

# Top Tips and Personal Insights Guide

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From the Motoroamers - 21 November 2015



As we embark on a really exciting phase of our lives, full-time travelling in our motorhome, thinking about how we arrived at this point in our lives, has been an interesting exercise. As we develop a Guide of Top Tips and Personal Insights, it gives us a chance to reflect on and share our lessons and what has shaped our decisions. We hope that our journey, so far at least, will help you as you step on the path of change and adventure. And so we wish you happiness on your journey.

***Karen and Myles***

The Motoroamers  
[www.motoroaming.com](http://www.motoroaming.com)



## **1. Have a dream and a shared vision**

In any walk of life, it's always important to have a dream or a vision to aspire to. They motivate us, excite us and drive us forward. Often those dreams become a driving force for the choices we make and determine our resilience for creating change. For us, our vision was to live the Good Life after a very stressful and unhealthy period of our lives. We had a desire to get back to nature and reconnect with an earthy existence. Intermingled within this vision was a desire to see and experience the world as travellers not just holiday-makers. Having planned a couple of fabulous motorcycle road-trips in US and the Pyrenees, we knew that adventure had a big part to play in our vision. Although the most important element for our vision for full-time motor-homing is that it is shared. A dream not shared can often be an individual nightmare. We talk regularly about our vision, what it means to us and our lives together. This now fuels us forward together in a harmonious way and even during the difficult times, we remember what our dreams are together and they glue us back together.



## **2. Work out what is most important to you - identify your values**

Where our dream/vision is the destination, our values are the compass to our lives that sets us in the right direction. When we explore our individual and collective values, i.e the things that matter most to us, we can then ensure that the life-style we choose creates happiness and comfort. When we are out of line with our values, then we experience sadness and misery. When we commit to a new life, we must ensure that it fits both parties' values, so that harmony becomes the foundation. We have talked a great deal about what matters to us; for me it's comfort/safety, family connection and exploration and for Myles choice, happiness and fun.



## **3. Work through your fears - what might/does hold you back?**

Change can often bring up a big dose of fear, a dash of anxiety and a sprinkling of doubts. This is healthy as it shows deeply engrained issues that is often years old - and once revealed they can be addressed and rationalised. For me, mine was a need for roots, certainty and security and the thought of selling up, packing up and leaving behind friends and my mum without the security of having a home, scared me half to death. It was in truth the reason that our decisions were so tardy. I think had my fears not existed, then we would have made a commitment three months earlier. Still, understanding the things that hold you back and what worries you most, can really help you solve problems before you take the leap. I think this is such a vital part of change and will help later down the line. Be honest about those worries - don't just agree with your



partner to keep them happy. Work through your fears together and identify how real they are. Establish whether the fears can be removed or perhaps simply managed. When I looked at my fears straight in the eyes, I could see how they were just barriers holding me back - almost excuses I was putting in the way. This has been such an important part of our journey so far and has really inspired our philosophy of ***living life beyond your fears***.

#### **4. Be practical and do your research - although don't over-think**



We need our dreams, although we also need to be grounded in reality. We can't live in our heads when we're about to make a huge, life-changing decision. So the next realisation for us, having worked through my fears particularly, was to start in earnest with our research. We spent months searching for the right motorhome, the right layout for our full-time life-style and once the decision had

been made, we needed to work on the detail. How would we stay connected to friends and family, how about wild camping, how would that work in practice and how could I transfer my healthy eating from home to van? And that's on top of practicalities like furniture storage, selling our cars, financial considerations and our work-style.

We've not concluded all of our practicalities, although we have a timeline from now to D-day to ensure that we're calm and enjoying the lead up. The key insight though, for both of us as deep reflectors and me the 'worry-guts' is not to over-think things - it's a foundation for fears to rear their ugly heads again. Do your research, be informed, take strong decisions from the heart and then let go just a little bit.

#### **5. Courage, confidence and trust**

Big life-changing decisions, especially that go against what is deemed 'normal', need a huge amount of courage and confidence. Courage to stay strong with your convictions and confidence to follow your dreams, despite what the doubters/ridiculers may say. As you pull together your plans and tell your story, be prepared for others to not share the same enthusiasm as you - stay resilient. Their interaction with you may well be coloured by their own fears, jealously or worries, so empathise, keep confident in your desires and stay resolute.

Trust is multi-dimensional. Trust that things will work out as they are meant to for you - even if that's not what you have planned for; trust in yourself and the choices that you have made personally and finally trust in each other and the vision you have together. This is your dream - make it your reality with confidence and courage.

## **6. Listen, discuss and support**

As we've meandered on this journey so far, our team-work has been essential. We both bring something different to our relationship and it's so important to give each other the space for your own values, personalities and fears to breathe.

We've had so, so, so many conversations; hours and hours worth of sharing, caring and fearing. Plenty of 'what if' scenarios have been played out and the one thing that has stood out for me, on my particular journey, has been Myles' support. Whilst my fears took over our path for a little while, he listened, supported me and allowed me the space to be



scared. Despite Myles' excitement about the possibilities for our future, he never once pressurised me into making any decision other than one that felt safe for me. He didn't try to persuade or push me - he just supported me. We've had a couple of wobbles, although we've just taken time to talk them through and simply appreciated the other person's perspective.

Remember that change brings uncertainty and this could throw you into irrational or old default behaviours. So be mindful of what you are experiencing and check in with each other regularly, without judgement - just loads of love and understanding. As the Latin quotes saying, 'Amor Omnia Vincit' - Love Conquers All.

## **7. Trial out your new life-style**

Getting a feel for what life would be like - trying out your dream, is really important. It certainly was for us. We were fortunate enough to be able to celebrate our 25th Wedding Anniversary in New Zealand earlier this year - six weeks in a motorhome travelling both Islands. This was such a good test for us - primarily, could we live together in such a small space without killing each other? Now, I have to own up to the odd moment of 'high maintenance' behaviour and it did worry me that things might get tricky in such a confined space. Then there was the general getting underneath each other's feet. The trial was a positive experience and taught us such a lot about life on the road.

Our trial was in fact vital to fuelling our travel plans and so when synchronicity collided with us, we were ready to formulate a plan to make it happen. It gave us information, confidence and lessons to build on and it was, apart from being an incredible adventure, a rich foundation from which we could move forward from.