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. 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, 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 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. How you feel about your wandering? What does it means to you? What are the pros and cons? What would you gain if you find your place ? geographically or otherwise? Reflecting on these questions may bring you a bit of clarity. You could also explore them further with the help of mental health professional. In any case, it?s possible that 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.

Here's hoping there's more happy wanderlust than wanderbust in your future,

Alice!

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Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) (Morningside) [8]
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