

Here I am, it is the **30th of June 2011 and I am back** in our family home in the Southern Germany, where I left from half a year ago to travel to Brazil, Australia, Sweden and Israel. I know most of you are waiting for pictures, something to see where I have been, and how I have been spending my time. And the pictures will come I promise. But at the beginning there was the word, :-) wasn't it?

Well, since I left Germany on the 1st of January to Brazil this year, I have been taking so many things in: emotions, knowledge, tips, lectures, comments of love and comments of other kind, ideas, experiences, impressions... I often felt like life was going too fast, that I was taking these things in, but there was no way to put them in order. I was just randomly throwing into my suitcase, hoping if I'd just carry them long enough with me, I would find time to look through them again. And as you know one travels lighter with small luggage, my mental suitcase was on constant overload. And each time I would open it to put something new in, I had either to push and cramp things together, with a nasty headache as side effect, or I had to throw something out, hoping I wouldn't realize later (when I had time to look through things properly) that it had been something important.

Well, there I am now, sitting at home, finally unpacking everything. But don't get me wrong, the things that I have been carrying in my mental suitcase are still a mess :-). And as everyone who ever saw me unpacking for real knows (sorry Mum here and now, for mostly you are the one having to endure that mess), what I usually do is, pull out just what I need and literally throw everything else around me. So this is where I am at the moment, in the middle of all those memories and experiences, trying to get my own little crazy overview of it. But as life unfolds in mysteries, this stuff does, too :-) and I wouldn't know where to start or where to stop to tell you something about it yet.

But between all that mess I found something I thought you could be interested in. It's a text I wrote on the **21st of March, half way through my journey**, on a train ride from Canberra to Melbourne in Australia.

*„I am on a train now, and as I have stored more actual luggage on some rack a few seats behind of me, I also started to put my mind to rest, by watching the Australian landscape passing by. I am so happy I chose this train instead of the cheaper plane. I mean the freedom for my legs would probably be reason enough, I guess. But while flights help me to get faster from one place to another in times of need, train trips always help me and my mind to slow down and relax. Just what I needed: 6 hours on a decent speeded train, after one and a half month on life's roller coaster =). And don't get me wrong, roller coaster are big fun, and I love collecting mental luggage...  
... but I also love sitting down and sorting out... ;-D especially when I discover things I didn't even know I put in my suitcase in the first place.*

Well, anyway, let's look what's in the suitcase:

*First thing I realize is that things are actually in different bags in there. One has the tag: „**Time at Ediane's (my very friend's) place**“. This one actually is not very big, it just contains something like 5 days and not so exciting moments from an outside perspective, but the memories in there, are very valuable and unique to me. Thank you Ediane and Johanna for the wonderful conversations and moments we had together.*

*Then there is another bag, very full, very heavy, very chaotic, quite some extraordinary stuff in there. It is tagged: „**Warriors without Weapons in Santos Brazil**“. Wow we won't be able to look through all the details of that one now. It really needs some organizing! But*

let me point out some things that I can see sticking out: There are some wonderful moments of reunion with some of my dear friends from the Youth Initiative Program in Sweden. Maira, Johanna, Jonas, Kiko, Nathan, even though some of you I could only see shortly, it was really nice meeting you in this new place and getting to know you more! And uff there are lots and lots more meetings and shared moments with over 60 Warriors of some sort in that bag. I wish I could remember all of them! But whilst some of these memories slowly getting lost in space, others will probably stick with me and in that mental suitcase for the rest of my life. Thank you everyone for meeting me, as the unique people you are! If a dig a little deeper in that bag, there are also all kinds of social technologies, cooperative games and circle dances, a wonderful and rich action time in a beautiful Favella of Santos, called Pantanal, and some marvelous celebrations. Next to these shiny things, there are also some lonely moments. At the beginning I took my time, to open up to a new group of people, after the strong experience I had at YIP in Sweden. And after we had spent 2 hours in quite cold water for the Water Game, I was sick for five days or so. And there is also this memory, of that silly moment, when I swam into a sea urchin, and the crazy moments that followed that. An afternoon and long night of different people trying to get the sparks out of my food. The funniest trip to the hospital I ever had, to get some pieces of the sparks out of my foot on the next morning. By the way that was my first trip to a hospital anyway =) but still, I just can't get over these approximately 10 young female medicine students, that were all in the room, while I was checked and treated, wanting to hear my travel stories and see my passport and visas whilst flirting and joking with the young doctor. And all of them, including the doctor =) were way to good looking! (But the best part of this story happened a few weeks later, when I came home to Germany and examined the wound of the hospital operation again, just to find another almost 1 cm long piece of spark finding its way out of my body!) Anyway, thank you Heber and Azeer for trying to get the pieces out and Jeniffer for holding the lamp, Raphael for accompanying me to the hospital and all the others for holding my hand! There is lots more in this bag, as for example some times when I was very tired or others when I was all happy to reconnect with Edgard and his uplifting spirit. But as I said this bag is in some real chaos, as it was still filling up with new wonderful memories until the very last moments.

Leaving the Warriors bag, I went back to fill some more momeries into the other bag, „**Back at Ediane's place**“ and I visited Kiko briefly. But a lot of that time was spent with catching up sleep.... uuups. That word „uups“ by the way makes me happy each time I use it, because it makes me think of my dear friend Johanna in Bremen.

And than there is another bag, not to big, just like a week or so. And this one, well it's not tagged at all, maybe I should put something like: „**Crazy hectic week in between in Germany**“ or something like that on it. Well, I guess that says a lot already. I can find repacking memories in there, appointments with doctors, way to short meeting with friends and family and so on. But there is one bigger thing in there, that might be worth mentioning: I went for three days to Kassel, to meet with a group of young people, who I am organising a conference together for 2012. This conference is supposed to bring young active people together with Nobel Peace Price Laureate and Right Livelihood Award Laureates, so together they can design projects that will enhance our future. During our meeting we were mainly discussion our vision and mission statement and to my great enjoyment the shaping of society as such, played a big part in it.

Than there is a tiny bag, that is filled with strange wary memories of getting to „**Hungry on a plane**“, watching movies, falling asleep, waking up to eat, watching movies and falling

*asleep again, just to experience the same over and over again, until the 24 hour flight to Sydney finally was over.*

*There I was „**In Australia the opposite side of the world**“. Sure enough that was worth opening another bag to fill in new impressions. And this bag..... I don't even know where to start. Everything here has been so different, in such subtle ways. While I could feel the differences between Brazil and Germany, generally in everything around me when I was there, starting with the climate (what a heat in Santos) including the landscape (we could already see mountains covered with stunning rain forest, as we took the one hour bus ride from Sao Paulo to Santos) ending with the language (wuuah I got really good with hands and feet...). Australia somehow seemed so similar, but than was so different in the details. In many ways I felt thrown back to my three month school exchange in England, my first longer stay abroad, when I was sixteen. But see here things starting to become a real mess, cause this bag hasn't been closed yet, as experiences fill in every minute a travel on this train in this vast country. I start thinking again, and I want to start new, to describe Australia, but maybe it's just too much to do this now. Let me just point out a few very clear things in that bag. There is a wonderful week of „**Looking at Sydney's architectures**“, followed by a „**sweet weekend with my dear friends from YIP. Linde, Hannah and Robin**“ it was so good to see you and spent time with you! Save and glorious travels Linde and Hannah, see you soon Robin! And around that are spread the various memories of the time working together with Cheryl (Rose's mum) on the interview series project „**What is important for school and education?**“ at the **Orana High School and College in Canberra**. Whilst this time has been sometimes challenging for me, as I had to walk up to so many people I didn't know, and never knew whether they were interested in what I was doing, it was the most rewarding experience, when these people actually turned out to be friendly, interested and supporting :-). My special thanks go to Cheryl, who has made all of this possible for me and has been taking care most wonderfully during the time I was there! The video we created is soon is online and you are more than welcome to watch it!*

*And well as I am sort of closing the „Work Phase“ bag of my memories of Australia, with this train ride I am just starting a new bag, tagged with „**Holidays :-)**“. Until now, all that's in there is a few hours on a bus and another few hours on a train, looking at the landscape passing by.*

*Wow enough snuffling in my suitcase :-) I'll go and enjoy the view out of train window again.“*

As some of you and I know by now, this „**Holidays**“ bag was filled later by memories of a wonderful refreshing, nurturing and relaxing week at Matthew and Inga's place in Melbourne, a beautiful little camping road trip with Robin in the South of Sydney and a few crazy days on the West Coast of Australia with the wonderful Phoebe.

Back in Germany I got „**Lost in books and TV series**“ for two weeks, refusing to actually arrive, unpack or anything, knowing I would leave for another one and a half month again. What followed was a wonderful week in Järna, Sweden, where I was finally re-united with a lot of my beloved YIPpies and their inspiring spirits at the „**Initiative Forum**“.

And last but not least I went to „**Jiser el Adam**“ in Harduf, Israel, to craft and to tell stories of conflict and peace. Little did I know, what impact that course would have on me :-) but be sure to hear more about it.

For now I hope you are happy where ever you are and live the difference you want to see in the world.

Love and care. Silvia