

Pass It On®...

How Far Would you go for a Friend?

The story of Dindim, the penguin who travels 5,000 miles every year to visit with its rescuer.

On a typical day, off the coast of a small Brazilian island, Joao Pereira de Souza was headed out fishing. He was disheartened to find that an oil spill had contaminated the waters. Staring out at the waves with their greasy sheen, he decided it was not a good day to fish. But walking the beach that day, he found a struggling penguin, covered in oil and starving.

Pereira took the penguin home, gently cleaned it and spent the next week nursing it back to health. He named it Dindim, a Portuguese word meaning “ice pop.”

Dindim is a Magellanic penguin, a species known for living in the seas of South America. In order to breed, they must return to Patagonia, 8,000 kilometers (5,000 miles) from Pereira’s home. Pereira patiently took Dindim back to the ocean and taught him how to swim again. Soon enough, it was time for Dindim to return to life in the wild. Pereira watched Dindim swim away, believing it would be the last time he saw him.

But the next June, Dindim returned. The two shared a tender beak-to-nose greeting, and Dindim stayed for a month, waddling around the fisherman’s house. The time to leave arrived, and Pereira thought this surely would be the last time he would see Dindim. But 11 months later, the penguin with a long memory returned again.

It is a common belief among scientists that animals have short memories. So a couple of them put a tracking device on Dindim to see if it was indeed the same penguin that returned year after year. To their surprise, but not Pereira’s, Dindim returned, year after year, for more than a decade.

Love and nurture create a bond so deep that we can’t always explain it. It’s just something we feel, something we long to provide. And when we do, it lasts much longer than we ever expected.

Pereira and Dindim share a bond that bridges human life and the natural world. Their friendship is hope personified.

Remember your Friends...[PassItOn.com](https://passiton.com)

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