated coconut. Very traditional Aussie fare and very appropriate for the day! Afterwards everyone thanked me for my efforts in organizing the program, and I got to bring two lamingtons home for John and myself, which we ate as dessert for our



Sabbath lunch.

In some places, evidently, it is possible to be accepted and (almost) integrated without prejudice. That is in itself the greatest miracle of all.

But acceptance didn't come quickly or easily. I have worshipped with this group since it was first formed, nearly six years ago. I have gradually disclosed my story as I felt they were able to understand and accept. I think acceptance is earned. As the church members see that I love God just as much as they do, that I believe all the "doctrines" they believe, that I care for the church in the same way they do, that I exhibit Christian love and concern to them, that I am no different

from them, except that I am not heterosexual, they are coming to decide that I can bring gifts, not danger, to them.

When an older member who is a retired pastor told me he thought it was inappropriate for me to teach Sabbath school, I withdrew quietly. So many other members were unhappy with his interference in their Sabbath school that they have decided to ask me to teach again on the weeks when he is away.

I love my little congregation dearly.
We make a great group.

God bless,

David Coltheart



A String Too Short to Save Rom Wilder

Last year the company I work for offered a new program called "Transition to Retirement." *Transition* to retirement, I thought? Who wants to transition to retirement? I'd like to dive right into it! Physically, I'm beyond ready. Financially, it would be smart to wait a while.

Transition: "The process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another." Ahh, well, if you put it like that, transitioning to retirement can indeed be the 18-month program they offered.

Life is a transition with a lot of transitions within it. Diagramming it would be like the ones in algebra where you had brackets inside parentheses inside brackets inside parentheses. Some transitions are blurry; pinpointing their beginning or end is impossible. Some are exact. One day you do not have the right to drive legally; the next day you do.

Some transitions are easy, some a challenge. Some hurt more than we think we can bear; some are delightful beyond words. Most are a mix.

Learning that life is a transition from start to finish and finding out that everyone else is also in a state of transition has helped me realize how very "normal" my own life is.

Kinship Older Adults Workouts Jolt the Memory

Exercise is good for many things, but in an unusual study researchers found it may also be good for mental abilities such as memory. In this case, University of California researchers recruited 31 normally functioning adults, and 23 who had been diagnosed with a mild cognitive impairment. In particular, the latter group had trouble remembering things. Each participant was shown a series of 20 emotionally positive images—baby animals, sports scenes, and beautiful landscapes. Then half of each group walked on treadmills to exercise for 6 minutes at 70% of their aerobic maximum. The other half of each group sat quietly. All were later tested for their memory of the photos.

Results showed that the exercise significantly increased the recall of the photos. Among the normally functioning group, this single bout of exercise increased their recall of photos and details by 30% over their control group. Among those diagnosed with impairment, the exercise group improved their recall even more. They were able to remember twice as many photos and details as did those who did not exercise. They did not do as well as the seated group with no impairment, but it was still a great improvement.

Clearly this research shows the benefits of some vigorous activity in improving our memories. The duration of these effects remains unknown. However, the results do raise the question of how to simulate treadmill walking on a regular basis in the quiet of our homes. If a treadmill isn't handy, perhaps shoveling, raking, and mowing lawns might be a start. ▼

- 1) From: Workouts jolt the memory, *LA Times*, in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, December 3, 2012.



Valentine Continuing the Celebration!

Ben Kemena

Emotions and aspirations resonate as that word lingers, spoken in the air. Perhaps Valentine's Day is less about hope and more about knowing that we are not only lovable, but loved. In spite of difficulty acknowledging our need for reassurance, most of us desperately want to know that we are the object of another's affections and desires. We want a valentine in our satchel.

Valentines remind us that we are sexy! That term used to insinuate nice hair, a new shirt, and toned muscles. Sigh. Now, having employment and being on time is the quickest way to my middle-aged heart!

For this middle-aged heart, a valentine is also about remembrances. I look back on my life, the passions of my younger years, and savor my journey. Though there were years when I did not receive a valentine, somehow I only seem to remember the years when one arrived.

After nearly twenty years, Michael remains my valentine through both stormy and sanguine times. I have appreciation for endurance and constancy. Today, I understand that a valentine reminds me of a journey starting, far more than a journey lasting. Michael and I have survived change and transformation. Michael is my awe.

Whether single or partnered (or somewhere lost in the muddle), we tend to find our better angels through those that we love. A valentine is an invitation to love and an invitation to grow. As Christians, we are called to our best efforts: taking risks, sharing our hearts, and flexing with change. It is a frightening prospect to risk our self-esteem. It is worse to remain safe and loveless. If I have ever known grace, it has been through my stumbling attempts to love others and their charity to forgive my sorry efforts on our way to gentle reconciliation.

Grace does not call us to perfection; it simply asks us to take our first steps with one another as valentines. Ready or not, may we always be ready to grow. ▼





Transitory Transitions

Larry Hallock

***I**s this plane really moving or is someone down there turning a crank that slowly transfers a magnificent picture from one spool to another—like a giant player piano roll?*

I had selected this particular “picture roll” for the wonders it promised: icebergs like giant ships, Chinstrap penguins at my feet, and a 360-degree view of Paradise Bay (West Antarctica). For me, this place *defines* Paradise. A circle of glacier-capped mountains rises out of waters, frigid and abandoned. The only frequent visitors here are the clouds that fraternize at sea level, undisturbed.

“Whadaya see out there?” a woman’s voice intrudes from across the aisle. I wish I had a bullhorn to screech back a description of the angular island that appears unmoored in the water below. Aren’t there enough jokes about yappy seatmates to make people think twice before shattering the tranquility of these finely tuned machines? Her intrusion is like fingernails on a blackboard. Perhaps she is an upgrade

from the economy section. I reply with a facial shrug and ignore the question.

You know, these big airplanes are “transition chambers.” Like tubular air locks, they not only transport my body; they transform my soul as well—from the mundane to the glorious and back again. My everyday world where people scurry about, work and play and fight, is already getting hazy. This machine puts it farther and farther behind me. Soon I will think it all a myth, that world, a place whose very existence will soon seem unreal in the distance.

A flight attendant releases the sash on a curtain that cordons off first class from the economy cabin. She is careful not to let it simply fall gently into place. Grasping the edge of the cloth, with a dramatic pause, she looks directly into the eyes of those persons in economy, and then fiercely yanks the curtain shut in front of her face. I wince and hope my reaction doesn’t give away my little secret: I’m usually among the insulted ones on the other side of that

curtain. I furtively lift a corner of the flight magazine on my tray table and make a note on my papers underneath. "Lois." It will be a demerit for her on the written report the airline is paying me to write.

I can't say that I would enjoy flying incognito as an airline spy on every future flight of my life. I can say I don't mind working a segment I would fly anyway for pleasure, especially when the ride is free and I'm being paid for my time! I could easily stay in *this* transitory state forever. Flight attendants wait on me constantly, calling me by name. There seems to be an endless supply of Godiva chocolates. The bottomless bottle of Dom Pérignon is nearby. Who cares how marbled the filet mignon is, as a chef-hatted man sears it on a wok in the aisle of first class?

I lift a journal out of my carry-on bag and place it over the magazine that hides my secret report. On its cover are the words, "Antarctic Log." Little do I know I will fill it up, even before I arrive. It will be the stories of those I meet in the process of getting there: the cabbie who didn't drive like a cabbie; Ruth and her loud in-flight phone calls to relatives asking them to guess where she was; the Nigerian airport worker who was also a preacher and told me in the space of a parking-lot bus ride that God will change me; and a friend in Brooklyn who took 20 years to tell me who he was. It will tell the story of the eight passengers in a tiny dot of a commuter plane who would be flung from place to place in the skies until scattered—in fewer hours than there are in a day—to the corners of the planet on five continents: Asia, Africa, Australia, Europe, and Antarctica.

There's something about getting far, far away that changed me. A visit to a third-world country changed my life. The temporary, transitory states I enter when I go abroad and exit when I return from my trip to normalcy have changed my perspective.

Here's an excerpt from my Antarctic Log to show you what I mean.

I'm trying to make it to Chicago's O'Hare airport, on time. Underground, minutes fall off the clock as I wait endlessly for a train on the northbound platform. Trains briskly come and go on the southbound side. Finally, the tardy northbound train crawls into the station like a child expecting punishment. The train is nearly empty except for its first car, overcrowded by people who've planned ahead to save steps at the other end. Among them is a tired old woman in Goodwill clothes, with large eyes set in larger circles of grayish skin. She stares at me through those eyes as though she's never seen a human. Nothing on her face moves. Even her eyelids seem frozen open. But her head swivels with my every movement as I squeeze around her and drop my bags onto the only floor space left,

blocking the last bit of access to aisles and doors. She's full of helpful hints. They all spill out. I should stack my bags. She could help. I should hang onto that bar. She could hold one of my bags. Others should move. When the train lurches, I should stand a different way. I smile, not at her weirdness (as others were), but because I love every taste of travel. At that moment I realize the thrill of it anew. An exciting trip is officially underway again. I will see strangers differently from this moment on. I will notice them, interact with them in ways I would never have before.

When we travel, these events and interactions enable miraculous things to happen. I cannot count the times I have thought, *If my friends could see me now!* I wish they could because I want confirmation of the reality of these sometimes almost unbelievable interactions. These transitions are what put me outside my normal persona.

My internal armchair psychologist has a theory about the power and profound effect of this particular kind of transitory state and its precisely delineated perimeters. I think it applies only to Type A personalities. When we are at home, there is always something we should be doing. Even when we are having fun, it's not the 100% pure variety. When we are abroad we can't do these chores, even if we want to. In this transitory transition our fun is 100% pure, no nagging little voice telling us "you should be more productive!" There is not an ounce of guilt. I am truly free.... Free, of course, until I climb back into that great aeronautical machine that is a "transition chamber." The plane took me out and it brings me back. By the time I exit ... I really do have that leaky faucet to attend. ▼

**When the winds of
change blow, some
people build walls
and others build
windmills.**
~Chinese proverb

Health Tip for the Month

Headaches

A pill bottle isn't the only way to stop your head from pounding louder than the stereo in the Camaro that just passed you. There are a few strategies you can try. Next time your head is pounding, apply pressure to these points to release muscular stress (but don't do this if you're pregnant):

1. Between the eyes: Pinch the tissue just above your nose with your middle finger near one eye and your thumb near the other, and slowly push upward so you feel pressure near your eyebrows.

2. Behind the ears: Locate the points on the base of your skull, just past the bones behind your ears. Use your thumbs to massage in a circular motion for two minutes.

3. Belly of your temporalis muscle: Place your fingers across your temples and clench down on your molars a few times. You'll feel the belly of your temporalis bulge. Use your first and middle fingers together to press the tension out of that spot.

Some foods are known to trigger migraines, including coffee (or caffeine), wines, cheese, smoked meats, sugar, chocolate, and any-

thing with the chemical MSG. Most of them aren't all that good for the rest of your body, either; so it shouldn't be a surprise that they can wreak havoc on your head, too. If you're prone to headaches and regularly indulge in ache-inducing foods, eliminate them one by one to see if you can find the link between what you eat and headache pain.



Tips for a Younger Brain and Better Memory

Up, flexing your memory muscles—with after-dinner Sudoku tournaments or a class in conversational Esperanto—may help you reach 81 with a brain like an 18-year-old's (but without so many of those thoughts). But to keep your memory young, your neurons also crave a few growth factors.

One of these factors happens when you do something deceptively simple: unplug. Researchers speculate that being constantly connected to digital devices deprives your brain of the downtime it needs to process information and consolidate memories. In lab studies, rats need breaks to form strong memories of new places they explore. You may, too. It's another reason to turn off your iPhone at dinner, leave your BlackBerry behind when you take a walk, and disconnect from the internet frequently on nights and weekends.



Here's how to get four more stealthy brain boosters off the endangered species list and back into your life:

Less noise, more silence



Noise ages even 19-year-old brains. Loud noises during the night (planes, trucks, trains, the party next door) can disturb deep, restorative sleep enough to make your reaction times "old" in the morning. Try running a white noise machine to muffle disruptive noises at night. Exposure to high decibels causes surges in blood pressure and stress hormones, and both can be major brain-agers. If you work in a noisy environment (factories, construction), wear a protective headset (hey, they even look cool). Cover your ears if a loud noise erupts near you (jackhammer, siren, low-flying jet, vuvuzelas). And when you've got to focus, turn off the radio and shut the door. Your brain is less able to screen out distracting sounds with age, making sharp thinking and recall more of a challenge if you're trying to balance the checkbook while listening to the ball game.

Protective headsets even look cool!

Less artificial light, more natural light

Sun salutations aren't just for yoga class. At the beginning of time, that first burst of natural light woke up the sweet spot deep in our brains that was responsible for daytime alertness. The same thing happens now: Greeting the day gets your brain in gear, boosting your ability to concentrate and turn out stellar work. The light bulb over your bathroom mirror can't do this. It takes intense blue light, a wavelength so far found only in Mother Nature's homemade morning light.

Scientists are working on artificial versions; there's early evidence that exposure to extremely bright blue-white light may reverse dementia and depression. For most, a few minutes of natural morning light may be all that is needed to feel bright-eyed and bushy-tailed.



Less stuffy, smelly air . . . more fresh breaths

You spend 90% of your time indoors, where stale air causes mental fatigue and even some diseases. The cause? Anything from mold or mildew to substances released by fresh paint, new carpet, cleaning products, and artificial smells, including, disturbingly, some air fresheners. The fix? Choose scent-free products. Open your windows regularly; open vents on air conditioners; and ventilate well when using cleaning products or scented sprays (even fragrances) and, of course, when you're painting anything or replacing carpeting.

Less clutter, more wide-open spaces

Visual clutter slows down your brain. That's why clusters of road signs double the chances that you'll miss the one you're looking for and why designers of websites and hospitals aim for simplicity. We instinctively look at something uncomplicated while wrestling with tricky problems (which is why you'd rather gaze at a blank wall than a Jackson Pollock painting when you're doing your taxes). Clearing up the clutter in your files or on your desk, bureau, or shelves could do wonders for your bookkeeping, not to mention help your brain stay closer to age 18. Is there a hoarder in your life? ▼



A Poem of My Girlfriend

When you are dead you can not hear such sweet words.
 Why do I love you, you ask?
 You are strong, yet composed.
 You are principled, but gentle.
 You are aggressive, yet tame,
 Time-conscious yet patient,
 Iron lady with a warm heart,
 Tough, yet mushy,
 Simple, yet complicated.
 My love for you grows.

Rena Otieno



Kampmeeting 2013

The U.S. Kinship Kampmeeting 2013 is scheduled for July 2-7, 2013, at the Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, California. You won't want to miss the opportunity to vacation and fellowship on the beautiful Pacific Coast, so start planning now by blocking this week off on your 2013 calendar.

Kampmeeting is a time for Kinship members to celebrate and embrace other members from a broad range of spiritual and social experiences. If you *haven't* yet attended a Kampmeeting, 2013 will be a good year to discover Kinship through our biggest annual event. If you *have* been to a Kampmeeting in the past, you already know what a diverse and fulfilling experience Kampmeeting can be—music, friends, family, networking, sharing, absorbing, laughter, fun, learning, growing, celebrating, and oh, did I mention music! —it's all found at Kampmeeting!

Watch for pricing and travel information. And remember, *Women and Children First* weekend will precede Kampmeeting.

*July 2-7
Save the Date!*



▽ Kinship ▽ News ▽ Kinship ▽ News ▽

Kinship Board Meeting

April 4-7, 2013

This year we will be meeting at the beach house in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, used each year for Region 2's wonderful mini-kampmeeting. Our board meetings are open. If you would like to join us, please feel welcome. We also invite you to let us know if there are issues or programs or projects you would like to have us address. To add an agenda item to our schedule, please feel most welcome to contact Kinship's President, Yolanda Elliott, at president@sdakinship.org. ▼



Rehoboth Beach April 25-28 Mini-Kampmeeting

April at the ocean! East-coast board walks! Mitch Tyner for a weekend speaker! Our wonderful beach house, filled with friendly people, comfortable places to sit or sleep, and delicious food! This event is always one of the highlights of the Kinship calendar. If you would like to attend, please feel most welcome to register at SDAkinship.org. Click on the "Events" link. We look forward to seeing you there! ▼



◀ Rehoboth
2012

connection

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Bem Venido!

European Kinship Meeting 2013

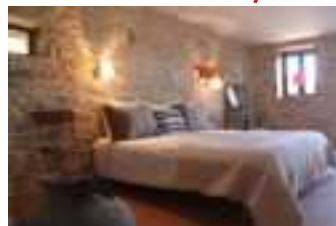


Lisboa
Portugal

August 29
September 2



Welcome – Willkommen – Bien Venue
to our annual European Kinship Meeting & to the EKM-Holiday week (from September 2 to 9)



For information and registration write to kinshipeurope@sdakinship.org