

19 May 1983

Been busy with training last two weeks so I haven't had time to make entries. Not a whole heck of a lot has gone on. I hate such a long span of time because specifics kind of dwindle into a hazy smudge. Things are at a kind of tentative "hold" right now, feelings and physical activity.

Sitting in on training is nice for three reasons. First, it allows me legitimate time out from work. Second it helps me to get to know more folks in the P.S. Third, it allows me to observe some professional training. For all these reasons, and for some that are "hidden", I have enjoyed the training.

I've been feeling a need for a "time out" lately. I needed to do some reorganizing and alternative planning for my job. I needed to come to grips with the reality of me working here. I needed to explore options. Basically I needed a chance just to sit and think about my situation here. Not so much cultural things but rather my job and my need to feel needed. I've been feeling quite superfluous lately. Like a branch without a tree to hang from. I know I have skills (many). I know I want to contribute to the development process in St Vincent. I've been trying to decide how best to do that. As an HR professional it is an excellent opportunity for me to apply my own theories to my own situation. How to maximize the use of myself in the situation at hand. So far I've done a fairly pathetic job of it. But I am learning so much about myself in the process. It may help me to be more effective back home.



The second reason, for attending the training to meet the staff, has paid off somewhat in terms of me feeling more a part of the organization. It's nice to be able to recognize and say hello to folks in different departments. The only negative aspect I can think of is that I begin to want to do too much to help. I can completely identify with the situation. The despair. The demotivation. I feel it. I know it and I can think of about 50 ways to go about trying to correct it. I get frustrated in knowing that I can do so little to change attitudes in the 18 months I have left. But I want so much to change those attitudes because I care so much for the folks I'm working with. I get to leave voluntarily in 18 months. They either have to leave, stick it out miserably or change the attitude of the organization. With a lot of pushing, brainwashing and a change of government the P.S. may become responsive to public needs. Lastly, I need more exposure to training. I need to do more training so I can become a full-fledged, real life trainer. I still feel like a trainee trainer. The thought of teaching a class in practical economics and a training of trainers program almost freezes me with fear. I'll have to put my money where my mouth is. I do and don't particularly like the idea. It will make me a trainer, or show if I can be one but it will almost certainly show how bad a trainer I am. I am out on a limb risking again and I'm worried about the cracks that are appearing behind me.

Speaking of risks, etc that was part of my work phobia problem. Perhaps the largest part. I've been thinking this phobia thing over and over trying to determine just what caused the whole thing. I thought at first it was just the over emphasizing with the despair felt by many public service employees. But then I thought it was a learned helplessness kind of thing: me repeatedly asking for something or being promised something without receipt. Now I'm beginning to think it's just plain fear of failure. Feeling the risk of wandering into ambiguous territory without a map. What tipped

me off was that I had a rush of phobia after committing myself to some programs at the UWI. Same feeling, same response. so perhaps my lack of initiative was is due to biting off more than I can chew. Now that I've bitten off even more I'm really feeling panicky. But on the positive side, the fear is almost so big that I must necessarily put it aside for fear of being overwhelmed. Kind of a "Damn the torpedoes Full speed ahead" sort of thing. Hopefully none will score a direct hit.

Death has been haunting me lately, not my own but of a loved one. Perhaps it's because another PCV was sent home for a funeral and that one of the OECS trainers did likewise. Deb's grandmother had a mild stroke and was almost fully recovered when the letter reached us. All these happenings only increases my anxiety about being so far away from family. Granted there is nothing I could do if I was stateside but it's just getting the info second, third or fourth hand that is unsettling. I won't rest easy until I do go home.

Mom's request on the phone for us to return home, was followed by a written request. Apparently my letters about suffering for Christ touched off of a lot of concern back home. both Mindy and Dad sent letters questioning the theology of the statement. Mindy was also piqued at my criticisms of the RC Church. So I have been writing home furiously to dispel any rumor of my martyrdom down here. Actually I was playing the Martyr bit somewhat overly so the actual situation. I had really separated my suffering from the object or reason for that suffering. Christ himself. Now Christ isn't asking me to have a lousy time in his name. Nor can I be assured that I am pleasing him and doing his will if I am having a lousy time. Yet that seems to be the philosophy I've been operating under. Deb and I (especially me) have put a lot of work and faith into putting the joy back into our difficult times. That's where we went wrong. We failed to see that our serving Him, even while suffering, is cause for joy. Joy and Peace. So I'm trying to change my thinking now. To include him in my suffering so that the concurrent pain is diminished. Actually I should give up my worry and pain (suffering) to Him. This is been my failure and a turn around has occurred in the realization.

That doesn't mean however that my troubles with living here are over. There are still many things which complicate my life more so than in the states and that I would rather do without. But we're passing some real milestones the next month or so and with increased involvement on the job front it may be Christmas sooner than I think. gads, I hope so.

Keith Paulson has returned to St. V for a 3 to 4 month stay to work on local applications of appropriate technology. He brought much news from Barbados. That Robert Rivas had ET'ed (#8) and that our 6-month conference is now scheduled for August. Actually that's okay with me. We have firmed up our sailing plans for June 15th to 20th. Carnival will be 26th through July 5th and Deb still has a possible rehab conference in Barbados the end of July, early August. We also plan to fly to Dominica after our conference in St Lucia so we'll get a bit more travel in. Gads with August gone, will be busy preparing to visit the U.S. So things have a positive forward flow. Hopefully a fast one.

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