

This morning, as I sit here listening to the rain on our metal roof, I am thinking about how our likes and dislikes are influenced by the circumstances of our lives and also by what we read, hear, and see. We need rain. It has become too dry these past weeks, and a relentless wind for a couple of days dried out our area even more. In the garden there is still moisture down a bit in the soil, but we have needed rain for growth.

I recall reading in one of Barbara Kingsolver's books about hearing someone complain that the predicted rainy day would ruin her plans. This sentiment, voiced in a dry climate, seemed to be in total disconnect from the realities of life. So, are our likes and dislikes always purely personal, or do they have a larger meaning and are, perhaps, an indication of our own understanding of our place in the larger arena of Life on Earth?

Some of our preferences and prejudices are, of course, purely personal. I really do not like white bread. I cannot imagine eating white "store bread," but even homemade white bread is distasteful to me. I don't like mayonnaise, either, or any kind of white dressing. And, I don't like milk, though I have no intolerance for dairy products. I just don't like it. I have not drunk a glass of milk since I was two years old, and that has been a long time.

I like to go to bed on sheets that have dried outdoors on the clothesline. There is no fragrance that is comparable. I use unscented laundry detergent, and the smell in those sheets and pillowcases—as well as in the rest of the washing—makes for sweet dreams and good sleep.

I don't like throwing things away, but I don't like accumulating "stuff," either. So, my clothes basket is many years old—unfortunately, plastic—and is pretty well broken on two sides. But, I won't throw it away as long as I can use it to carry the washing to the line.

I like good socks. There is nothing better than comfortable cotton or wool socks for making my feet happy. I usually wear wool socks from our own sheep year round. They are as useful in the summer as in the winter, and they wick away moisture from my feet.

I don't like to go away from home. This has become more pronounced in recent years, but I really never have liked to leave this farm for any length of time. When I was at the university, I came home on many weekends, and I was at home, helping on the farm, all summer long. It seems incredible to me now that I made a solitary trip to Europe when I was in my twenties, but the result—meeting my life partner and finding him willing to come to this farm to live and work—was well worth the uncertainties I have always felt in regard to traveling.

I like to read. It seems to me that I can travel in my mind as I read biographies, accounts of the adventures of those who do roam the world, and even novels. So, my lack of desire for traveling myself is compensated by my pleasure and the things I learn from reading the experiences of others who are more intrepid travelers.

I like to live on this farm where I was born. There has never been a place that has drawn my affections from this piece of land. There is nothing I like better than walking the fields that my great-grandparents, grandparents, and

parents also walked. I have never wished to live anywhere else.

I do not like stupidity in the voting booth. Anyone with any sense should have seen what their unthinking actions in November of 2016 would do to this country and to the world. The results for our people and for all of the people of this precious Earth are already beginning to show. Thoughtlessness at best and uncaring greed at worst—and I feel strongly that it is the latter—are a recipe for disaster. I really, really do not like that.