

Friends do matter!

After living as a nomad for over two years, on May 1, 2010, I moved into my own apartment. I was just telling a friend that I could not have made it through these past two years without my friends, many of whom I've known and remained connected to for over 30 years. These are the same friends who will be my safety net (and I theirs) as we move further ahead in life.

Little had I known when I left my long-term and well-loved job at Childhaven, where my decision would lead. What I did know was that it was time to take care of some personal and some family business: my father needed me, and the time had come to divest myself of my attachment to the life I'd known. I thought that sequential house sitting arrangements could provide me with time and space, and I was right. I am so very blessed to have my friends and extended family here in Seattle.

Looking back, if I could give advice to younger people, it would be to cultivate and sustain friendships for the long term. Having done so has helped me hugely. However, my parents did not do this and it made their lives very lonely and isolated. This lack made it difficult to temper the impact on the few of us in the family who could be available to help when they got ill.

While working through career and family issues, my friends, Deb & Keith, bless their hearts, housed me, adopting me into their family. Annie Laurie, another friend, kept me employed, even as I moved back and forth to the Midwest for family care giving. She nurtured me with her three cats, her Golden Retriever, and two granddaughters. Most of what I owned was housed at a storage unit that I visited so often the owners considered running hot & cold water into it so I could move in! No thank you, though I appreciated the sentiment!

This spring, with more personal and financial stability, I readied myself for a move into my new space. I realized that I had experienced sharing and friendship taken to a whole new level. Many people were integral parts of my Personal Safety Net, the support system I needed to allow me to fulfill my dreams and deal with the challenges life had sent along the way. For each house sitting assignment, email, letter, card, long-distance call, coffee, breakfast, hello, goodbye, teary moment, laughter, photo and prayer I say a heartfelt thank you. And so, the journey continues...

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