

- that the distance between the partners is not too great, for example, New York - Ottawa is better than Lima - Ottawa
- that frequent reunions, phone calls and letters can be had; that the courtship pattern remains in place, i.e., special dates are commemorated, birthdays and anniversaries celebrated
- that the partners remain aware of the daily realities of the other and are sensitive to them

Long distance relationships in the foreign service have to defy several of the important predictors for success. The channels for reunion, voice communication and other tangible means of continuing the relationship are limited by long distance and expense. There is also the repetitive nature of the postings which means it may not be a one time situation.

Spending a large part of ones married life apart is not a situation most couples envision, but it is becoming more common as pressures and options become more complex. Finding the best education for children, especially for those with special needs, is difficult and sometimes impossible in another country. More spouses work outside the home and contribute significantly to the family finances, so that going on post would mean a major drop in family income. As the health care budget shrinks, society expects that the elderly will remain in their homes and be cared for by family members.

As more couples opt for the commuter solution, the network of spouses who have stayed at home is growing. There are more people who are going through the same experience that you are. Through the Posting Centre or the Foreign Service Community Association, it should be possible to get in touch with them. You might consider forming a mutual support group, or persuading the FSCA to help organize one.