Ryan’s Question: Do you feel at “home” at college? Would you say many people feel this way?

Amberly’s Answer: The other day during winter break, when I was talking to a friend, I told her that I was “going home” next week. Noticing her confused look I realized I had referred to UMass, not my small hometown of Sherborn, Massachusetts, as home. So I guess, really, that that answers your first question.

It took a while before I reached this point, though. As I wrote in my previous blog post, reality hit me this past semester in a way it hadn’t for the others. I came to the realization around November that I had viewed my freshman year of college as a cool experience, but one that would ultimately end, and thereafter I would return home and go back to a Dover Sherborn School the following fall.

As we can all see now, that didn’t happen.

I realized around November that this — college — was officially my “new normal” of sorts. What defined that “new normal,” though, I wasn’t quite sure. All I knew was that a new phase of my life had swung into motion, and I had no clue what the trajectory it was going to take. And that? That was terrifying.

It was then, I think, that UMass became home in my eyes. As for anyone else, I can’t really say. But to me, “home” is that place in the world where you feel brave enough to take a step forward, no matter how much uncertainty might make you want to take five steps back.

Blog Column: 
Amberly's Answers