

5 Tips on Studying

- 1.** Every thirty minutes take a ten-minute break; this will help you concentrate better!
- 2.** Don't try and cram the night before a big test! Your brain will work a lot better with a full night's sleep.
- 3.** Keep a glass of water nearby to drink while you study. Water gives your body more energy!
- 4.** Find a quiet place and turn off all electronic devices for a distraction-free environment!
- 5.** After you're finished get a sibling or friend to quiz to make sure you really know it!

A THING OR TWO ABOUT LOVE

by Michaela F.

Today I passed a girl on the street that I have passed at least a hundred times before. She looks about my age (14-16) and I always see her leaving or coming home since she lives on my street. Up until today I always thought of her as mysterious and a little aloof. Not in a bad way. It's just that she never smiled or said hi when I passed. She was always busy on her cell phone, playing a gameboy, or talking to a guy I assume is her boyfriend. But today when I saw her I started to wonder why she wasn't very friendly. Then it dawned on me that I had never seen her with any friends besides her boyfriend and she is probably lonely, maybe even depressed. I felt bad that I couldn't do something to lift her spirits in a little way but she obviously wasn't responsive to my smile and "Hallo", so what else could I do? Well later I was walking and my suspicions were confirmed. I saw her standing in the middle of the sidewalk crying, her boyfriend's arms around her in a comforting hug. My heart went out to her immediately, which is weird because I don't know her or her story. But I knew that if she was desperate enough to be crying in the middle of the sidewalk, it was probably bad enough. As I maneuvered around them I couldn't help but look back. The whole scene got me to thinking about how I could relate that situation to my life and I came up with this conclusion. Her need for someone's shoulder to cry on is very similar to mine. Sometimes I feel lonely, depressed and like no one in the world notices me. I couldn't help but be glad for her that she had a strong guy to



his arms around her and tell her it's ok. Sometimes I want that in my own life, but then I stop and realize that I have the most loving, powerful, strong, gentle arms around me all the time. God is there when the whole world turns their backs and He is still there when we sin against him. I can never have anything greater than that. So this girl on my street taught me an important lesson and I know for sure that the next time I see her I will greet her with a "Hallo" and a big, friendly smile. Maybe I'll end up teaching her a thing or two about love just like she taught me.

A Mother's Perspective

By Tricia Marcos

Moving overseas with teen-agers was not something that we had originally planned, but God seemed to have different ideas, and our kids were willing...one more than the other...but still willing. So off we went to Germany. (Our oldest was already in college).

I think one of the things we all came to value the most was the quality time we got to have together as a family. All of us were extremely busy in the US, not with bad things, but not a lot of margin to just sit and talk. It was easier in America for those times to be snatched away. We found our relationships going deeper and conversations happening that might not have in another scenario. Those conversations have served us well over these last years as our kids have grown and graduated from college. One engaged, one on the verge, and another looking for a job after working overseas for a year.

Living internationally, they developed more of a heart for the world, seeing other nations as real people, with real needs and joys. It has

helped them in reaching out to internationals on their college campuses and in the workplace. They are more understanding of these people and kinder to them, since we as a family have also been strangers in a different land.



Tricia and her kids Jessica, Brett, and Julia and soon to be daughter-in-law Kim

I think one thing that was really important to me as a mom overseas was that my kids be honest with me about where they were in the process of living in another country. Were they happy, sad, angry, lost, fulfilled, challenged, friendless, too many

friends... It was not always easy for my "radar" to track what was going on. So, I would say communicating honestly, even though it might be hard, is very important. Sometimes, it might be emotionally tiring because maybe it is hard for you to figure out exactly how you feel, but in the midst of your emotion, it becomes clearer for everyone.

Living internationally, even in Europe, is also harder in day to day life. From going to work, to the grocery store to stock that small refrigerator, to only using one major appliance at a time, to cleaning the house...All of these things can take much longer. So, my encouragement to you all would be for you to observe how you might be more of a help to your mom and offer your services voluntarily in areas that might not be required of you.

I know it is not always easy for you to have come with your parents to a "foreign" land. You are very brave and amazing teen-agers. I applaud you and encourage you with my thoughts and prayers to keep on walking with the Lord and trusting Him for all your days.

The Big Move

By Abby W.

Everyone said it would be hard. Moving to America would be quite a transition after living my whole life in central and western Asia. Part of me believed them, but the other part was excited to move to a country where everyone spoke English and no one would look at me like I was an alien from Mars.

I had never considered the third-world country I lived in, Azerbaijan, to be my home. I moved there when I was nine years old. Before that I had lived in Kazakhstan since I was seven weeks old, so that had undeniably been the place I attached the word “home” to. The fact that I was definitely not connected emotionally to Azerbaijan smoothed the way for the big move my parents told us about in February. I knew there were some things I was going to miss, like the cherry trees in our backyard, fresh hot bread sold right out of the oven, and the close community

we had with our staff team. But there were things I was definitely NOT going to miss, like the insane driving, bumpy roads, and smoking.

The night before we left Azerbaijan I was so excited I could barely think, much less feel any regret for leaving my home of five years. The plane ride – or more like *rides* – was very long, but I was used to that. When we finally landed in America, I felt a high adrenaline course through my body. We were finally here! My grandparents picked us up, and riding along the smooth highway, I felt very content.

The summer was a little hectic, trying to find a house and then doing some minor renovations. We ended up moving in two days before school started. School. The mere word gave my stomach butterflies. This was the ultimate challenge everyone had warned me about.



Continued on next page.