

SAYF Nurturing and Steering Committee Worship Journal

February 25-27, 2011

The worship journal is the written reflection that closes the retreat with love and relative worshipfulness.

At closing circles SAYFers should look inward and reflect on their experiences, thoughts, and questions from the weekend.

The worship journal is the time we come together to express the feelings that you take from being part of a loving spiritual community.

There is no wrong way to write a worship journal, however it's shared with the wider 'community therefore you should not say anything private or offensive to others in it. What did this retreat mean to you?

Dear SAYF,

Lovely, beautiful, wonderful SAYF. Oh how I do adore you so. It had been much too long and I had begun to forget your magic but, like old friends or a prodigal son (or for my cobe daughter) the second I felt your embrace I was warm and comfy and smiling. I sunk into my skin and let out a breath I didn't know I was holding. You were exactly what I needed this weekend.

In honor of your greatness I would like to dedicate to you this list.

Loves:

The lovely Knoxville Meetinghouse and its plentiful windows seeing SAYFers who were tragically missing from this years previous retreats (Braden, Miyoshi, Patrick you were much missed)/ lucky charms/ the abundance of wonderful tecio/forking potatoes/having intellectual conversations with Lekey ill suited for energy levels/ hugs/ SAYFers tendency to use my thighs as a pillow/ learning Quaker values through mono-poly/ the closeness of the community/unionizing with Braden/ Delaney's banana shirt/ Bac-o-bits.

Hates (no, scratch that – Dislikes — it's more Quakerly):

That's its only for the weekend/hug withdrawal come Monday/Patrick no Wall Mart/losing mono-poly/ straining everything purple' that the Lucky Charms always run out/leaving/ that sleeping on the floor is only comfortable when sleeping is not appropriate/ the relative disorder during our first Nurturers meeting session/ the smell of acorns.

The loss of an integral, always smiling member of the SAYF community (this is separate from the rest of the lost because it is and should be more serious). Ceal you will be dearly missed. Chrissy, Samantha, Kaitlyn, Mark and everyone else feeling the weight of this loss I will be holding you in the Light and I send my love.

~ Ansley

When people find out that I'm about to take a bunch of young Friends on a youth retreat where I will get little sleep and will sleep on hard floors, they usually groan and express their sympathies.

— But the truth is that I come home revived and full of Spirit. One can not find a group of nicer and more loving kids than the ones with whom I spend my weekend.

Thomas Kelly called it a Blessed Community. If you've ever read his book [A Testament of Devotion](#) then you might have rolled your eyes and thought “Yea, that's not likely to happen very often” .

And you're probably right. It is rare. But that's what we have here in our SAYF community. Anyone involved feels the Spirit move and knows they are blessed.

I hope more adults feel led to join us as FAPs.

Chuck Jones

This nurturing retreat has been beautiful. However, it feels unnatural to write about what happened at the retreat when it is not rightfully over. So, I'll talk about some other things: First: Oh, dear Ceal. We will miss you. You have been such a gift to SAYF and you will be remembered with so much love.

I never felt close to her at all, but oh, how In will miss her. She was a beautiful constant in the SAYF community and also seemed to play the same caring, bright role in the rest of her life.

I don't understand why the world works in the way it does, and I'm always afraid I'll do it wrong if I try. Ceal's passing is so beyond understanding, there can't be a reason that things happened like this. But I want to try to remember and honor her and all she did for our community by supporting her family, who are part of the community, and by keeping SAYF moving forward, checking along the way. Ceal, we will miss you.

SAYF has changed me so much since I started that I can't remember the way I thought before. To be fair, it's also been a good four years. But SAYF made a place for me to honor and explore all the thoughts introspective little 13 year old me was having. This group, the community, the people have all been enormous in shaping the aspects of me that lead to good things. Valuing community. Learning leadership, patience and consensus-y things. It gives people a place to be yourselves, and that's addictive. Then seniors of my first SAYF years were heroes! I simply cannot imagine myself filling those shoes, ever. SAYF gives you a chance to decide on and create what is a good community. I guess it's good to plow through some of these memories now, so they don't overwhelm me in June, or June the next year.

I really think that whatever its faults, problems, growing pains, leadership gaps, spirituality vacuums, guideline breakages that might happen along the way, SAYF means something to almost every person who is, was, or will be involved. Apologies for the grammar. The issues just make the community stronger in the end.

God, I shudder to think were I would have been without SAYF, starting all those years ago. Sure wouldn't be here, chillin on the Knoxville meetinghouse floor yet again, surrounded by people I love, wasting ink, sleep-deprived and pouring my bewildered benighted heart out.

It's not really important so much what any individual gets out of SAYF, that will differ from person to person. The point is that every individual does get something out of SAYF, and most of the time, with a little silence, we're able to figure out the way to keep it that way.

Not always been a good community member. Sometimes I'd much rather yell-write a song with a group of people than go to business meeting. Sometimes, although less often these days, I forget to be inclusive and the exhilarating nervousness of being a new SAYF baby. I'd sometimes rather write a million inside jokes and shout outs instead of figuring out what this SAYF meant to me.

And I thank you SAYF, for letting me do that and loving me anyway. You're just what I needed.

Love,

Lekey

Lekey like Becky

my name in Tibetan

PS This is me at my best SAYF. All jumbled up in a pile of words. We've got one and a half more years. Let's go.

Good Things About SAYF

- People know about endurance, especially when it involves a Healing Circle.
- SAYF is really proud of the community it has created.
- Thoughtfulness- sometimes too much, but I think its good to figure that out. People are thoughtful about everything from noobs to making meals to watching movies.
- They're really good to newbies, I felt welcome.
- So CREATIVE.
- They'll just hug you, but they're totally ready to talk if you want to.
- Knowing each others facts.

This community has meant so much to me. I have loved, grown, and matured since I first started. I can't imagine my life without it. My favorite thing about this community is the unconditional love and support that I've grown to depend on.

My last nurturing retreat. Once again you all showed me that my original doubts were wrong. I'm glad I came. I'm glad I didn't do any homework.

I love you all,

Emily

PS IAN AND HIS LADIES! I'm going to pass physics so hard. Lekey, why we so good at music? Michael — I'm so glad you finally came. I wish we could hang out every weekend. In wish I could hang out with everyone every weekend. I'm so excited for our road trip!

Grammy Ceal. I couldn't say anything because I didn't know how to say it. I will think of you every time I watch a Disney movie, every time I hug Amber (that stuffed lamb you got me), every time I see knitting and every time I hear Bobby Rydell's beautiful voice. You have a beautiful, strong light that will resound in my memories and thoughts always.

After five months of SAYF deprivation, I am happy to be writing in a Worship Journal. This retreat has been different as it was a Nurturing retreat. It felt about the same as a regular retreat with the exception of business meetings in place of activities and there's approx. thirty to forty less people. It was great being here. I loved the healing circle and loved being in the presence of people I haven't seen in so long. It made me realize how much I love SAYF. I've gotten so many wonderful memories to remember and experiences I wouldn't have had if I had been home (ie 6 hour monopoly game). I'm glad I got to be here and that I don't have to miss any retreats for the rest of the year. I'll see you in Asheville.

Love and many hugs and kisses,

Braden

I was wondering why my throat has been hurting for the last couple of hours, when I realized; I don't usually talk as much as I have this weekend. When you take into account that I've been fairly quiet this weekend, it's kinda sad. What I'm trying to say is, SAYF is pretty great.

Sincerely, Meh.

The fact that Ceal died was truly sorrowful. She was very much a good person. Rather than spend all my energy mourning her departure, I will celebrate the fact that she had entered the world instead, that she did great things with her life and that her presence within SAYF will continue to bring warmth and life to the people in its community.

Pat

What I see in the SAYF community, what led me to support it as an involved parent volunteer and later as a Friendly Adult Presence and steering committee member; is a precious haven from the relentless social pressures of modern teenage life. Given the opportunity to decide, direct and determine their own system of values, the Young Friends here have built a living shelter of Quaker principles and practices where they can find connections to each other and to the wider world, connections that are securely rooted in compassion, mutual respect, and a deep confidence in their own image of self.

Aaron Ruscetta 2011.02.26

Oh SAYF, there are so many things I can say about it. At least as far as this weekend is concerned, SAYF to me is sorta like therapy, only a lot cheaper and significantly more entertaining. The past month, between January and now has been really stressful, with a million and a half things going on at the same time, and it was really easy to get lost in it all and feel so alone. This weekend has helped to boost my spirit/light and has reminded me that I don't ever need to be truly alone. I am truly thankful that I have gotten to be part of this community for the past four years. It has changed me as a person so much (for the better I hope) and has taught me what love and acceptance really are. I don't know what I'm going to do when it finally comes time to leave the wonderful nurturing environment of this community in June, but I sure hope I'll be able to handle it.

Love and hugs,

Autumn (of Berea)

PS Thank you all for being a huge part of my life. I really appreciate it and I hope you'll understand how much you truly mean to me.

This being my first nurturers retreat, I'll have to admit I was a little frightened that I wouldn't be able to keep up with the amazingness of this group of people or that I would do something stupid that would make people think I'm not mature enough etc... to be a nurturer. It was quite a bit like the feeling I had at my first SAYF about two and half years ago, just on a much smaller scale. Just like at that retreat, there was nothing to be worried about because of how wonderfully friendly everyone always is. It was nice to be able to see and take part in what helps make SAYF the community that I have come to fall in love with. SAYF means a lot to me; the weekends full of laughter, cuddling, singing, dancing, and thoughtful moments of lovely quaker silence always seems to clear my mind and helps me get a glimpse of the person I wish I could be all the time. I feel that the sayf community does its best to bring out the greatest parts of everyone. So on that note, I just want to say that I love you all.... A Lot.

~Emma

It was great to see my friends faces again. I hadn't realized until right then how much I had missed them.

Watching the Dead Poets Society was a lot of fun, more so because it was with friends over oreos and skittles, Robin Williams, da bomb.

I really am liking playing monopoly with Ansley, Braden, Caty, and Miyoshi. At the time of writing we have still not finished our game, however it ends I really enjoyed playing.

I had a really good meeting.

Pat

My last Nurturing retreat. With so many deadlines looming, sometimes it's nice to reflect on the past, to tap into the strength gathered from previous experiences. SAYF has meant so much to me these last years.

1. Gave me a place where things never changed and F(f)riends were always present.
2. Allowed me to expand myself in a safe (no pun intended) environment, free of bias and bitterness.
3. Allowed me to meet new and interesting people with whom I have become fast friends, whom I never would have met.
4. Any other things I'm leaving out.

I really don't mean for all my epistles to be so existential and deep. It just sometimes happens that way.

See you in March.

Ian

P.S. Since the speed of sound increases with temperature, if you're hot enough, you won't even feel my lovin' comin'.

P.P.S. What's your KUR?

P.P.P.S. I'm not a hipster, because I care.

P.P.P.P.S. Sorry I got carried away. I forgot that Phorest graduated for a minute there.

At this nurturers retreat in Knoxville, as we met to contemplate community, as we planned for the next year and talked about our community, we received word that someone dear to SAYF has passed on. While no one really knows where Ceal went, we all felt her Spirit as her love and quiet patience covered our Meeting for Worship. Ceal Wutka will always be a part of our community. Our hearts go out to Mark.

Mark, I can't imagine the pain you are feeling. I'm sure that love surrounds you as hundreds, if not thousands of people are holding you in the Light.

Chuck Jones

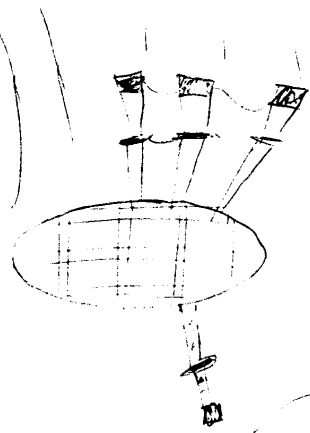
This SAYF has been wonderful. I really like how small it has been and I love each person here. I have been really busy and stressed recently so coming here has been a blessing and so relaxing. Thank You Beautiful people!

Love lots. XOXO elise



This Salt
In all modern
I really like like (in the world)

30 EYES

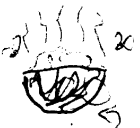


All current events are captured for analysis while you sleep, so it had to test it up.

DOG-SHEEP LOVES GUNBERG



unintended "haggis"



unintended "haggis"



FANDEN THE TERRIFYING WILL ~~NURTURE~~ THE SH**T OUT OF YOU