Dear Alice,

I enjoy travel a great deal and seek to find an area I like as I have never been happy about where I've been geographically. I have noticed that this sort of behavior is generally frowned upon and wonder about Alice's opinion. Is it healthy to travel for these reasons??

? wondering wanderer

Answer

Dear wondering wanderer,

I've been wanderin' early and late
From New York City to the Golden Gate
And it don't look like
I'll ever stop my wanderin'

From the song, "Wandering"
Traditional; arrangement and additional lyrics by James Taylor

Not sure if you mean that you're never happy with where you travel, say on vacation, or with where you've lived... or both. It's true that many people look down on those who don't stay put. For reasons that are probably grounded in social norms ? affected by culture, religion, family, and work expectations ? the "wanderer" may be seen as lacking life goals, lazy, unable to make commitments, "lost," suspicious, irresponsible, not serious, and/or running away from reality. One or more of these tags may be true for some who don't settle in one place for substantial periods of time. For others, frequently changing environments brings great growth through challenges ? new social, work, and cultural learning opportunities ? and ultimately, self-discovery. People who are fortunate enough to come into contact with new and/or varied people and places will often say that these experiences make them feel more alive and whole.

Do you reap any of these benefits? Or, do you feel dissatisfied no matter where you land? If your changes of address come from constant discontent with your surroundings, such as
friends, family, work, finances, or other life basics, then you may want to pull over for some self-examination with a counselor. Start with a look at how you feel about your wandering and what it means to you. You may find that your destinations don’t have as much meaning for you as the troubles you’re trying to leave behind. This may be the ticket to first-class answers to your concerns.

Alice!

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Published date:
Sep 22, 2000
Last reviewed on:
Mar 12, 2014

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