

EMILY

My life is very different now than two years ago. For starters, I don't live in the same part of the country anymore. So I moved from Seattle to Los Angeles semi-recently, eight months ago. Um, mainly spurred on by a series of job changes that started from when the pandemic hit. Cause I got laid off like everybody else did. Um, had a relationship and ended a relationship all in the space of two years. Um, did a lot of going to therapy, left a ***** roommate, got a cat. So lots of, like, personal development and which I feel like I've tried to bloom into a new human.

So I went right from my parents' house to living in Seattle. And then all of my, like, kind of young person development up to a point was totally influenced by the very like insular, very white, very stoic culture. And then not seeing the sun and all that kind of stuff was just a lot. So I just broke. I was like, I can't do this anymore. I'm leaving! I'm leaving Seattle!

When I got laid off, um, after the pandemic, that was the third time I had been laid off from a job, you know, in a big mass layoff situation in Seattle. And the industry up there is very focused on UX design and I'm more of like an experiential and art director type goals in my career. And when that pandemic hit, I was just like, the level of absurdity has gotten too high. Like something broke in my brain. And I was just like, I can't do this anymore. Like, this is, this is done. And so I was applying for jobs in LA and just trying to get the **** out. And it didn't happen until, you know, a couple of years into it. But that was a moment where I was just, like, this place is forcing me out. Like, I felt very certain that Seattle was giving me a clear sign that I do not belong there anymore.

I had a very, um, slim social life in Seattle and was just getting so burnt out on being by myself or just only seeing a limited number of people that I didn't feel I could connect with. And Miranda, my very, very close friend, lives down here in LA. And I had been trying to get down here, you know, for permanently for quite some time, but I'd had the chance to visit. And just the feeling of coming here and having a really close long-term friend that I've had, we've been friends since high school. Um, and then just her friend group being so open and so welcoming and like Erin being so wonderful and all that kind of stuff, um, really just made me feel like I needed to be somewhere that would enrich my soul. Not just like what I was doing for work or kind of the trees I like to look at, you know.

I wouldn't have come here if I didn't have a super close personal connection here. Having a friend here was the main pull, and it feels almost embarrassing to say I moved here to be in proximity with my friend, but that's the truth. I came here to finally be near somebody who has known me for longer than just the ***** things that happened to me in Seattle.

In terms of the long-term, um, I don't have a life in mind in which I would need to necessarily plant roots, like, you know, family and all that kind of stuff. Um, but I don't want it to be a two or three year stint, and whenever, you know, we have big group friend experiences and things, and we all get to go out and stuff, I'm like, "****, these are some seriously good people." And that is something that you just, you can't conjure that up from the ground. Right? Like if I, you know, I also would love to live in New York City one day, perhaps, but then the thought of leaving such an important support network of people that really seem to care about me and going off into the wild again is so, um, off-putting, um, so I definitely, you know, no pressure on, in my brain, on myself to leave LA or make any decisions and plans or finalities or whatever anytime soon.

My definition of success and happiness doesn't have to just be the next promotion or the arbitrary number of what I'm paid. But actually, I didn't even realize what I was missing was just that chicken-soup-for-the-soul type vibes of, you know, people who have known me a long time and care about me and want to see me thrive regardless of what material or, you know, LinkedIn achievements I can have.

It was definitely the right move to come here for sure. If only on the purely chemical level of getting more vitamin D in my system, it's like, "oh, maybe that did cure my depression just a little bit," right?