



## Vive la Différence

If there is anything that stands out for my life in 2007, it has to be how my relationship with Polly has developed and flourished this past year. And what has most amazed me, it's how rich our lives have become because of our differences.

### A VARIETY OF PLACES

We've taken trips to beautiful [Sedona and Flagstaff, Arizona](#) (to visit Polly's brother Rich); to a quaint and romantic Bed & Breakfast in [San Diego, California](#) (to join my nephews Daan and Joost and sister-in-law Monique who were themselves visiting my nephew Dirk who was studying at UC San Diego for half a year), and the lush variety of flora and fauna on the [Hawaiian island of Kauai](#), a present I gave Polly for last Christmas. We've entertained Polly's sister Bebe and her two kids Beth and Charlie over the [4th of July holiday](#) week (going rock climbing, attending a theatre play, swimming, and go-carting among many other activities). And I attended a week-long seminar in September in the beautiful Santa Cruz mountains among 100 year old redwood trees.

### A VARIETY OF WORLD EVENTS

Of course, the war in Iraq continues to drag on with 3897 soldiers dead as of this writing, as well as no-one-knows-how-many thousands of Iraqi people killed. A terrorist attack just killed another Pakistani politician yesterday. Al Gore and the IPCC won the Nobel peace prize for his work on educating people on the urgency of acting against global warming; the effects of which are no longer deniable and may be accelerating a lot faster than was predicted earlier, no matter how inconvenient.

Luciano Pavarotti died of pancreatic cancer, Anna Nicole Smith of life in the fast lane, and reverend Jerry Fallwell of cardiac arrest. Tony Blair resigned as prime minister and converted to Catholicism, and Queen Elizabeth

went high tech by creating her own YouTube.com video web channel.

Meanwhile the housing market collapsed in the USA forcing the failure or bankruptcy of over 100 home mortgage lending companies. A student at Virginal Tech decided to prevent 32 students from graduating along with himself. Forgive me if it all sounds bleak, but still there is a lot of variety of events, you have to admit.

### A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES

Polly and I and her son Tony have done quite a few fun things together this year, including walking the 10Km Boulder Bolder Marathon, backpacking into the Rocky Mountains for a long weekend, hiking, biking, rock climbing, swimming and playing a lot of board games on weekends. Attending theatre plays, and dance performances, Cirque du Soleil and Tony's basketball games and guitar performances, as well as watching movies at home and at the movie theatre.

But the most magical moments of all have been those of just relaxing together sometimes at home staring into each others' eyes over a glass of wine, sometimes just reading together in the same room, and best of all: sitting on the beach in Hawaii watching the sun go down in a gentle, warm breeze with the sound of the surf.

### A VARIETY OF PAIN KILLING

So how is it possible to live in a world with so much personal and worldly strife, fear and bad news and still feel happy? How is it possible to stay happy in a seemingly unhappy world? I think it's becoming part of the human condition to start resisting taking it all in: we want to keep things the same and stop having so much change.

Any single human being cannot take it in any more. And those of us that don't have the mental stability, or get carried away by our emotions are taking drastic steps, whether it is by killing our pain, killing ourselves, killing others or killing the planet, consciously or unconsciously. When pain and suffering seem too much, we numb ourselves to it and pretend to not care any more about others, taking drastic steps that are sometimes counter even to our own ethics and values.

### THE VALUE OF VARIETY

In my relationship with Polly, I initially thought that our differences were keeping us apart. Over the past year I've come to realize the great value in our differences (in addition to the obvious gender differences!). What we contribute to each other makes our lives much fuller and richer. Our different knowledge, strengths, feelings, insights and talents have enhanced not only our relationship but also those with our friends and family, co-workers and acquaintances.

It is well known in biology that the theory of survival of the fittest includes keeping a sufficient amount of random diversity within each species to ensure that when circumstances change a variety of adaptations are possible. Without the variety, a single environmental change could wipe out an entire species. Change demands adaptation which demands variety. Our survival depends on diversity.

### MICRO AND MACRO VARIETY

So, whether it is diversity of opinions in my relationship, diversity of ethics, morals, religions, or animal species, diversity of climates or political systems, ethnic backgrounds or geographic locations it ALL contributes to survival of life. Life IS diversity, and when diversity starts dwindling (whether it's through acts of war, acts against humanity, or acts against the planet), it's all done out of the illusion that diversity is counter to life.

So, my personal resolution for this New Year is to acknowledge and embrace that my life style is not the only life style, to become more aware of where I still demand that things should be more the same (like I want them), and less diverse.

This coming year I want to celebrate Polly and my differences more, enjoy more of the diversity of cultures and lands on our little planet, and value more that there is no place like home, our source of diversity: Mother Earth.

From sunny Colorado, wishing you and your loved ones in your home, in your town, in your country, a Happy 2008 in your own way. Long live our differences!

*Love always.*

*Marrrek*

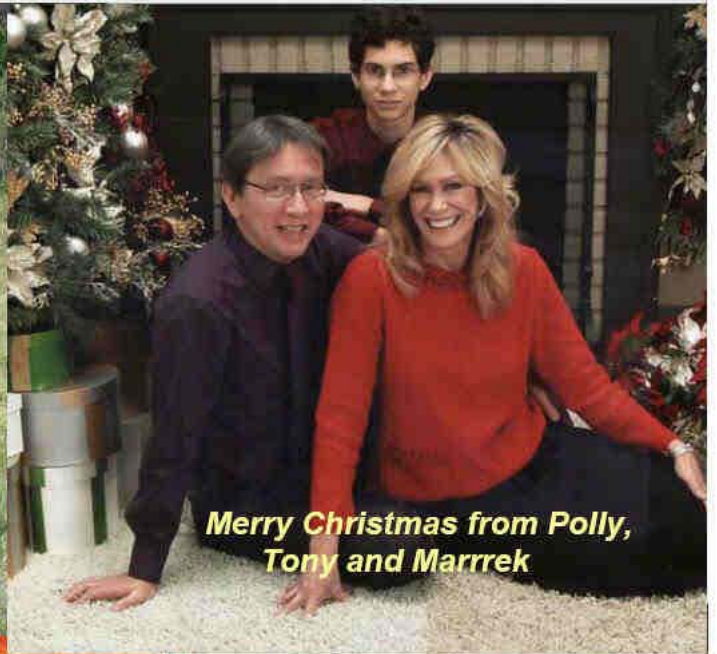
Visit <http://www.marrrek.com>

See photos on next page

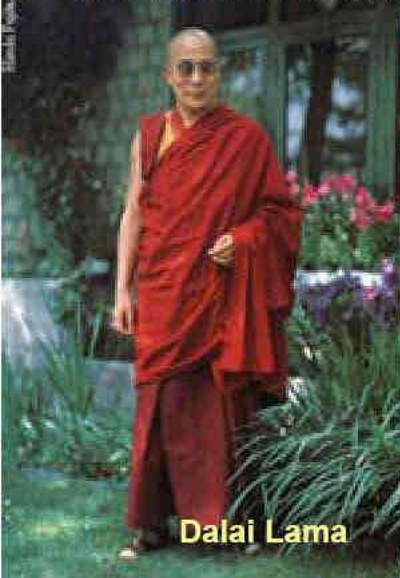




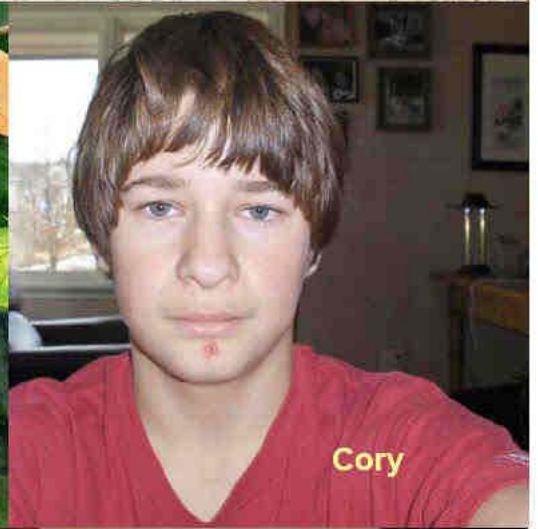
Polly & Marrek back packing



Merry Christmas from Polly, Tony and Marrek



Dalai Lama



Cory



Dad



Mom