It’s every teenagers dream to move out of the house at 18. I did it. There’s a catch to it though. I moved out from Illinois and moved to a completely different state (obviously Wisconsin), but it was with my girlfriend. We were high school lovers that had our heads on our shoulders. Our relationship was going to last forever and moving in together and away from what we had called home didn’t bother us a slightest bit. Our relationship was considered to be a fantasy, a dream, a fairytale, but as you well know – and feel free to enter your own cliché here – what goes up must come down. After two and a half years of being in a relationship and everything seeming to be going according to that of a dream, I had the unfortunate event of discovering she was cheating on me. Once the perfect love story, turned into a movie, and then turned into a memory. This is where I want to deviate from the location change of *My Antonia,* whereas they moved as a group and I by myself. It has now been almost a month since I had moved out and am truly living on my own. Quite the emotional experience if you can’t already imagine.

Loneliness is a word we often toss around without specification. It’s a very loose word. To say I felt alone would do no justice. Do I base my emotions on the fact that I no longer felt a close connection with anyone? Do I base it on the fact that I had left who **I** was when I moved out? Would I be confusing loneliness with being lost? You could say that a person who feels lost can’t express emotions, but it is not the case. I was very much lost and when it comes to emotions, I had plenty: rage, sadness, awe, anticipation, and most importantly acceptance. Acceptance in that I had no choice but to blacken out all negative emotions and thoughts of loneliness. I refer to it as life education, which is extremely similar to what David Foster Wallace calls liberal arts education.

“And I submit that this is what the real, no-bullshit value of your liberal arts education is supposed to be about: how to keep from going through your comfortable, prosperous, respectable adult life dead, unconscious, a slave to your head and to your natural default setting of being uniquely, completely, imperially alone day in and day out.” – David Foster Wallace

I wish I could say that the change itself was frightening, but it wasn’t. However, what did frighten me was the length of time that it would take for life to balance out again. Would I have to make other life changes? Could things get worse? Then again, that would only be a scare if I thought it was possible that things could get worse. They couldn’t. Since the only direction life could go was forward, it meant that I was going to have some positive surprises come my way.

Pulitzer Prize winner Annie Dillard [says that](http://www.brainpickings.org/index.php/2012/09/17/the-meaning-of-life/) “According to the second law of thermodynamics, things fall apart.” What she hints at is that because everything falls apart, it is up to us to create more to counteract it, “so the universe comes out even.” After moving out on my own, I was surprised to have an article I wrote be published on the blog of Discover Outdoors (a New York based tribe whose business is about getting you out of yours and outdoors). Yet another surprise is that Under30CEO also began searching for writers to contribute to their website and I am currently working on articles for them. The biggest surprise of all is learning that life helps you get up when you stop thinking that you should stay down.

My change in settlement, this life experience, has changed and added a lot of what I thought about the world. I’m an ultimately optimistic person so I think of serious changes as a tree falling and decomposing, only to provide nutrients to another tree so as to grow [in another life direction]. Everything in life is about collection; collection of memories, of artifacts, of thoughts, ideas, of emotions, of interactions. If one collects enough of something and does some alchemy with it, one can produce something incredible. This change in settlement has given me a thousand new variables to play with about life. The experience hasn’t taught me a new way of seeing the world, it has taught me to watch and see how the world changes from experiences like these and build a life worth living from them.

As far as I have read in *Antonia,* I have found two similarities to their resettlement and my own. The first is that it was a need. While it is hinted at that Jim needed to live with his grandparents because his parents had died, the point is that he needed to settle somewhere else, as did I. The second connection is that Jim takes a number of rides on his pony to explore and discover the local wildlife. I do the same thing whether it is talking a walk, riding my bike, going kayaking, parkouring, or just coffee hopping downtown.

From my experience, if I had to make a single proclamation about it, it would be that in life there are many times in which you must resettle, but that never means that you need to settle for anything less.