

Author's Foreword
Jodi Mitchell

Forwards
I
Wrote

I started running away from home as a fourteen-year-old, but my parents pressured my girlfriends to divulge my whereabouts, a shy, bookish girl from a typical working class West Virginia family. The Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War led to a huge generation gap between my parents, my school and my community. I spent a lot of time in the library reading Gandhi, Whitman, Thoreau, Martin Luther King Jr., Herman Hesse, Kerouac and Ginsburg. I listened to Bob Dylan, Joan Baez and they all seemed to say "Get the hell out of there!" I was greatly influenced by them. They were beacons in the darkness and they opened up new doors of perception.

My quest for knowledge and curiosity of spirit led to an ever-widening generation gap between myself, my parents, teachers and eventually my entire community.

At seventeen, in 1969, when it seemed to come down to "It's my way or the highway" between myself and my family, I made a master plan. I lied to my friends, and told them I was going to Toronto because I was against the war in Vietnam. Like Alice Through the Looking Glass, I just opened the door one day, stepped out into the big wide world and vanished. While my parents searched for me on the East Coast, I already had headed West.

I wrote this journal as an ongoing dialogue with myself while living on the streets of Berkeley, hitchhiking back and forth numerous times across the nation and finally living on a rural northern California commune. I was not alone. There were many youths on the run, on the streets and on the road during those turbulent times. I melded right into the flow. The other street kids became my surrogate family. We recognized and

It is hard to believe these Journals were recorded 3 decades ago, against the backdrop of the civil rights movement and atrocities of the vietnam war.

my parent could tell, simply

These Journals reflect not only my outer on the road journey, but also my inner most feelings & thoughts (acting as a road map towards self discovery).

ending with the conception of my son.

They begin with they whole hitchhiking back & forth across the nation, living on the streets of Berkeley, and also in a rural northern California commune.

They end with the conception of my son.

Those days of
sun and wonder

I realize they
had their hands full
with court cases runaways
on the streets during
those years, but their
cruel, un-caring
treatment of us
was all called for.

Walton
Cafe
when they
now
resided.

Freed from
the st. flying
of fear go bring-
go like a flower I
the beauty of mother nature
hills + pastures of
I opened
wings
in those verdant
cabin.

At wheelers,
at long last I
was welcomed
with open arms.

For the first time I felt
unconditional love
+ respect upon me.
I was no more
be my self.
10
I was no more
be my self.

honored each other, panhandled for spare change together,
hitched rides together, looked for places to crash, and shared
what little food, money or sleeping arrangements we may have
come across on any given day. We had to develop street smarts
and savvy, for there were always those who were out to exploit
a young, naive girl.

Eventually the hunger, cold and constant dodging of cops
and finding a safe place to sleep where I could be unmolested
became impossible, with the police specially vicious and
unprotective. Heroin and harder drugs found their way to the
streets along with the hardcore scam artists. The gentle spirit of
Flowers in Your Hair days changed almost overnight into
violence and paranoia, and it was at this time that I was rescued,
literally off the streets by two boys who came back from a rural
communal to get me. They found me panhandling in front of a
grocery store and literally grabbed me and took me to my new
home in the woods, Wheeler's Hunter Ranch.

I will let the courageous and hopeful girl that I once was
speak for herself through these pages, written three decades
ago. May her spirit and the spirit of those magical times smile
through these pages. I hope they can speak to young people who
have troubles with their families or who are out on the streets
themselves. And may they also speak to the now-aging Flower
Children, the baby boomers of my generation, so they can
continue to offer the important gift of love and compassion that
we held so dear, and in some cases paid for so dearly.

much love and Ahimsa to all.

Jodi
MAY ALL ROADS LEAD YOU HOME

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