

## Teaching in South Korea

-- Joe Dugan (CU '07) --

And the pomp faded, and the circumstance was all circumstantial after all; and then the tassel was moved.

It has been almost one year since I left Ambassador for the last time, almost a year since I saw the last issue of Cedars in print. It has likewise been close to a year since I graduated from Cedarville University, and a blissful ten months since Heidi and I made our vows and splashed in the sea along the coast of Mexico's Puerto Vallarta.

We moved to Seoul last July; we teach English at an elite academy for "returnee" students who have experienced education abroad. Recently, I was named supervisor of our TOEFL program, a promotion which has empowered me to develop curricula and manage human resources, two responsibilities which I have thoroughly enjoyed.

This has been a good year; it has been exciting and enlightening, surprising and challenging. I have discovered much about myself, about my goals and my dreams. I have also discovered that even now, after four years of exceptional education and almost a year of marriage, I am a greenhorn at life: I'm still piecing together my identity, still imagining my future.

Some days, I am enthusiastic; other days, I am soporific. Some days I feel rich; other days, indebted. On Friday evenings, I study the American political process in anticipation of November, or I sing myself hoarse in a Korean *noraebang*.

I guess that's life in our twenties; it's a mish-mash of everything we've inherited, all our desires, everything we think we know. It's a kaleidoscope of possibilities, and we sense the sovereign understanding of God, but we realize that knowing His will involves more than connecting the dots.

Be prepared, my fellow sojourners. Life after graduation is infinitely more complicated. At Cedarville, I griped and fussed about those late nights of studying, but now I covet the freedom to think, to pursue inquiry without the trappings of life in the wide, wide world. Even so: that was then, this is now, and change is good.

As I reflect on my life, I am reminded of these lyrics by Coldplay: "All that I know, there's nothing here to run from / 'Cause everybody here's got somebody to lean on." If there is one piece of advice I can give you, it is this: be sure you have someone to share the journey with.

Good luck to you, and stay away from kimchee.