

Opportunity of a lifetime

August 22, 2012

When my mother told me she thought she might have cancer in 2009, I had decided to give up my dream of going to school in New York so I could stay close to my family. If anything were to happen to my mother, I wanted to make sure I was nearby. So, I decided to attend school in Kingsville. I had to make sure I was reachable and could still afford to attend college while taking care of my two siblings. So, I let my dream go.

But I had a way bigger dream in life, and that was to leave the United States. I love the country, but I just don't feel like that's where I should spend my life.

I was offered a position to teach in Asia. At first, I couldn't believe it. I was scatter-brained for a while. Is this real? Can someone pinch me? Did I just get a job offer? How would I live? How do Asians react to foreigners? Please, someone pinch me. But there was no pinch. This was reality.

All I could think about was teaching in Asia. It would be so cool to teach in Asia. My dream would be completed. But I wasn't completely satisfied. I knew I had to pray about the idea if I'm really supposed to live in Asia.

Recently, my new friends here in East Asia and I talked about our dreams. It was quite emotional and a deep conversation. I got to share about the opportunity to teach in Asia. But then I told them that I had something holding me back—my family. It's like if things were beginning to repeat itself. I would have to contemplate giving up my dream to stay in the U.S. to be close to my family. All these emotions were coming at me at once, and I couldn't concentrate. I began sobbing and breaking down as I spoke. I could see the sympathy in their eyes. I could feel them hurting because I was hurting.

They comforted me by telling me they supported me in any decision I make, whether to take care of my family or follow my dream and teach in Asia. They wanted me to come back, but they understood my predicament.

Alfred and I decided to take a break. He mentioned how my speech made him very emotional and about to cry. He could tell I loved my family by giving up my previous dream. He thought it was very honorable of me to do that. He said, "I'm glad you opened up tonight, because it helped me realize things don't always turn out as you plan." He knew I poured my heart out for a reason.

He opened up about people telling him that he couldn't fulfill his dreams. But one of his dreams is on the horizon—to complete a bicycling marathon. I told him not to allow people to put him down. I told him that my dream wasn't shut down; it was just put on hold. I believe Alfred can do anything he wants if he puts his effort into it, because he has a beautiful heart and soul. We hugged each other that night—a hug of reassurance that our dreams will come true.

Kevin, a student at Texas A&M University in Kingsville, has been serving with Go Now Missions in East Asia. His last name is withheld for security reasons.