

REUNIONS

Hello All,

I just returned from a visit in the Midwest to see my father. He was finishing up a job in Oklahoma and had a few days before returning to his home. When he works that part of the world, he lives in a 40' trailer with a slide-out on a piece of land that he owns. My father travels without a cell phone because service in different parts of the country may be unavailable. He's right. In Oklahoma my Nextel service was unavailable. Phonecards are his domain even though he does say it gets harder and harder to find payphones these days.

Thus, I flew out to Wichita KS and spent essentially 4 days camping alone with my dad. Communication with the outside world ended when my cell phone screen said, "no service" and to further my isolation I lost my voice ENTIRELY the evening I arrived. Aside from the jokes about becoming the perfect daughter because of my mute state, it turned out to be of a value I will someday treasure more than I do right now.

Three of the four days I was there, my side of our conversations were written. I always keep a notebook handy to journal in and this notebook journal became the minutes of our time together. In a future year, I will revisit these last few days to see where I was inside my mind and I will find my responses to his half of the conversation and I will remember our sharing a pot of coffee in the morning on his patio. Through my henscratch, I will remember the hours at the kitchen table of his trailer during the 100-degree heat of the days playing gin, my favorite of all card games because he taught me that game as a child before I could even read. And I will laugh at my food stained notes from the banter at the restaurants we ate in. It was a great visit and having time to be alone with my father revealed how much we had changed from parent-child bonds to that of two adults with a lifelong history sharing trials and solutions to personal experiences. We truly bonded despite my lack of voice.

Universe provided one of the greatest gifts when I was forced to abandon my vocal chords and pick up a pen.

Namaste,

Stacey