

THE CHALLENGES OF TRAVELING AS A COUPLE or Jennifer and Donald go to Las Vegas

Occasionally, while single and traveling, I would meet a couple (both nurses) traveling together. My heart would get a momentary tingle thinking of how nice it would be to have a partner to see the country with. But is it all a bed of roses?

Recently, I spoke with a couple, Jennifer and Donald. They are on their first travel assignment together. Jennifer was open and honest as she shared her story. She spoke about the challenges they have experienced while traveling as a couple.

Jennifer and Donald met 11 years ago while working together with the developmentally disabled. Jennifer started out as a Medical Technologist and Donald had hopes for dental hygiene. As time went on, they both changed directions and went to nursing school. Now they are taking on new ventures together in nursing as a way to see the United States. After researching the tax benefits of traveling, they decided to rent a room from her parents in Washington in order to maximize on the tax benefits of maintaining a permanent residence.

Jennifer and Donald are on their first adventure in Las Vegas right now. While traveling is a wonderful experience that Jennifer can't imagine doing without her husband, she says it hasn't been so easy. They really had a difficult time finding an assignment in the same town. It took them 3 months of diligent searching to find an agency that had an assignment for both of them in the same town. Sometimes, they would find the agency, but the hospital only accepted one of them. They would have to start their search over. Soon, they learned to respond quickly to leads and start assignment searches early.

Jennifer and Donald have also learned how important it is to get agreements in writing. One of their challenges as a couple is to not only finding a compatible assignment location, but compatible working hours too. Prior to accepting their last assignment, they worked out a schedule with the hospital so they would be off every other weekend.....or so they thought. When they arrived it was a different story. The hospital had scheduled them for 6 weekends straight and has continued to make false scheduling promises. They have tried everything from pleading, setting up meetings, and asking the agency to back them up, but nothing has helped. Having their scheduling agreement in writing, would have given them more leverage in dealing with the situation.

While Jennifer is frustrated, she says, "I am glad contracts have an expiration date and travelers stick together. I have managed to see the area with other travelers while my husband is working. We are not going to let this experience sour our taste for traveling. This is a learning experience. Next time, we will get all agreements in writing."

Donald and Jennifer are currently applying for an assignment in Long Island, New York. Perhaps I will have to do a follow up article on their next adventure. Perhaps traveling with a partner is more challenging than I realized, but good things don't always come easy do they?