

The Great Transition from MFT to a Non-MFT Church Life

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In 1984, after 5 years on national MFT, I was sent to Dan Fefferman's IOWC team, which was in Ohio at the time. Wasn't much of a graduation, my commander told me to stay behind after everyone left the Chicago MFT center in the morning. We got in his station wagon, he drove me to the bus station, gave me a Kmart shirt and it was goodbye and good luck.

I had been looking forward to leaving MFT for some time, but the 'Great Transition' was quite something.

Sometimes I'd be in charge of buying something for the team, and it was eerily disturbing to walk right up to the front door of Kmart. MFTers will understand this: when fundraising in a parking lot (never with permission), you always avoided the front door (being seen by a manager) and never talked to people going in. I logged thousands of hours at Kmarts without ever going inside.

Related to this, I guess, was not instinctively crouching down when I saw a police car cruising through a parking lot. For a fundraiser, seeing the cop car's light bar over the rows of parked cars was a little like seeing a shark fin when you're swimming.

It also took me months to get used to walking up to people without a box under my arm. My first attempts at witnessing involved me walking up to people thinking "Where's my product?"

Dan Fefferman also talked me into buying something brighter than my customary 'MFT camouflage' - polyester in shades of blue.

I have hairy legs. It took years for the bald patch on my right leg to grow back, having been rubbed bald by all the change jingling in my pocket as I jogged along looking for the next person.

And the change in metabolism was another big one. You could always tell the MFTers in a 21 day or 40 day workshop - they were the ones in the back walking up and down while listening to the lecture. It wasn't that we were sleepy, we just couldn't sit still after running and walking all day for months on end.

Sitting down to eat regularly. Using plates. That was a culture shock. Eating in the car while driving still feels completely normal to me.

What was your 'great transition' shock?