

Live and Die in Honduras

Back in years 2017/2018 I had an opportunity to do my volunteering in Honduras. The journey was unbelievable from the beginning to an end and I still feel like it happened in another life. This is just a short summary of experience that has changed me forever.

'Mom, I'm going to Honduras as a volunteer.'

'Are you nuts?' Mom's eyes open widely.

'No, seriously, I'm going to be a teacher for ten months.'

'What are you going to teach? Madness?'

I smirked and thought to myself that somehow, she got it right. However, I was not going to teach madness. I was about to experience madness.

Even though I arrived in small central American country during a rainy season it welcomed me with a dry and hot day. It also welcomed me with a purple colored foot and touch of diarrhea the very next day. Despite the intro was terrifying, I found it elevating. Who wouldn't like to sit on a wheelchair first week of their allegedly life changing experience? Fortunately, my memories on a small hospital will remain only positive. After all, I got examined by a young nurse behind a closed curtain. Does anyone dare to tell me it wasn't a positive visit?

As time passed by, my mind got used to a different culture and my body to different climate. It no longer seemed weird wearing jeans during a burning hot day. And it certainly didn't feel weird to eat beans and eggs every day. Well, it did but I wanted to feel Latin for a while. You can't blame me.

In the beginnings my Spanish skills were limited. I didn't want to dry clothes, I wanted to remove clothes. Objects had new names, although ninety percent of items were called simply 'thing'. To this day I wonder how they understood me. Obviously, by time it got better. Everything in life does. Did my students get better? They did. I'd like to say it was because of my amazing ability to teach but mostly it was because of their incredible dedication and willingness to learn something new. It was because of their desire to explore and grasp world into their hands. No matter how good your teacher is, it all comes down to students' motivation to grow and change their future. I just like to think sometimes that I did my part and helped them to steer their lives...

...and then I got lost in dozens of places and almost died (I will spare you the details). However, since I am writing this, you know I didn't die. On the contrary, I learnt to live. Hospitality of small Latin country opened my heart and mind. Curious kids asking about my family, men in the streets shaking my hands asking where I come from and even persistent street vendors offering me extraterrestrial products taught me that there are many ways in life to get by. To see joy and tribulation of people on the other side of the world only proved me that we are all one. To this day I return there in my sleep. Sometimes I wake up at night shouting 'no more tortillas!' but other than that the dreams are nice. In those dreams I am at home – in Honduras.