

What are some of the things you have learned while living India and Africa?

I found when I went to these new places, you not only wake up sleeping parts of yourself but you arrive in in the new culture, like a young child: the learning curve is very steep no matter how old you are – I was in my 50s when I went to live and work in Africa.

Early on, I remembered a decision I made in a similar experience during my probation in India in 1971: when I first arrived in a place so different from my own life experience, I had to consciously work at suspending my *opinions and preferences* and just try to learn all I could... That seemed to give me greater peace: while trying to learn the why and how of a new way to look at, understand and do even the most familiar things.

I got so well practiced in this exercise that one day one of our sisters asked me: “what do you think about ...” (I don’t even remember the topic... I just remembered my reaction) startled, I found myself honestly, wide-open and *speechless... asked for my opinion...* which often I had set aside. I had no spontaneous reaction/ no opinion, I really had to re-engage in that process of personal evaluation. It was a good experience.

Something else I learned... was that often Americans look at *obstacles-in-the-path*, as problems to be solved... many of us are “problem solvers” by nature and /or necessity. When I first arrived in my new home place, I sometimes found a sense of fatalism, “inevitability” perhaps because many of these cultures are so ancient. This is just the way it is and always has been... but that was before the tech revolution. Once that “revolution” took place, many things changed: They took to “mobile phones” for example, faster than the “speed of sound” surely faster than we did... out of the necessity of just *being connected*.