

Adult Learner Writings

Volume #5

Published in April 2002, by The Literacy Action Center

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Introduction

Writing is a way to practice reading. Some of the stories in this booklet were dictated to tutors then copied by the adult learners. Some stories were composed only after many discussions between the adult learners and the tutors. Some stories were written by the adult learners on their own. Regardless of how they came to be, all of these stories were the results of many hours of practice with the written word. Together, adult learners and tutors revised and edited these stories to the fullest of their abilities at the present time.

This is our fifth volume of Adult Learner Writings. As in all of our volumes, these writings represent a range of “story.” Some stories share the writers’ thoughts, express feelings, describe events, explain decisions, or simply share funny incidents. We hope you enjoy this lively mixture of interesting stories!

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[April 2002](#)

(Please note that all of the stories in this collection were reported by the authors to be original works when submitted to the Literacy Action Center by the adult learners.)

My Visit To San Francisco

By Lin

While we were in San Francisco, we also went to Ghirardelli Square. Ghirardelli Square produced chocolates as well as sold chocolates. It is said Ghirardelli Square is a famous place.

A lot of visitors like to go there to see how to make chocolates. There was a series of machines that was making chocolates from beginning to end. Visitors can see the whole production line for making chocolates.

There were a lot of different kinds of chocolates for sale. Most visitors bought or ate some there. Of course my daughter bought some and enjoyed them, too. Ghirardelli Square has a really well-deserved reputation.

April 2002

The Greatest Gift

By Julie

The *Christmas Box* is a mystery about some messages left in a wooden box in an elderly woman's attic. It is up to Richard, a workaholic who began to neglect his family as his business grew, to find out why the elderly woman had given him these messages. This mystery made me cry because it sounded like this story could really have happened.

I got a lot that I never thought I would get from reading the *Christmas Box* book. This book also left me thinking about my family. I learned that the money I have in life is not as important as my marriage and family.

I only have a husband and birds. I will never have children. Like a mother, I love my nieces and nephews. As much as I would like to call them my own, I have learned to give them back to their mothers. I would give anything to tell those who can't have children not to worry because there are other ways they can involve children in their lives.

I've learned that my marriage and my birds are the most important part of life. But even more than my birds, I love my husband. I've learned that I need to give my time to my husband. Like Richard, in the *Christmas Box* mystery, I have learned that the greatest gift is my family.

[April 2002](#)

Finger Prints
By Kajal

This week came a letter about finger prints. April nineteenth I go to get my fingers printed.

This year I am not going to Iraq because I go to be finger printed. I am not going to see my family. I am very sad about not going to Iraq.

April 2002

A Dog Named Lucille

By Nathan

My neighbors gave me a tiny pup. She could drink milk from a dish. I named her Lucille, after the Little Richard song. She was light brown. I built her a dog house.

She would bark to protect us. She would chase the cats named Stripes and Crybaby, and play with them.

When we kids played ball, she would get the ball and run for us to chase her. When we went swimming, she would swim with us.

She ran around so much that the man from the dog pound made me chain her up. She hated the chain, and would have got mean if I didn't work with her. I took her for walks through the park.

She had five pups. I gave them all away.

April 2002

Meet Ed Parrott

By Ed

My name is Ed. I work as a security guard at night, and I protect the Salt Palace from theft and criminals, and protect the public.

The Salt Palace is a convention center for convention shows from all over the world. We get to meet large quantities of people from different places in the world. The Salt Palace is big and can't be described. Right now, Novell, which has been here the last four years in March, has come back again. Novell is a computer company. But last month was the biggie—we got gifted with the Olympics' news media. We met news people from all over the world.

SLOC moved in and took over. There were about 150 kids who did not know what to do. The regular Salt Palace security had to teach them.

My first day back after two days off, I got a call to go upstairs and open some doors for the U.S. Marshals, and there were Army men with sniffing dogs. To start my day out, I walked right into one and it almost ate me. I jumped back and the Army guy said, "Don't do that!" After that, the Army guy and I became real good friends.

We were highly surrounded by FBI and U.S. Marshals. Every night I had to take off everything that was metal and go through the x-ray machine; so when they turned off the lights in the security office, I glowed!

Pin trading was also an exciting thing. I collected a hundred pins from everybody. On my day off I went pin trading and I had four Salt Palace pins. People were fighting to get them. The green jello pin was the most expensive of the pins. I went to the Greek Church with my wife. She likes the Coke pins. I bought her some pins. I made a friend of a U. S. Marshal named Denis. He gave me a pin, and I gave him a pin.

As fast as the Olympics started, it was over. Now things have to be taken down. It took as long as two weeks to put it up. It took two weeks to take it down. Everything is back to normal, but pin trading is still hot and heavy.

April 2002

My Future

By Sachi

I worry about my age. I worry about Alzheimers. That is why I'm going back to Japan to stay with my sister. She said, "I'll take care of you."

I'm going to enjoy Japan. But I worry about the Japanese culture. The culture is quite different between the United States of America and Japan. I have to get used to the Japanese culture again. I'm going to try to live in Japan for the rest of my life.

When I return to Japan, I would like to do many things. I would like to keep learning English. But I heard that it is too expensive to learn English in Japan, so I think it is impossible. Another thing I would like to do is visit where I was born in Hokkaido, Japan. That place is in the north part of Japan. Since I came to the United States I haven't visited there, even though I have been back to Japan many times. I like to remember good memories.

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Why I Like To Star Gaze

By Jennings

I like to star gaze because you get out of the city. You are out in the desert by yourself. It's peaceful, and sometimes off in the distance, you can hear coyotes howling. I think it's neat to be able to look up into the sky and see pictures and planets, not just a bunch of stars.

April 2002

The Innocent Kid

By Linda

Seven years ago there was this family who had a house on two and a half acres of land. They had a three-year-old son and he had a dog named Fred. They raised animals for food. They had a chicken, duck, turkey, pig, and a cow.

One day the boy followed his father into the barn. When the kid saw the cow he thought my dog has a name so the cow should have a name, too. He said to his dad, "Daddy? Daddy, what is the cow's name?" His dad was busy and pretended not to hear. Again the boy said, "Daddy, what is the cow's name?"

The dad thought if I don't make up a name for this cow this kid will never stop asking the same question. So he said, "His name is Henry." The kid remembered the cow's name was Henry.

A year went by and the family had eaten the chicken, duck, and pig. For Thanksgiving they had the turkey. Then it was time for the cow. When the kid saw the beef on his plate he said, "Mommy? Mommy, is this Henry?"

She told him, "Yes."

After six months went by with no meat on the table, he said, " Mommy? Mommy, no more Henry?"

His mom answered, "No, Henry's all gone."

The kid looked at the dog and pointed his finger at him and said, "What about Fred?"

His father said, "Oh, no! All the animals are gone and now he wants to eat the dog!"

April 2002

Lesson Of Life

By Joy

My husband had been working the night shift for the last few days, which made it difficult for me to get a good night's sleep because I am so used to having him next to me at night.

So, one afternoon I decided to wake him up a little bit early so that he could spend a little time with me and our daughter, who is eight months old. We spent some time in bed playing with our daughter, and it was time for me to get ready to go see my tutor. I put our daughter in her walker and continued a conversation with my husband while I was getting ready. During the conversation I looked over at my daughter to check on her and saw that she had somehow managed to get hold of my anti-depression pills and had removed the lid to the bottle, which was a child-proof cap.

I quickly grabbed the bottle away from her and checked to see if she had any pills in her mouth. I removed one pill from her mouth, but I was not sure if she had swallowed any. So, my husband began to get dressed very quickly while I called Poison Control to see what we should do. Poison Control advised us to get her to Primary Children Hospital's emergency room as quickly as possible.

We immediately loaded our daughter into the car and rushed to the emergency room. When we arrived, the nurse escorted me and my daughter to a treatment room. As they began to pump my daughter's stomach, tears filled my eyes. After looking at what they took from her stomach, it did not look like she had swallowed any of the pills. But to be safe, they went ahead and put charcoal in her stomach. It is better to be safe than sorry, and if she by some small chance had swallowed a pill which did not come out, then the charcoal would neutralize any effects of it.

After about an hour they informed me that they would need to keep my daughter overnight for observation. We stayed at the hospital for ten hours, at which time the doctor thought that our daughter was out of danger and allowed us to take her home.

This incident helped me to realize that even though some containers are advertised as child proof, they are really not, and I need to pay more attention to what is actually within my daughter's grasp.

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My Life

By Kei

In 1977, it was the first time I went to my aunt's house. I was seventeen years old. I lived there for six years. Sometimes I would make an "Umu" (Dinner) for the older women that were 75 years old. The older ladies told me, "Makei, you are a good man, you help me. Be good in your life and you will marry a good wife and have good children."

As I look back, I say that I can't believe that I came to the United States. I went back to my country, Western Samoa in 1983. My dad went to New Zealand for three months to visit. He came back to my home and said that I was ready to go to New Zealand. My brother, Auvae, was paying for my trip. When I got to New Zealand, my other brother, Samita, and his friend, Danny, called New Zealand to find me. They lived in California. They fixed my visa to allow me to come to the United States.

I came to the United States in 1988 to Santa Ana, California. I lived at my aunt's house. My auntie tried to take me to English school and I went, but not for too long.

During that time Danny moved away and came back to California. I went and lived with him at his house. I worked as a security guard for eight months. Danny moved to Utah, so I went to live with my stepbrother. Danny had been living in Utah for three years. Then, one of Danny's friends came to California for a funeral. I asked him, "Do you know Danny?" and he said, "Yes, I know Danny." So I asked him for a ride to Utah. I got to Utah and Danny was excited to see that I came here. I lived with Danny for two and a half years.

Danny took me again to school in Utah. I went to school for two months. I got a new job with a moving company. I worked with them for six months, then I applied at Beehive Clothing Store. I worked at the Beehive Clothing fixing mattresses for eight months, then the company sent me to Spring Air Mattress to work for them because I would make more money. I worked there for six years. I would make 70 mattresses a day. I was the fastest mattress worker they had.

In 1994 my father came from Samoa to see me. He stayed two weeks and gave me a priesthood blessing to protect my life. After my dad was ready to go home, we drove to California to send him to the airport to go home. I decided to stay in California for a year and a half at my stepbrother's home. I helped my stepbrother at his company.

I wanted to change my life. I prayed to my Heavenly Father that He would help me in my life with English and school. I moved to Utah and lived with my friend, Pamela. Mika asked me to go to a dance at a Polynesian dance club. I had been in Utah for one week. So we went to the dance club named the Hula Hut, and that is where I met my wife. We dated for a year and a half and then I married Julie Herrington in the Salt Lake Temple on July 18, 1998.

One year later we had a baby girl named Cameo Justice Tamala. She was born on June 28, 1999. I was happy to have a good wife and a cute child.

On April 7, 2001 we had another baby girl named Lusía Rose Tamala. We have beautiful children. I am so happy.

I started going to Literacy Action in 2000. I am happy to have good support and people who take time for me. I am learning a lot, and know that I will be able to be a person with a good future by study, reading, and living my life to be honest. I thank them for helping me so much.

April 2002

My Dog Peanuts
By Arnold

I went with Ronnie to see his grandmother. She had a little brown dog that would not obey.

I threw a ball and the dog picked it up and brought it to me. The dog did not play with anyone else.

Grandmother asked if I wanted Peanuts, so I took Peanuts home.

He was friendly with me, but nipped at others. I taught him to be friendly with everyone.

He never begged for food except when my mother got ice cream; then he sat up on his back feet to beg for it.

I had Peanuts for many years.

April 2002

Judy's Family

By Donna

Judy lived in Kearns, Utah. When she was a teenager, she went to high school in Kearns. Her brothers and sisters went to school there, too. Her dad was in the Army. Her family moved to Salt Lake and lived there for two years. Then they moved to Elko, Nevada.

Judy ran away with a man that she liked and got married when she was sixteen years old. The man wasn't very good to her. He made her drink. He treated her badly. So she went to the store and had the store manager call the police. They took her to another place, and she stayed there until her dad came after her.

Then Judy lived at home for about a month. Judy had to go to the doctor because she was very sick. She had yellow jaundice. After Judy was married, her mother died. She did not know about it until she came home to see her dad and brothers and sisters. She was very surprised that her mother had died.

Judy moved back to her husband and lived in Elko, Nevada. She was very sick and she didn't know why she was getting sick. So she went to see a doctor. He said she was having a baby.

Judy left her husband and went to live with her dad and stepmother. She came back to Salt Lake to live with her uncle. She was expecting a child. Her uncle and aunt wanted her to give the baby up for adoption. She couldn't.

She ran away from their house and went to live in the city. She didn't have any money or food. She went looking for some help so she could live. Judy met a lady and went to live with her. She didn't have her baby until August. She had a baby boy.

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Living By The Scriptures

By Roy

There are many scriptures that have been helpful to me. Throughout my life I have suffered from a learning disability that has made it very difficult for me to learn to read and write. For example, I was kept in the first grade for three years. When I was older, I was sent to a special school that was located in Farmington ,Utah. This school was sometimes referred to as the school for “MRs” or mentally retarded by the kids in our neighborhood. I started to attend this school in 7th grade. I tried to hide this from my friends at the junior high school. I took the bus to the Central Davis Junior High everyday and went inside as if I was going to class. Then I would sneak back out and walk to another bus stop to catch the bus to the Farmington School. I was able to hide this for awhile. However, eventually the kids in my neighborhood found out and they started to tease me. They called me “MR” or stupid.

This made me feel really bad inside. Many times I would go home and hide in my room and cry. I had great sorrow and I was angry towards those who were mistreating me. I started to pray to my Father in Heaven. I talked to my Bishop and other leaders asking for counsel about how to deal with this great challenge in my life. Scriptures like that which is found in Alma 24:19 have help me deal with these challenges.

Alma 24:19

And thus we see that, when these Lamanites were brought to believe and to know the truth, they were firm and would suffer even unto death rather than commit sin; and thus we see that they buried their weapons of peace, or they buried the weapons of war, for peace.

Once the Lamanites of old experienced a mighty change in heart, they buried their weapons of war. When I experienced a change in my life, I buried my “weapons of war” (e.g., pride, self-righteousness, self-will, enmity, fear, self-pity). I also developed a willingness to make amends for all my past wrongs, to seek a spirit of peace and to forgive those who have hurt me.

April 2002

Helping Others

By Marylee

I'm a nurse's aid. I work with homebound people. I love to help people. I learn a lot by hearing their needs and wants.

Their main fears are that their families don't care and don't want to take care of them. When I come into their homes, they are scared of me. If they have been abused or stolen from, they are afraid I may be ugly to them, too. Then we sit and talk about their fears. I try to reassure them I'm not like the others, but only time, love and support will get them to trust me. Over time, we become friends and close like a real family.

I do a lot for these people. We go on trips out of state and in town. On one trip, I took Robin to Phoenix, Arizona, on the Greyhound Bus. It took 3-1/2 days. Then I came home alone. She stayed with a friend.

I sometimes take them to the mountains or to the zoo. We also go to each others families' homes, so they can know me better and trust me more.

When I help these special people, I feel I'm doing what God wants and needs me to do. I love all of them and my work.

God bless my clients and their families.

April 2002

**Traveling Around
The World While Sitting Still**
By Bernard

This story is about a boy
That could not read or write
And a lady who helped him read the books.
He traveled around the world sitting still.

She said, I will teach you how to travel around
The world while sitting still.
You can go to Memphis,
Go to Ireland.
You can go to Germany,
Go to Switzerland,
And see this great big wide-open world.

I said , I can't read,
But it would be nice
To travel around the world like you do.
It would be nice,
It would be nice,
To travel around the world while sitting still.
While sitting still in one place.
Oh, study your books, my brother,
And I'll help teach you how to read
The words in these books.

I knew it'd be hard to grasp onto those words.
But I had to try.
I want to be like everyone else,
Traveling around the world while sitting still.
I heard so many stories
And so many tales
Of what's in the books.

So, I wanted to learn,
Learn about these tales that they were telling,
And how fun it is to read.
I traveled around the world,
I was sitting still,
I was sitting still in one place.
It was fun to sit still in one place
And travel around the world while sitting still.
Travel around the world while sitting still.

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April 2002

Write your story here!

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