

## Chapter 5

Day 5:

Belfast ME to Eden ME (Bar Harbor). 48 miles, 7:50 am to 3:30 pm. Total trip miles:376

This day was the end of journey, this journey anyway. There are more to come, this I know because growth just doesn't end with one event. We are constantly learning and growing. This can be quite fun especially when looked at with hindsight, but at the time we are going through it, well that can be a different story.

This day I was much calmer, maybe because I was in the last miles, or maybe I was just physically spent. Either way I surrendered to the day. I knew there were hills along the way, and I let go, accepted. I talked with God and asked for help up those hills, and with my inner growth. I had learned the importance of family and connectedness to people. I was learning surrender and that everything is sublimely just as it should be, even if we don't like the wrapping the gift is always there to help us grow. That Divine Spirit, no matter what name one gives it, is always in the energy of love. Always looking out for the highest and best way to have us grow. We just need to allow that energy into our lives.

This is not to say one can't ignore it or second-guess. I spent some time second-guessing myself. Was the journey long enough? I told everyone that I was going to be on the road for a month. Here it was only 5 days AND I was being picked up for the ride home. I didn't know what this journey was going to take out of me though. Did I need to camp out more, maybe beside the road without the niceties of plumbing and electricity? Did I need to suffer more than I thought I was already? I don't think the Divine Spirit wants us to beat up on ourselves too much, but a challenge is good now and then. I believe I did exactly what I was supposed to on this journey.

Was 5 days long enough? Again it is all perspective. A workweek can go by fairly quickly when caught up in the day-to-day activities. It is an entirely different thing when one spends 5 days on a bicycle with only one's thoughts for company. Then those 5 days become very long indeed, but never boring. Inner meaning of one's life becomes very important and those outside things that seemed important are meaningless.

So I started out on the final leg of the journey at 10 minutes to 8 am on that Friday morning. I was in a very calm frame of mind, and as I mentioned I accepted the ride ahead. I had pushed my physical, mental and emotional limits right to the edge. I didn't have much left, and the thought of having to bike another day would have made me puke. Luckily I didn't have to do that. I just needed to push the pedals round and round for a few more hours to the end of journey.

I went at a casual pace knowing I was close and had all day. When I came to a hill, I asked God to help me out. A few times when I really let go, it felt like I was being pushed up the incline. I made the top with much ease. There were those moments as well, when I fell back into cursing and strangely enough, the hill was terrific in responding. It was a struggle to achieve the crest so I really worked on letting go, which seemed to be the best method.

I had become pre-occupied with watching the side of the road. Well, not the road itself but the lost things lying forgotten. When we are in a car we don't notice the little things, like the smell of the forest or the texture of the road. We don't see the hills as

anything but something to get over by pressing a little harder on the gas pedal. We don't wonder about all the lost stuff now orphaned in the ditch.

I'll come back that idea in a moment because as I noticed one thing after another I hadn't noticed the suspension bridge looming in the near distance. Now here was a challenge. A change of perspective, in a car I would have been over it before I noticed I was crossing a very deep gorge. On a bike, well need I say more? I will say this one thing, has anyone noticed how low guardrails are on these structure? I would think they would be reinforced, very high beams nurturing one's safe crossing. Yet they are always very low and threatening to plunge oneself into the depths below. OK, maybe its just me, with not really finding bridges that span the depths hundreds of feet below all that thrilling. So there I stopped and looked at this bridge and looked at the map...and looked at the bridge and looked at the map. The only route available around it would take me many miles out of my way. It was cross it, or bicycle a lot further than expected. I prayed and went for it, keeping my legs pumping, looking straight ahead, and not at the certain death I knew would come if I did happen to glance over the rail. A little further, at the top of the bow of the bridge and coming down to the other side. Almost there and I was still pumping the legs. And then I was across, nothing bad had happened; I was feeling ok and a little uplifted. It was all about the facing of fears and God had given me another one knowing it was for the better. I do want to say in my own defense that there was a lot of activity surrounding this crossing. Workmen were building an even more spectacular suspension bridge to replace the old one I had crossed. There was traffic, work vehicles and guys walking about on the new bridge. And did I mention guys hundreds of feet up over this gorge? It was unsettling just to watch them. It was joy though, to coast down into the town of Bucksport.

I stopped in Bucksport to call Trish. I even called my friends at work. It was good to talk with everyone, reconnect with people. I was having a good day so far I thought. The road wasn't getting to me too badly, I was more relaxed and I was almost at my destination.

I continued on towards Ellsworth following the AC map only because it was following route 1. It would turn off soon but I kept on route 1. The theme of this trip was not sightseeing but inner growth and I was getting plenty. Route 1 had traffic but was not as bad as I thought it would be, it was pretty wide in most places and I had enough room on the shoulder. It was mostly in the bigger towns where the shoulder went down to a little strip of rough pavement.



And as I bicycled, I continued to look at the roadside in fascination. So many articles of stuff! I had picked up a perfect feather early on in the morning, a beautiful symbol of the freedom of flight. And I just kept noticing, and pedaling, and talking to God. Another item I found was an action figure for lack of what else to call the little toy that was of a young woman with short blonde hair and measuring about 3 inches (see photo). I think it may have come out of a Happy Meal but I am not sure. I am not sure why I picked it up in the first place, but it was in the road, and I did. It does become important later on in the story.

At one point I passed a place that would be the envy of Jackson Pollack. Someone had not tied down a bucket of joint compound well enough. The assumption is that it

freed itself of its binds and became airborne. I had noticed some sort of white stuff first on a fence bordering a property, and then the road, and I wondered what the owners were thinking. Then I noticed it was on the grass and quite high up in the branches of some trees. Then a short distance on, it was again on the road, the guardrail, everywhere until finally there it was, the errant bucket lying on its side empty of its contents. It was a remarkable scene you don't see everyday, and one would normally miss at higher speeds.

I also noticed coffee cups, lots of coffee cups. It seems we as a culture, drink a lot of coffee then feel the need to wing the cups out the windows of moving vehicles. Some things though, I think were not winged out of windows but must have been whipped out of the back of trucks or off rooftops. I saw cardboard boxes, various pieces of clothing, all sorts of bits of garbage and even a plastic gas can. I was in awe of all the stuff people loose, left there beside the road.

I continued to be amazed as I entered the homestretch; I was in Ellsworth. It was about 10 miles to Bar Harbor. 10 miles that by car would be a mere hop skip and jump, but to me meant at least an hour of pedaling. I stopped for lunch at a mini-mart consisting of a turkey sandwich, raspberry shortcake, Snickers bar, water and Gatorade. I was in tourist mode and was taking my time with everything; I wasn't really visiting any sights in Ellsworth, I just wasn't rushing.

But I did move on eventually, I did have a destination after all. I was now on route 3, which leads into Bar Harbor as well as having many touristy shops along the way. I decided to stop at one, as I needed a final item for the reunion with my family. I didn't find what I was looking for other than a hat for myself, my one souvenir of the trip, a ball cap with Maine written on the side and a big M on the front. Worked for me. I did find what I was looking for a little way down the road. It was a carved bowl for Paul. It was now a few more miles to relaxing , camping, and family.

From that morning throughout the day, I wondered where to camp on the island. I kept looking at the map as I bicycled until it had struck me; there on a northwest corner was Eden! I couldn't believe it at first. Then I became elated that we would meet and stay in Eden. What a great way to end one journey and begin another. Symbolically, it was a representation of family. All spiritual faiths have an Eden story, a beginning of the family of humankind and the birth of the soul. This destination just felt right, a journey to a new way of seeing the world and myself. It was a perfect way to finish a vision quest, by returning to the beginning.

So Eden it was...end journey.



\*(Remember the little action figure? Well what did I see at the campground in Eden? It was that very same figure I had picked up on the roadside earlier, though this one was a bit cleaner. You may say, so what? Well, it was placed quite incongruently between boxes of candy bars. There were no other toys in sight, just different forms of junk food and that one figure. There are no coincidences. I was exactly where I needed to be.)\*

Food: Lots of water and Gatorade. Turkey sandwich, shortcake, candy bar, soup, pretzel sticks, coffee, Cliff bars.

Aches and pains: Achy but not too bad. Legs were hurting a little and the balls of my feet were numb.

Weather: Warmest day yet, maybe low 90s but the humidity was low so it didn't feel that hot.