

SAYF Worship Journal
Nurturing/Steering Committee Retreat
August 2014
Atlanta Friends Meetinghouse

On the weekend of August 22-24, 2014, the Nurturing and Steering Committees of the Southern Appalachian Young Friends met at the Atlanta Friends Meeting. This is our witness. This is our story.

Dear SAYF,

I've really missed all of you over the last year, more than I actually realized. It was so great to just take a weekend off from everything and spend it with y'all. From our great game of cards against humanity on Friday night to the ice bucket challenge to a very thrilling game of body body body, to Levi's sketchy tactics while doing the cookie ritual, to Levi's sketchier tactics in the watermelon challenge, it was an amazing retreat. I'm really pumped to see all of you at the September retreat in Asheville, and I think it's fair to say that each and every one of you can be expecting an incredibly high quality dance piece from your one and only SAYF dance company: SASSY!

Love y'all,

Asa

This nurturing retreat was calming. Besides the fact I lost a toenail and I was exhausted from running, seeing all 20 of y'all lovely faces improved my day. Because of personal issues, I might not be able to come to many retreats, but always know that I love you. Stay safe and see you next month.
Katie

Dear SAYF,

For many people the term "business meeting" may be associated with long arduous hours of discussion and debate, weighed down by excessive formalities. This retreat showed me once more that vital planning and dialogue can be a wonderful way to productively spend time with friends.

This is one of the joys of being a nurturer, affording me with two extra retreats to dance, sing, play, and plan with some of the best people on Earth. Who could ask for more?

I was thoroughly excited about how much we were able to accomplish during this brief time together and am glad I decided to take this role as a leader of SAYF.

Go Nurturers!

Love,

Noah

**I was extremely afraid to come to this retreat. It was my first Nurturing retreat and I was afraid no one would want me here. I was wrong. (I usually am.)
There is very little that is more important to me than giving back to this community. It makes me happy to contribute to the process of making SAYF great.
I feel like I always write the same epistles. I never feel that I can adequately convey how important you all are to me. My writing skills cease to exist when trying to write to you.
I had an audition during this retreat. It was nothing if not nerve-wrecking, but it helped to know I would be coming back to you. I just pretended I was playing where you could hear me.
I think I probably say this too much, but each of you deserves the world (and the moon and several other reasonably sized celestial bodies). If I can ever help give you that, please just tell me. (I will contact NASA.)
Sincerely,
Charlie**

Dear Nurturing,
As always, thank you for your friendship, love, and kindness over the weekend. My first nurturing retreat was a lot better than I thought it would. I truly believe the community benefits from the time we spend here with them in mind. From business meeting to getting SASSY w/the crew, I've had an amazing experience. I feel the need to add an "I love and miss you, Anna." She was so present this weekend. It was beautiful. I love you guys and I can't wait to spend the next two years with you.
With endless love,
Laura Kelley
p.s. I'm so sassy
p.p.s. Welcome Annie Mae. ☺
p.p.p.s. Sorry Sven's dumb.

Dear losers,
Noah just kidding yo. How are you all? I hope everyone had a nice retreat. Mine was pretty solid. I think we got a lot of stuff done at business meeting which is always an A+ thing. We're pretty good at this whole nurturer thing. A lot of dialogue and two really good clerks for this new generation of nurturers.
My life has been all over the place these past two months. FMC was a life changing experience, and I'd be lying if I said I didn't miss those people more than anything, but the wheel of time turns, and ages come to pass, and now I have to focus on a different part of my life. I still write songs and send letters every day, but school is now a full time job.
I miss the graduates. I miss Bradie Smith and his 10,000 swags, but we're all caught in the ebb and flow that is SAYF, and as I get older I know that there's no place I'd rather be.
With much love,
Sven

My favorite thing about the retreat was that Guthrie said he is happy.

Dear SAYF,

What I'm about to tell you feels more like a graduation epistle, but I want to say it now. I became a Nurturer because I felt a sense of duty to give back to this life-saving community. SAYF is where I discovered that I was loved. The love that was shown for me by people I didn't know kept me alive the last month of seventh grade. I wouldn't still be here without this community.

My freshman year we were in a car crash and when we got out of the van we found that the Japanese character for love that Migoshi had drawn on all of our hands was clearly visible. I'm not saying it wasn't a coincidence, but it did feel pretty special.

Two years ago, I told you all that I'd been hospitalized for an eating disorder. Yesterday in Nurturing Meeting I had an epiphany. I didn't want to follow rules and measurements for food anymore. I was tired of it. I ran in to tell the adults and feel so blessed to have your support. I ate what I wanted and this love that continue to feel at SAYF liberates me. It's why I'm a nurturer.

Thank you SAYF for welcoming another member of my family into our family. Thank you for saving me.

I love you all deeply.

Grace

Dear SAYF,

(Mainly to nurturers) I am tired, I am sore, I'm happy, and I'm glad. I am tired because SASSY, because exercise, because watermelon, because we're going to be amazing nurturers (and that means we talk for hours), and finally because sleep. I am sure for probably some of the same reasons. But I am happy because you all never fail to make me smile. You never fail to surprise me, you never fail to excite me, and you never fail to be just your amazing selves. And lastly, I'm glad because WE will be the nurturers for this community. We will have amazing times, shocking times, tiring times, all of which will leave us wanting more.

I love you all,

Benjamin Chapman

p.s. Stay sassy! And fancy!