



Dominique with local children, after the Indian Celebration of Holi, "The Celebration of Colors".

Through the Eyes of Love

I have always been fascinated by stories of people who experience miraculous, eye-opening, life-changing events. Not just that we experience these things, but that it can actually shift our entire thought paradigm; it can create a whole new way of thinking.

Sometimes, these events are small or take time to slowly mold and shape us, while other times we encounter a massive, in-your-face type of experience that leaves us different.

I recently heard about a local woman, Dominique Boudreau, who had taken a trip across the world and returned changed. I was told that she experienced a culture and a people that had enabled her to see our world through different eyes.

Dominique is a current masters student at University of South Dakota and Yankton native. Below she gives an account of her time spent, and wisdom gained, while working on an International Medical Relief team in India. Don't see yourself traveling across the world anytime soon? Allow Dominique's experience to inspire you.

On March 1, 2012, I boarded a flight to one of the most densely populated cities in the world, Kolkata, India. This city is home to 4.4 million people who carry out daily routines within 185 square miles. I would spend eleven days with an International Medical Relief (IMR) medical team. My days were stripped of my morning coffee, computers, toilets, and beds. The absence of all materialistic things left one thing-life in its simplest form. Over an eleven-day period, I experienced something more powerful than could be offered by my strong black cup of coffee or delivered by my mega-pixelated, high definition TV screen. I experienced life: raw, and it was beautiful.

As my team and I walked out of Kolkata International Airport at 9:00 p.m. on March 1, I was in awe. I have had my fair share of experiences at JFK, O'Hare International, and Heathrow, but never in my short life had I seen so many people circulating outside an airport. Despite the swarm of traffic from departing and arriving flights, the atmosphere was calm. But, soon the calm was replaced by chaos and anxiety.

We loaded our luggage into our driver's car. Instantly, as we pulled into traffic I was given a crash course in Indian road rules. There are none. Without lanes to organize hundreds of cars, the driver swerved in and out, honking as he went. Latchmin, a team member familiar with Indian traffic, assured me that the driver was experienced and that I could relax. Suddenly,



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