

## Familiarity

Written by

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Our first night back in an area where I had spent most of my life and Rick had spent many years of his, seemed familiar but at the same time, strange, a contradiction of sorts. While much is the same, there have been many changes here in Orillia since we left here in December 2003... some good and some bad. There is a new Galaxy movie theatre, two new storage businesses, a sub-division expansion and some destruction of buildings by fires and demolitions. The main street, Mississaga Street, once a fairly busy downtown seems to be following the footsteps of many town centres, slowly dying because of the growth of out-lying malls or "power centres". While driving around Orillia yesterday, I felt a sadness for the city and a little like a stranger here with all the changes.

Today, Rick and I drove out to Coldwater to visit with our friends, Rob and Rosanne, and later with my sister Christine and her husband Fred. Since we left here in 2003, Rob and Rosanne had moved from Orillia to a new homestead in the country and we hadn't been there yet. They have done a lot of work cleaning up the overgrown garden and insulating and heating a shop, but the property and house are lovely with a pond and several out buildings. After we all exchanged big hugs, Rob gave Rick a tour of the shop and property while Rosanne showed me where she is hoping to construct a sweat lodge. Our afternoon was spent sharing updates of our lives and talking about spending many days together over the next couple of months, doing Reiki, having meditations and exploring our spiritual paths together.

From the "R & R Ranch", we headed over to see Christine and Fred at Norma's (Fred's mom) house. The last time I saw my sister was in November when I was in Markham but it has been over a year since Rick saw either of them. We exchanged more big hugs and spent a couple of hours there, visiting while getting caught up with each other's lives. We had a great afternoon visiting with friends and family before heading "home" exhausted and ready for another early bedtime. I get the feeling that when we leave here later this summer, we will feel like we ran out of time to visit with everyone we want to see but once again we are beginning to feel at home! The picture here is of our temporary campsite at Gayle and Graham's!