

20 LIFE LESSONS LEARNED FROM TRAVEL



Caroline Makepeace

"The difference between a tourist and a traveler is that a tourist seeks only comfort while a traveler seeks discovery. They take more risks. They get pleasure in overcoming difficulties and discomforts, and they seek out the people."

Lea Lane

INTRODUCTION

Travel is more than just a portal in which to explore new destinations and cultures; it's a journey within yourself. Travel can help teach you more about who you are and how you belong.

Travel can teach you certain truths about life and natural laws. Things you don't learn in school, which is surprising, as these truths help you create a fulfilling and empowered life.

WHAT IS AN EMPOWERED LIFE?

To empower is to enable oneself to become the authority of his or her life.

Empowerment is a growth process that develops skills necessary for a successful life.

Skills such as positive thinking, an awareness of your greatness, the ability to decipher right from wrong, and to live with an attitude of kindness and gratitude.

Living an empowered life means leaving positive and uplifting marks on your own and others lives. An empowered life means striving to live your best life and to help others to do the same.

FOUR MAJOR RELATIONSHIP AREAS

I have categorized the lessons within this ebook into the four major relationship areas of our life: Relationships to Others, Relationships to Self, Relationships to the Earth, and Relationships to Life or as some might call it God. To me, they are one and the same.

These lessons may belong to several of the categories, as these relationships are never separate; all living things are interdependent. Being strong in each enables you to be strong in all.

These truths, or lessons, I have found to be the same no matter where I have traveled or with whom I have interacted. Some of these truths I have

extended upon through private study and teachings from those, dare I say, “enlightened beings” who have walked a continual path of learning and who now pass on that wisdom to others.

Could you learn these things by not traveling? Yes. You can learn anything by keeping your eyes and ears open no matter where you are and what you do.

A lot of our lessons in life come through the pain we experience, and that is why I explain that pain is your friend. But there are certain things I think you would find harder to learn without traveling, and I think travel helped me to learn the lessons a lot quicker.

For instance, how could you truly know what God means, if your only experience of it was through the four walls of a church and the religious upbringing of your childhood?

When you travel, you look to learn about other ways, and you experience new things, not through a book or audio CD, but by using your five, or six, senses.

You may visit a Hindu temple, attend a Muslim wedding, teach at a Buddhist school, or just spend a lot of time in nature. At the end of that entire discovery, you might find that, yes, God is in the place where you were first told to believe growing up, or you may not. You would never have affirmed this, or discovered a new way, if you did not go out and see the other ways for yourself.

And so, in many regards, one could then consider travel to incorporate any event or journey that leads you to discover a new way of being or thinking. And with that discovery comes a changing of thought, and an embracing of either the old or the new.

So yes, you can learn these lessons without having to travel around the world or for long periods of time. You may just travel to an ethnic part of your city for the weekend.

I found travel experiences heightened these lessons.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHERS



1. SAME SAME, BUT DIFFERENT

Whenever I travel to a new destination, I first view it through the eyes of what is the same.

This perspective helps me find a connection and be less willing to turn my nose up in case I don't like it. Once I have found the commonalities, I am more open to accepting and appreciate the differences. And in the end, if I don't like what is different than I can just focus on what I like about it that is the same.

The biggest truth to this I learned is in regards to all people. It never stops to amaze me just how much we human beings are the same.

Every new place I go to, I run into the same personalities from where I just departed. I meet people who laugh at the same jokes; I talk to people who share similar dreams and experiences, I see children on the dirt roads of Cambodia playing the same games that children in the playgrounds of private schools do in Sydney.

I experience the same joy at a Muslim wedding that I do at a Catholic one. A Buddhists perform ceremonies with the same reverence and awe as a Jewish one. And I see that when people are hurt, they bleed the same color, and have hearts that cry the same salty tears and burst with the same deep love.

Same same but different.

Inherently we are all the same. We are made up of the same stuff. The differences are so unimportant; they are just the minor details that make us all unique.

If only all people could view others like that, there would be no need for war and hatred.

If I first recognize that you are the same as me, then why would I want to hurt you?

When you get to the heart of all major religions, when you delve deep below the dogma and traditions, you will find this truth. It's just that most people practice the dogma and tradition, the differences, and forget to go deeper to

seek the truth.

The Balinese use this saying all the time to explain or describe something they can't explain or describe.

With a wave of their hand, they will just say "Same same but different."

I love this, and I think it shows a natural law. Everything and everyone is the same ... same but different.

I love how the saying first recognizes that what is the same is what is most important. But within that sameness comes some differences, differences that can just be waved away with your hand, they are so minute.

But not so minute, that you can't celebrate them too!

Same Same but different

2. HANG AROUND PEOPLE WHO CELEBRATE YOU, NOT TOLERATE YOU

When you are traveling, you have the luxury of choosing who you hang around. You are not obligated to keep a connection with the people you meet.

They are not family, and they have no childhood history with you. You can spend time getting to know them, and if you decide they are not your cup of tea, then you wish them a fantastic journey, and you go on your way. There is no drama or sorrow that comes with moving on.

You're granted greater freedom to form deeper bonds with those people whose company you enjoy.

Moments spent with friends like these will be placed in your treasure box of memories forever. These are the people who have loved you for who you are.

When you are traveling, barriers tend to get removed, and you find yourself opening up more to people. You can be yourself. There is no one around who knows you or your past. You can be loved for who you are in this moment.

When traveling, you tend to choose your circle of friends to be those people who celebrate you, not tolerate you. Hopefully, you choose to be a celebrator yourself.

WHO ARE THE TOLERATORS AND WHO ARE THE
CELEBRATORS?

THE TOLERATORS:

These are the people who have known you forever and put up with you just because. You find you probably don't have much in common anymore, and you can't relate.

People change; it is the nature of life. Don't hold onto past relationships just because. Let them go.

Why waste yours and others times by being tolerators of each other?

Tolerators won't listen to what you are saying, they won't get excited by the great things you have done or plan to do, and they will think of all the reasons why things you choose to do won't work.

They'll compete with you and, when you are not around, you can be sure you will be a topic of their conversation with others. They won't want to hang around you; they do it only through a sense of obligation.

I am sure you are a tolerator with people within your network of friends too. We all do it. Tolerators tend to bring out the worst in each other.

THE CELEBRATORS:

These are the people that uplift and inspire you. They are excited about your life and the things you choose to do. They offer you words of encouragement and believe in you. They don't feel insecure around you, and they know the relationship is reciprocal.

When you hang around those, who celebrate you the experience is fun. You are there together to just enjoy each other's company.

Who you are yesterday or tomorrow doesn't matter, I just like who you are now. Conversations with your celebrating friends flow easily, and you feel comfortable to let down your guard and be yourself. Celebrators tend to bring out the best in each other.

Traveling gives you the confidence to choose to only hang around those who celebrate you.

What about tolerators you can't shut out of your life?

Sure. We all have people in our life we can't cut the cord with for whatever reason.

Be pleasant. Do what you can to be a celebrator of them, yet limit your time with them. Make the conversation less about you and more about their lives. And then take a shot of whiskey to calm your nerves!

Travel taught me that I have a choice. I don't have to be friends with people who tolerate me just because, and this is so empowering.

Removing the tolerators from your life might reduce your connection pool, but it will make your circle of friends higher in quality.

It is so liberating to know that you can choose to surround yourself with celebrators, and with that positive and uplifting energy. You don't have to settle for anything less.

Celebrate don't tolerate

3. YOU CAN UNDERSTAND OTHERS THROUGH MORE THAN WORDS

I'm good at reading people. I usually can tell very quickly if I can trust someone, or if they are merely tolerating me or celebrating me.

I can tell if someone is nervous, insecure, or shy. I'm good at interpreting those who don't speak clearly or in Pidgin English.

When you travel, you interact with many people whose culture is vastly different to yours.

You'll network with people who speak a language you can't understand, forcing you to rely more on your sight and your intuition to aid communication.

You quickly learn how to read gestures and facial expressions as you try to put the pieces together of what they are trying to say. Teaching English in Bangkok helped me to tune into non-verbal forms of communication.

Travel opens your eyes to the other forms of communication that are vital to understanding.

When you live in the same place for most of your life, you are mostly hanging around the same people. People you know and trust, who are probably of a similar personality to you, and most likely of the same cultural background with the same ways of speaking, sharing, and believing.

You tune out of non-verbal forms of communication because you don't need it; you hear and understand their words. Words can easily hide the truth. Those who pay attention only to words will believe them instead of seeing what lies underneath.

When you travel, you are out of your comfort zone. You meet people of many different personalities and get to know these different personality types quickly.

Human beings are so similar in the way we think and act. Because of my exposure to a wide variety of people, I can usually tell the type of person someone is when I meet them. I don't mean this from a judgmental or critical perspective either.

Quickly understanding a person's personality or energy, makes me feel very comfortable in talking to and relating to them. If you can read someone well, then you know how you can act around him or her.

You know if it's better to put your guard up or down, you know if you can throw a joke out to ease perhaps their discomfort or your own, and you know whether to offer an encouraging word or ask a question to initiate conversation.

Humans connect with each other through energy. It's what brings you the feeling of wanting to get know a certain person or not. It is the energy field, or chemistry, that connects you.

Traveling and having interactions with diverse energy fields, helps you to read the energy better.

If I don't like the energy of a person, I know to be wary and keep my distance because that energy can rub off me in a negative way. Remember you can choose to be with tolerators or celebrators, and you can choose to be one or the other yourself.

*Connection and truth
runs deeper than words*

4. HELPING ANOTHER MEANS HELPING YOURSELF

I think this can be a difficult concept to understand and practice. There's a great fear attached to the idea of giving selflessly. Giving takes energy and trust, and often it feels like replenishing that energy will never happen.

It might not get replenished straight away, or by the person you help, but life has a way of bringing it back to you in unconnected and surprising ways.

HELP YOURSELF FIRST

The first thing I have learned in regards to this principle is the **first person you must help is yourself.**

When you are so involved in the pain of your shortcomings, past failures, and daytime dramas, it is almost impossible to give any positive energy into helping somebody else.

You have an obligation to do whatever it takes to empty the baggage that you are carrying.

We all have loads in varying kilograms. We carry around the harsh words our 3rd-grade teacher shouted at us; we struggle to let go of the bullying in the playground, the pain of our parent's divorce or our teenage broken hearts.

There is a very wise Buddhist tale of two monks who were walking down the street in silent meditation.

"Two Zen monks were walking along a river when they came upon a beautiful young woman. The bridge was out, she tearfully explained, and she needed to cross the river right away.

"Don't worry," said one of the monks, "just climb on my back and I'll carry you across."

The girl climbed on the monk's back and he took her across. The monks then continued their journey, but the second monk was very upset.

Finally, and a few hours later he couldn't stand it anymore and asked, "How could you, a virtuous monk, allow a woman to ride upon your back?"

The first monk said, "Are you still carrying that lady? I put her down when we crossed the river hours ago."

When you put down the baggage of your past, you release the negative energy that has been permeating out from every orifice of your body, and you're free to move forward.

On an airplane, the air hostess instructs you to put the oxygen mask on yourself first before you help anyone else, even your child.

You **can't help someone unless you first help yourself**. (and scientifically, children have greater lung capacity so will have more time to wait for you to help them. If you try to help them first, you'll expire quicker and run out of time to help them anyway. Facts learned on a behind the scenes Qantas tour!)

Travel is an inner journey that forces you to stare into the faces of your demons.

Many people say that others travel for long periods of time because they are running away from something. It was when I started traveling that I began running to life.

My problems were now staring me directly in the face, whereas in my normal life there was a multitude of ways I could bury them or run.

But, now I had the space to figure it out without the expectations, judgments or assumptions from those around me who knew me.

When you travel, you learn how to get along with yourself and with total strangers. It helps you evaluate your life, and who you want to be, and then it gifts you the opportunity to be that person.

Travel allows you greater freedom to change.

A lot of people hold onto who they were in the past, as they are served constant reminders of it in their day to day living. They think their past defines them and, thus, cannot be anyone other than that.

And the people around you mostly will not let you release yourself from the past either. As a traveler, there is no need to do this. You are free to be, as most the people you meet do not know anything about you.

They don't know your past or your future, just who you are now. So, you can choose who you want that to be. The adage works perfectly here,

'Fake it till you make it.'

NOW LET'S HELP OTHERS

When you have helped yourself, you are in a more empowered position to help others.

Your higher vibrations and strength naturally transfer onto others to uplift and encourage.

When you help others, in return you receive so much more back. Zig Ziglar, a popular motivational speaker, often says,

"You can have everything in life that you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want."

Prospering in life does not have to mean I need to compete with and tear down the person beside me. I can get ahead by helping my competitor get ahead also.

How does this happen?

By helping someone else get what he or she wants you are saying that I believe there is enough to go around. There are no limiting thoughts of lack.

When you believe, there is enough to go around; you will start to see the abundance that exists around you ready to be shared.

You attract into your life who you are, which is defined by your thoughts.

There is truth to the saying what goes around comes around. When you help others, that good energy you throw out comes straight back at you magnified.

This idea works powerfully in two ways:

1. What you give out you get back.
2. When I help someone, I feel great, which empowers me to help yet another person. With this empowered feeling comes more powerful energy. The more powerful your energy, the more things you will attract to you that has the same energy vibration. That is why good attracts good, and bad attracts bad.

*Help yourself and be
empowered to help others*

5. A KIND SMILE & APPRECIATION BREAKS DOWN BARRIERS

Some of the most beautiful conversations I've had with others have purely been through a smile or joyous laughter.

This simple act can destroy barriers and form friendships.

South East Asia taught me how to bring ease and joy into my interactions with others. Their cultural need to save face means they bring a smile and a laugh to every situation.

They use this as their weapon of choice to disarm any angry or volatile situation. Smiles, gentleness, and respect are the foundations of most conversations.

Business happens in a pleasing and happy manner, which brings them good luck. Bartering in Asia is fun and done with a teasing joke, laughter, and smiles (at least that has always been true for us).

When we approach bartering like this, we always come out with a good win-win price.

We now use this way of being in almost all our dealings with others.

Why choose to be mean, rude, grumpy, and negative to others? How does this help someone else to feel good and how does this make me feel good? (Although, we will admit to not being perfect and having the odd occasions when we just crack it through pure frustration and tiredness. The results are never great, and I always feel bad.)

However, when we smile, try to encourage laughter, praise whoever we are

dealing with, or communicate our appreciation for their help, we are met with smiling eyes of relief and gratitude, which in turn makes us feel wonderful for making someone else's day a little easier.

Not only that, sometimes we may find little treats have happened, like a room upgrade, a discount on a vehicle, or free air freight of 900kgs of personal effects from the US to Australia. Yes, true story. Craig received this bonus from his Delta boss, not because it was the Delta policy, but because his boss appreciated Craig always coming to work with a smile, a good attitude, and a friendly personality to everyone who worked on his team. It makes a huge difference.

When interacting with others make your intention

*"How can I bring a little more joy to your life?
How can I best serve you?"*

The simplest and easiest of answers is a smile, a thank you, or a compliment.

*Uplift others through
smiles, encouragement, and
appreciation*

RELATIONSHIP TO EARTH



6. THE EARTH IS A LIVING ORGANISM MORE POWERFUL THAN US

It's funny how many people still believe they can conquer the Earth. She can wipe us all out in a minute if she so wishes.

The Earth doesn't need us to survive; we need the Earth.

Before travel, I was caught up in my everyday life, paying scarce attention to the natural world around me, and having a huge disconnect thus.

I only knew something of beaches and the bush. I didn't know anything of towering mountains, deserts, volcanoes, lakes, canyons, snow, or rainforests.

Sure, I learned about this at school, but it bared little relevance as I had no personal experience. The best way to learn is to experience things for yourself.

Traveling exposed me to so many different ecosystems and allowed me to see, in action, how each one survives, thrives and operates. And it does this in total perfection, through the perfect synergy of nature's elements.

The Earth is a living organism, just like you and me and all living things that exist on it. It is the biggest living organism and incredibly powerful.

When you learn and discover this truth, your mind can dig a little deeper into its power. If I am a living organism and my body fights off diseases and invading predators that do not wish to look after me, then my body will go

into battle mode to fight it off. If my body does this then wouldn't the Earth?

Wouldn't the Earth do all it could to fight off those predators not looking after it?

Something to think about next time you want to release those carbons into the air, or throw your cardboard box into the underground waste pile. We're all guilty of acting without thought of our Mother Earth.

What small steps of loving changes can you make each day?

Respect nature.

She holds all the lessons and provides you with everything you need to survive.

The Australian Aboriginal culture is the oldest living civilization. They had survived for 50,000 years before white man came along with not even the common flu ailing their healthy bodies.

As nomadic dwellers, they had no permanent structures, refrigeration, or synthetic medicines. They understood Mother Earth's power and how she is here to help us live and survive; she is not our enemy to be conquered. Spending time with Indigenous people has opened my eyes up to the power of Mumma Earth and how she's here to empower us.

In our modern-day lives, we have drifted away from Mother Earth and fail to recognize the power she has to offer all we need in sickness and health.

Turn to Mother Nature more. Look to her for your cures for ailments of the body and mind. Eat more of the produce she grows to strengthen your body for superior health.

I could rant and lecture for pages about the health of our world today and the very simple solutions that are present through the Earth, but if I had never traveled, and opened my mind up to learn these truths for myself I may never have listened either.

We do our best to turn to Mother Nature before synthetic medicines and quick fix solutions. We incorporate a wide variety of organic herbs and vegetables into our diet and enrich our meals with nourishing super foods and supplements. Processed and packaged food has no space in our cupboards. We avoid refined sugar (but still treat ourselves in small doses), opting instead for healthier alternatives.

We always look to nature or the power that lies within ourselves to solve our problems and quieten our anxiety.

Walks along the beach or strolls through the forest bring such a sense of calm, connection and balance.

The only time we start to feel sick is if we stray from this plan.

*Trust in Mother Nature;
connect to her power*

7. NATURE IS A PLACE OF REJUVENATION

I hug trees.

Trees are perfect, and so with that, comes perfect energy. When I hug a tree, I get a short little burst of energy transferred to me.

Think I'm crazy? Maybe so, and if so, it's probably because, like me, your culture believes those trees are just something there in the background, like all things in nature, serving no real purpose or holding any power.

I challenge your thinking. I invite you to look around the natural world. Study its vibrancy and the perfection – a beauty that lies in its perfection.

It doesn't need changing or improving; it grows and exists, as it should.

Think about how you felt the last time you spent a day in nature.

Relaxed... carefree... rejuvenated? Even if it was pelting down rain, I'm sure there was some part of you that felt energized, and once you got out of the rain and heard it falling on the roof above you once again felt calm.

Traveling reconnects me to nature. Days spent hiking in the mountains, camping on the edge of escarpments, exploring rainforests, swimming in lakes, or relaxing on beaches, no matter where I was or what I was doing I always felt a sense of being in the perfect place for that moment.

Nature centers you and brings you back to what is important. My worries fade into the background, and I know all that matters right now is myself, my breath, and the perfection of being.

If I'm away from nature for too long, I crave it. My body and mind crave a restoration of peace and belonging.

*Go to nature to restore
your sense of being*

RELATIONSHIP TO SELF



8. YOU ARE POWERFUL BEYOND MEASURE

Out of all the truths I have learned traveling, I believe this is the most important one. I wish it were whispered to every child from birth daily.

I wonder how many issues in life may disappear, how much less Prozac prescribed, and how many people may take more risks to follow their hearts and create their dreams?

So often, through various influences, we are taught to fear ourselves, to live in shame, and to be less than what we are capable of being.

Travel involves risk, lots of it. It also involves stepping out of your comfort zone. When you step out of your comfort zone, you realize a little bit more about how powerful you are.

When you stay in your comfort zone, you forget this. You don't understand that you have the power to learn new things and to grow in tremendous ways. You don't understand just how adaptable and flexible you are, and how well equipped you are to deal with any challenges that come your way. Your fear holds you captive and renders you powerless.

When you understand that you are powerful beyond measure, you understand that you have the power to choose who you want to be and how to react to situations, positive or negative, in your life.

You are not a victim. You are powerful beyond measure.

The circumstances of your life are not there because of bad luck. Believing this is holding you in a state of being a victim.



When you are a victim, you cannot choose who, you want to be. There are always others and circumstances dictating that for you, and so you become powerless.

When you are powerful beyond measure, you can take responsibility for all that is good or bad in your life and make a different choice.

If you don't assume responsibility you cannot make a different choice, because it is not your fault, therefore nothing will change- because it is not the cause of your problems fault either.

I was a victim of circumstances for many years. I could not help who I was because the events of my life made me this way; I reacted to life constantly.

These reactions arose from insecurities, self-doubt, a lack of self-love, and remaining trapped in the negative power of these emotional states.

My reactions resulted in the same dis-empowering displays of anger, jealousy, nastiness, and shame.

I never knew how to respond; I only knew how to react. I never understood that I was powerful beyond measure and I had the ability to make a different choice.

It was only when my life reached the point of survive or die, did my true power kick in. I decided to live a better life it was up to me to make a different choice.

From that day on I have understood this most powerful truth in my life. I am more powerful than measure. I have a choice; I can be whoever I want to be, I can do whatever I want to do. And I deserve it.

When you understand are powerful beyond measure you let your light shine.

We are born with a light inside of us that burns brightly. Spend time with a baby or young child, and you will instantly feel this light stirring something inside of you. It is your lights recognition of one that is more powerful than yours - only because it shines freely.

A baby is so pure and innocent, so unconditioned and accepting, trusting and loving; their light shines so brightly.

It's only as a child grows that the light diminishes through circumstances, events, and the words and actions of others until a child soon forgets how to let their light shine.

The child grows into an adult, and the world becomes a little darker.

To remove the darkness, we can light up what is most powerful and special about us.

Why do we hide it away? We feel that playing small benefits others; that we are preserving their self-esteem and sense of security. We think that it helps others to feel better when it doesn't. It makes them feel as if they too must play small.

Celebrating your power does not mean that you think you are better than anyone else, it's just saying

'Hey, I'm a cool being because.... tell me, what makes you great?'

Each of us has our own light of unique greatness that contributes to making this planet a special place.

You are not inadequate. You are powerful beyond measure. There is a powerful light of truth and goodness that exists inside of you. If you allow this light of yours to shine brightly, it will unconsciously allow others to do the same. You will be serving the world.

Do not fear your greatness, celebrate it, and let it shine for the world to see. You will find that you will then enjoy celebrating the greatness of others. We all have this light, let us not darken it anymore.

I'll leave you with my favorite poem by Marianne Williamson.

OUR DEEPEST FEAR IS NOT THAT WE ARE INADEQUATE

Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that frightens us.

We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, handsome, talented and fabulous?

Actually, who are you not to be?

You are a child of God.

Your playing small does not serve the world.

There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We were born to make manifest the glory of God within us.

It is not just in some; it is in everyone. And, as we let our own light shine, we consciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

*You are powerful beyond
measure*

9. TRUST IN YOUR GUT

I read a story in Richard Branson's biography that illustrates the power of your gut.

He, his wife, and two tourists were off the coast of Mexico with two local sailors on a boat fishing for Marlin. A huge storm came through and the boat, due rudder failure, became stuck and could not make it back to shore.

The boat was pitched about in the storm horribly, and they were lucky to make it through the first couple of hours of the storm. When everything around them suddenly became calm, they realized they were in the eye of the storm. When they looked ahead to what was coming, they saw a whole lot worse headed straight for them.

Richard, as did his wife, knew that there was no way the small boat was going to survive another beating. His gut began to talk truth to him, while his mind screamed something different.

He decided to listen to his gut, and he and his wife jumped overboard with flippers on and swam to shore. They were good swimmers and knew could make it, as they were only a couple of miles offshore.

The remaining tourists and the captain listened to their minds, which told them they would be crazy to leave the safety of the boat.

Richard and his wife swam for three hours in the howling wind and thrashing sea. Eventually, they made it back to shore and raised the alarm for help. The tourists, the fisherman, and their boat were never found.

Your logical mind serves a definite purpose. But it cannot connect very well to our "sixth sense" and our natural survival instincts.

All animals have these. These instincts come from our gut, which is the area that can best connect to our higher powers. The gut does not listen to reason, or to logic, or to illusioned fear.

The gut listens to the truth and tunes into the energy of the now and a couple of steps into the future. Your gut is the bond between you and your

life.



Listen to your gut more; it speaks the truth.

When Kalyra was first born, and it was time to take her home from the hospital, I looked at this tiny bundle of life and thought

“Holy crap, what do I do now?”

I had no experience looking after a child. I had never had a pet to care for, and any plant that came within 5 feet of me met with a very premature death.

My logical mind lost. And so, I allowed the only thing that knew what to do, my natural instincts, to take over, just as all mothers do.

There were times through the first few months of her life, where I listened to well-meaning advice that went against my better instincts.

My mind, however, told me that I didn’t have a clue, and obviously, these parents knew better than me.

I soon learned to ignore the advice because every time I listened to them instead of my gut, things just did not work well and I deeply regretted it.

My only advice to new expectant mothers is,

“Don’t ask me, ask your gut. Only you know what is right for your child.” Just as only you know what is right for your life.

When you travel, you wander through an alien world most of the time. Your logical mind can’t help you much as it does not know too much about the new place you are visiting. Your gut becomes your compass. It lets you know when something does not feel right, and it helps you look for an alternative solution.

Whenever I ignore my gut, I head into the stormy waters. Whenever I listen to it, I find my way out of dicey situations, or I choose the right, and most fulfilling path, to walk.

*Listen to and trust your
gut*

10. YOU ARE NOT YOUR PAST OR YOUR PROBLEMS

Everybody has a shadowy past filled with shameful or embarrassing experiences they wish they could wipe from their history.

Part of living and growing involves making mistakes, sometimes revoltingly worse than others. It is by making the mistakes that we discover who we are and how we want to evolve.

I have many skeletons lurking in my closet, but they are lying in there peacefully now as I have laid them to rest. I realized they did not benefit my present life by continually dragging them around with me. I decided to use them instead as a form of empowerment.

Traveling the world taught me that your past does not matter and you are not your problems.

Problems come and go, like all things, and they do not have to define who you are.

You have the choice whether to remain embroiled in your problems and become a victim or take responsibility for them and choose otherwise.

You can make a different choice, and become a different person- a victor who is in control of their life.

When you travel, you understand the power of this more. You have the freedom to define who you want to be with each new place of arrival and each new friend you make.

If you stuff up a friendship in one town, instead of beating yourself up to be a loser, you can discover the mistake and decide not to be that person when you arrive in the next town. (It's important you don't miss this step and continue to be a jackass.)

Once you begin living your life like this you begin to learn a very powerful truth that it doesn't matter who you once were, all that matters is who you

are now.

I decided that I was going to use my travels to learn how to live a good life. I wanted to be the victor of my life, as I was tired of being the victim.

I knew it did not serve me at all; instead, it trapped me in a cycle of endless pain and recurring problems.

I took my new power and transformed myself. I moved to a place where nobody knew me, and I started again.

Running away, some people may say. Maybe. But if I had of stayed where I was, I am sure my life would tell a different story. I would have been held there, unable to change because those around me, and the memories I held would have haunted me into remaining a victim.

By running away and starting fresh, I became a stronger person - a more positive, kind and happy person. I became who I wanted to be because I knew I held power within me to choose otherwise.

Steven Covey, an authority figure on leadership and motivation says,



"Until a person can say deeply and honestly, I am who I am because of the choices I made yesterday, then that person cannot say I choose otherwise."

I currently have a problem with my finances in transition. In other words, I don't have a lot of money. (Note: This was at the time of writing this back in 2012. Life has now changed for me because I changed)

I made terrible decisions that landed me in the dire financial situation. I know that this is a problem that will soon pass. It does not define me as being a loser, a terrible manager of money, or unworthy of an ideal financial situation. I am not my problems.

A problem is something that passes through my life to teach me a lesson and enable me to move forward. Deep down, I am still an inherently good person, as we all are. I know that I hold power within me to change my current situation; it does not hold me captive in hell.

When you meet someone at a party for the first time, do you introduce

yourself as

“Hi, I am Caroline. I am a pretty big loser. You wouldn’t believe what I did in my life when I was seventeen. You see I was traumatized as a child and felt unloved, so I went and ...”

You certainly wouldn’t be a hit at the party.

Many people carry this definition of themselves around with them on the inside. A definition of himself or herself as a loser with an awful past that can’t help but affect their ability to make any good decisions now or ever. This perception is projected subconsciously onto those who meet them.

Strangers, who know nothing of your past, somehow pick up on the shadows that are lurking in your background and begin to make their assumptions based on the stranger danger vibe you are casting off.



Let go of the past; it does not matter.

Who do you want to be now? Be that person. You can. You can because you are the victor of your life, and all that matters is now.

Remember this other truth, change is good. People can change by letting go of their past and problems.

*All that matters is who
you are now*

RELATIONSHIP TO LIFE



11. SHARE SHARE SHARE

I only discovered this life lesson because of the pain that I went through upon returning to “civilized” life after our five-year “honeymoon.” I thought my travels were over and I fell apart. I couldn’t cope with living a life that did not involve the constant change and excitement of life on the road.

Meaning disappeared, and my purpose became stagnant. I wallowed in self-pity while trying recklessly to dig my way out.

Through my desperate digging, I created desperate circumstances, and my life of travel drifted further and further away.

I felt like I was dying inside. Over and over I’d tell Craig,

“I don’t understand. Why did we have all those experiences traveling for it to all be for nothing? I feel like I’m wasting all the wisdom and experience inside of me.”

Throughout this desperate struggle, however, one constant remained the same. I continually asked to be shown what my purpose was.

There was a constant hunger inside me to do and be more.

The pain persisted because I was very slow in learning the lesson. Nothing that I had attempted to do previously worked because I was not sharing what was unique about me.

Ideas came to me about writing a travel book and setting up travel websites, but because I was full of self-doubt, I did not start.

Until one day the pain became unbearable, and I let go, trusted, and started. I wanted to share all I had learned, not for me, but for it to help others. I wanted to inspire others to realize the greatness that exists inside of them, so they can start living the life of their dreams.

So, I found my niche, and I began sharing my life – the pain, the struggle, the lessons, the joy, the passion, and the travel. My purpose was very clear – use my life experiences to help improve the life of another.

The right teachers and experiences arrived, and I started to have success very quickly.

The most painful and disconnected period of my life happened to teach me that it's our purpose to share your light and joy.



*Break free from the confines of doubt and
insecurity and become who you were born to be.*

When you live from this position of share, share, share, you will be amazed at what returns and is shared with you.

It doesn't have to be just knowledge that you share; it can be a smile, a hug, a thank you, a high five; anything that brings joy to another human being, anything that brings positive energy that will uplift or improve someone's life in some way.

Share Share Share

12. THIS TOO SHALL PASS

Missed flights, stolen gear, travel sickness, penniless, jobless, and friendless...the list of all that can and will go wrong on your adventures continues.

The only common thread is that in the end, it all works out just the way it's supposed to. Learning this helps you to realize that problems are a part of life. They'll never go away, but they will pass. How slowly, or quickly, depends on you!

Instead of getting caught up in the drama and claiming victim status, accept it as another roadblock in time. Take one step at a time to learn, correct and move on.

Knowing that it all works out, in the end, gives you confidence and comfort to move forward, and it takes away the need to consume all your time in worry.

Travel teaches you that worrying is futile.

There is so much about life that is out of your control, so what is the point of worrying? Travel helps you to relax into life.

A lot of the time on the road the biggest challenge you may have is deciding what to have for breakfast. This kind of relaxed way of living teaches you the joy that exists in each moment if you so choose to see it.

Spending so much time in Asia taught me the benefit of not worrying and the truth to the saying,



this too shall pass.'

When Craig and I missed our return home flight after five years of travel, our Thai friend was right there with us.

"Mai pen Lai Caroline. No worries, you'll get another flight tomorrow. This just means you spend more time with family in Thailand."

You can always find the silver lining in the dark cloud.

I have turned up twice in a strange country, London and Ireland, with no money, no jobs and no friends.

In London, it was my first time traveling alone; I had an infected foot, and I wandered between King's Cross and Euston station for hours trying to figure out the tube and rail system and how to get to Wigan to stay with family friends.

It was frightening. But it soon passed, and before I knew it I was earning great money living in a house with 12 people in London, and partying in Convent Garden 3 nights a week.

In Dublin, alone again, this time an emotional wreck, I wandered the streets of the Temple Bar area trying to pull myself together and banish the lonely birds from my soul. Within days I was earning great money, staying in a fun hostel, and forming friendships with strangers who brought the gifts of joy and love back into my life.

This too shall pass.

The dramas of your life will always be there, but they will always go away as well. If you keep your eyes and ears open to learn quickly the lesson within the drama.

As one of my favorite quotes from the Dalai Lama says,

"If you have a problem and there is a solution, then why worry? If you have a problem and there is no solution, then what is the point in worrying?"

This too shall pass is not just about the problems in your life. It is also about the happy times in your life. A lot of people find this even more disturbing.

Travelers become accustomed to this very quickly. Memorable days spent with new friends soon ends, and you know it is time to say goodbye.

Goodbyes are frequent when you travel. Therefore, travelers make the most

of their time not just spent with people, but with places, they have an affinity with.

My daughter is such a wriggle butt, that I know whenever she graces me with a cuddle I may only have five seconds to relish every second of it. I never feel anxious about the impending loss, or resist this, or try to hold her longer, as I understand this will soon pass.

Instead, I embrace her with joy and presence, appreciating the moment for what it is.

Just as quickly as she comes, she leaves, and I am left with a joyous warmth of love and gratitude. Embrace every moment of your life as you would a small child.

Travel is transient. Accept these treasured moments as a gift and appreciate every second of it.

If only more people understood the truth to 'this too shall pass' they may **relish every moment of their lives good or bad.**

It won't hang around forever, so take what you can and lock it away in your treasure box of memories with gratitude for the experience and the lesson.

This too shall pass

13.THERE IS POWER IN PAIN

It seems as if everywhere you turn, most people are intent on avoiding pain.

Patients overcrowd doctor's waiting rooms waiting for repeat prescriptions to the latest pain relieving medication. Mums reach for the 5 pm wine to relieve the stress and anxiety of the day (don't worry Mums I've been there!).

We're conditioned to view pain as the enemy, to be feared and not trusted. People will always choose the avoidance of pain over the pursuit of pleasure.

Of course, we can see why this is - pain hurts.

Why would pain be there if we were not meant to feel it? How can we understand pleasure if we first do not understand pain?

Pain, like all emotions, is there for a reason. Pain is here to teach us and to help us grow. And like our last lesson taught us, it will soon pass.

Practice breathing into it, acknowledging and accepting it, and see how quickly the pain subsides.

Instead of seeing pain as an enemy to be avoided at all costs, see it as a friend and embrace it as so.

There are times of course when pain can be unbearable and do whatever helps you get through. What I am talking about is the stuff that you can handle (which is probably more than you realize).

There is pain in your life that you can deal with, if you just give yourself a chance.

One of my favorite sayings is,

"What doesn't kill you makes you stronger."

If the pain you are experiencing is not going to kill you then embrace it.

Feel the pain and move through it. How can you make it your friend?

Ancient meditation techniques teach this concept. You can, through your meditation, feel the pain, live it, breathe it and then eventually through the embracing of it, ease it.

For women, I think one of the biggest ways you can grow in strength through pain is from childbirth.

Some people think I was crazy for taking on childbirth without pain killers. I possibly was but I think I was living up to the potential we have as women. Pushing the barriers, feeling the discomfort and using that pain to gain strength.

My belief, and yes, I had to repeat this mantra a hundred times while I was in agonizing pain,

"If women have been doing this for years, then, why can't I? Will I die from it? Very slim chance. Will it make me stronger? Yes. Can I make that pain my friend?

Yes."

During the greatest pain, my thought was "Oh shit. I don't know how I am going to get through this, but I can't go back." I did not know what to do to make it through. So, I did what every woman before me has done. I dug deep and found a way.

You dive into the pain and find the nearest hand (hopefully your partner) to squeeze. You squeeze with all your might, you grunt or scream, whatever you must do and then finally, the greatest gift of your life comes out at the end and the pain disappears. It's gone, forgotten about; the only trace of it left behind is the stronger woman you have now become.

I want to be very clear that I have absolutely no judgement for anyone who has chosen to not give birth in this natural state, nor for anyone who has sought pain relief for any circumstances of their lives.

We all have areas where we struggle more than others, and goodness knows I've reached for a glass of wine at 5pm far too often when a day of parenting and life has gotten too much for me. We want to live a guilt and shame free so don't sweat it.

I merely want to highlight how pain can be something that strengthens us and offer a different perspective so you can better cope with a life that sometimes doesn't feel so joyful.

It's not always all that bad. Sometimes, instead of drinking that wine, it's far better for you, to lie down on the floor, just like your three-year-old and throw a wild tantrum. Tears, pillow thumps – just let the pain have a way to escape, rather than shoving it down and masking it because that shit has got to come out eventually. If not, it festers and grows and does way more damage than your tantrum will.

I once taught a child who had experienced unnatural levels of pain for his short 10 years on earth. His mother died when he was very young, his father was not in the picture, and he suffered from leukemia at a very young age. He was so sick for many years; but he fought hard and won his battle.

He had wisdom beyond his years and inspired me daily. His maturity, strength of character, and positive outlook grew out of his experienced pain.

One day, he spoke in front of the class about how he and his grandmother were being evicted from their rental property as the local authorities had condemned it. They were going to have to live in a hotel room "But that's okay," he said, "because that means I get cable TV and I've never had it before, so I'm excited."

He was never afraid of his pain and he would write beautiful essays that expressed his dreams of the future, what he needed to draw from his character to fulfill them, and the faith he had in his spirit to do so.

He was indeed a rare, human being, and if were not for his pain, he would not have learned so many truths to life. I am looking out for him in years to come, as I just know the magic he will be creating in his own life and others.

I think as travelers we place ourselves in these positions of pain more easily. Doctor's aren't as readily available on the trail, and you know going to see one will eat into your budget, so you are more likely to harden up and deal with it.

You experience pain squashed in the back of a pickup for an 8-hour journey over rough terrain; cuts and bruises come from jungle treks, rugged mountain climbs, and outdoor activities; tropical diseases and infections come visiting; and food poisoning becomes more of a reality when you move outside the Western world.

Traveling throws you into lonely and challenging experiences. There's no one around to pick you up and carry the load for you. You're forced to feel the pain, stare it in the face and deal with it. The outcome is generally the same.

The pain goes away (this too shall pass) and you grow stronger thus.

Pain is so powerful when you embrace it. Life will become easier for you; your tolerance levels will increase and you will feel less pain throughout your life.

*Feel the pain - it is your
friend*

14. SWALLOW YOUR FEAR & MOVE FORWARD

This truth goes hand in hand with pain is powerful. Fear is pain, except it is imagined pain.

Fear is just an illusion. The quicker you realize this, the easier your life will be.

As Franklin D Roosevelt said,

"The only thing we have to fear in life is fear itself."

Fear will hold you back from reaching your potential.

It disguises itself in the myriad of excuses as to why we can't do something.

Like our pain, accepting, and embracing it helps us evolve forward. We can't run from our fear, nor can we chase it, we need to swallow it.

It is in the swallowing of the fear, we take away all its power and transfer it to ourselves.

Fear has its purpose, as a protector from danger. It's the only true purpose it serves, and we'd do best to heed its voice. We'll talk about how that voice clearly speaks to you – through your gut – in a later lesson.

I remember sitting in my teacher's orientation class when I first arrived in the US. The leader of our program, David Young, was giving an inspiring talk about his company's mission and what we as teachers, being a part of it, meant for the students in America. He finished off his speech with this question,

“Put your hands up if the thing you are most frightened about by being here now is walking into the classroom to teach in a system you know nothing about?”

Over half of the room, raised their hands, including me.

He then asked, “Put your hand up if the thing you fear the most is driving on the opposite side of the road?”

A smattering of people raised their hands while the rest of us chuckled.

“Yes,” he replied. “You don’t need to be afraid to teach in our foreign classrooms, you are capable, and you will quickly find your way. You should, however, be afraid to drive on our roads. This is the only thing you should fear, as it’s the only thing that threatens your life. Just remind me to stay off the roads when you do drive.”

I have never forgotten this perspective on fear.

Other than in times of danger, fear is not a friend to you. It is holding you back from doing something that will enrich your life, or make you more powerful.

Swallowing your fear involves a lot of risks, which is why many don’t do it. Taking that risk means floating around in a world that is way outside your comfort zone.

But stretching the comfort zone is how you grow into an empowered and capable person. Stretching your comfort zone helps you recognize the truth—that you are powerful beyond measure.

Sometimes you take the risk, and you fail. So, what. Big deal, Next. If you’re empowered, you can see the failure for what it is – a stepping stone. Use the failure to enhance your story.

Failure, like pain and fear, is also your friend. You can’t have success without failing. Failure is a part of life.

Craig and I have taken many risks before, the rewards have been great, but we have had our failure through the risks. Failure so bad that I still can’t bring myself to name the cost of the failure. But as my successful mentors and celebrating friends always say

“So, what guys, you took the risk, you can’t have success without it. Just learn from the failure and move on. Do better next time.”

Fear is not an enemy to be avoided at all costs. If you swallow the fear and fail you get rewarded with a lesson to help you progress through to your eventual success, and if you swallow the fear and succeed then your reward will be massive.

The minute you become confronted with a decision that will involve you pushing the barriers of your comfort zone, and you feel the fear, don’t stop to think about it, which only leads to procrastination and paralyzation.

Instead look at the fear, swallow it and take the plunge.

I remember going rock climbing for the first time with newfound Swedish friends in Railey Bay, Thailand. I was terrified. My body was shaking, my heart was pounding in my throat, and the sweat ran down my body.

I sat on the rock at the base of the cliff, looking up and fearing what was ahead. Doubt and fear continued to scream at me **“Don’t do it.”**

My friend, Kim asked who wanted to go first. I jumped up and said “I will.” I knew that if I did not go first and **just do it**, then I would sit and listen to fear, allow it to win and remain as a spectator, only wishing that I had the guts to have as much fun as everyone else.

For the next week, our close-knit group climbed every day and our little excursions exploring the caves of the surrounding area were some of my most memorable, and life-changing, traveling days ever.

That trip completely transformed me and was the start of my new empowered life.

Travelers are good at facing the fear. First, you leave everything you know behind; jobs, home, family, and security to enter into a world you know nothing about, with nothing but a backpack, a few thousand dollars, and maybe a guide book to help you find your way.

Then, on the path of travel, you’ll find many opportunities to swallow your fear: talking to strangers; dealing with foreign currency; trying to get a job; having no place to stay; trying new foods; riding around on the back of a pickup with sacks of rice, bicycles and the whole village; bungee jumping,

jungle safari-ing and so the adventure list continues.

Imagine all you would have missed if you choose to let fear control your life.

Turn fear into a friend and use it as a guide. When you walk towards it, the fear melts away and you'll discover the true power living within.

If you turn from it, you make the fear real; it will become a shadow and chase you forever.

Ready 1..2..3.. jump.

*Swallow your fear, and
turn its power into a
guiding friend*

15. CHANGE IS GOOD & NATURAL

Many people struggle because of this natural law. They design and set up their lives so that everything is the same, day in day out.

Life can never be compartmentalized. Life is energy and energy is in constant motion.

The only thing in life that is constant is change.

When you set up strict conditions and expectations for life, you head into dangerous waters.

It's unnatural based upon Universal Laws, and yes, physics.

What happens to people when life changes? It's a bloody given that it will and at any moment we can't predict.

Not being able to cope with change leads to a downward spiral of despair. The despair can lead to anxiety, stress, failed relationships, health issues, anti-depressants, alcohol, drugs, or worse suicide.

CHANGE IS GOOD.

Change is what makes us grow and evolve. Change is the shaking off that stale energy that no longer serves the evolving person that you are.

Do the Taylor Swift and shake it off.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

Survival of the fittest is an often misrepresented quote by Darwin.



It is not the fittest that survive but those who are most adaptable to change.

Adapting to change is the one skill I have learned through traveling that I relish the most.

I love change. I thrive on it. In fact, I think therefore I love travel so much.

When I travel, every day and every moment is different. It helps me stay present; it helps me feel alive and connected.

It's why I feel like life flows for me when I travel, no matter how many challenges are present.

When my life stagnates and comes like the hamster wheel, I feel dead inside. I feel like the walls of the structure are limiting my growth. Without growth, I'm slowly dying. You can't thrive without growth, so extend the walls of those boxes out, or better still smash them down.

You'll be okay. You'll cope and surprise yourself.

My girls have lived a very unorthodox, unstructured life. It's not all perfect, that is for sure. But, I'm most grateful for what it has taught them about change and adaptability. They cope with life very well and, most of the time, have a very relaxed, confident, and carefree attitude.



Let it go. Go with the flow of life and trust it.

Remember this too shall pass, and everything will work out in the end.

Jump in the boat and let the river take you where it will always end up.

How much easier is life when you let life take control? It is so much more fun as you get to enjoy more of the ride.

Change is like a chocolate mud cake, drenched in chocolate sauce with vanilla ice cream on top; it is sooooo good.

*Adapt, go with the flow
of life, and enjoy the ride*

16. THE ONLY WAY TO FIND THE ANSWERS IS TO ASK THE QUESTIONS

One of the most empowering tools you hold is the ability to ask questions.

If you don't know the answer, ask the question.

You'll never know otherwise. You might not get the answer you wanted, but you'll get the truth. You may not even get an answer, and sometimes that is the answer.

If you ask the question, the wheels in motion will be put into place for you to find the answer. You'll be open to listen and receive.

As a traveler, you're always asking questions.

"What is this called? How do I get here? Why do you have this custom? How much? Where's the nearest? How do you say...?"

You soon become very good at asking questions. You soon start to realize how powerful they are and you learn not to be afraid to ask a question.

Many people don't, as they fear this may reflect badly upon them for not knowing the answer. I'd rather know the answer, so I ask eternal questions (tends to drive Craig crazy when he's watching the football and I want to understand the game)

Question everything.

| *Why? Why not?*

Learn these two simple questions and use them often. Don't settle until you

find the answer that suits you and your life.

On our blog, we promote the idea of living life out of the box. For us, this does not necessarily mean living a life of travel, which some could perceive as living life out of the box.

Living life out of the box means living life by your standards, on your terms, and following your dreams.

Society too often tells us how we should live and even how we should think. Many people blindly accept this as truth without ever first questioning what it means.

Society tells you to go to school, study hard, get a good job, marry, get the white picket fence, save for your retirement and then play in your garden when you're done.

There is nothing wrong with people choosing to live this kind of life; if they actively choose it instead of passively going along for the same ride their parents, neighbours, or friends took.

Craig and I, through our travels, have discovered that a life like this is like being confined to a box; there is limited room for growth or diverse experiences.

Once you break free from the box, you can question more, and discover for yourself what is true for your life and so live according to those values.

For me, I could never let my experience in life only be the one small town I grew up in, a small dot on our beautiful planet. Growing up, I was told what to think and believe.

I grew up questioning this "Why? What about how others think? Why is this way better and theirs not?"

These were only questions I could answer by getting out of the box and seeing for myself. It was these questions that eventually set me on the discovery path of travel.

Now that we have children, we always receive comments that we should be at home, raising them in a neighborhood so they can form solid friendships.

My response is,

"Why? Who says that this is the best thing for her?" Why should I do what you say? Why is that relevant to me? Why is this the truth? Could there be another way?

I don't accept what anyone says unless I have first questioned it and discovered the truth for me - and that is living life out of the box.

The other side of the coin is when people tell you that you can't do something.

The question then becomes, **Why not?**

Years ago, I decided that I was going to apply to be a train driver. My mother was horrified,

"It sounds like it would be great for Craig, but I don't think for you love. A pregnant woman driving a train probably isn't a great career move."

I replied, "Why not?" I won't allow any rigid cultural or societal expectations stop me trying something new.

Working on a pearl farm, with a bunch of very tough, Aussie miners, was not what society deemed appropriate for a woman either. But I asked, "Why not? Why couldn't I do it." And what an experience it was when I did.

Despite the hard, physical labor, it was a unique and fun time experience that will stay with me forever.

*Question everything Why?
Why not?*

17. SILENCE AND STILLNESS IS A FRIEND

Dodgy Rodger was a wise Irish friend of my best friend, Bec, and I. He worked down the cobblestone road from our restaurant at the Quay Bar in the Temple Bar district of Dublin.

We became great friends and spent many a sunrise drinking Irish coffee in illegal drinking cafes, talking about life and motorbike adventures through South East Asia. (There is always a way around the Irish drinking curfews.)

Two pieces of his advice that have always stuck with me is, 'be careful what you write down because once it's written, you can never take it back.'

This was after our flatmate wrote some harsh words to us via a letter, and we were attempting a reply. Thanks to Roger our written reply never came, and we sorted the issue out peacefully enough through our spoken words.

The second piece of advice, which was more of a statement, was "People who talk constantly have nothing upstairs. They need to fill the spaces with words. Don't talk so much and allow yourself space to be silent and think."

I know this statement sounds mean and harsh in implying that people are stupid, but it his words did make a valid point with me.

Silence and stillness is a friend and not to be feared.

Many people talk incessantly, not because they are stupid, but because they are afraid of nothingness.

SILENT STILLNESS FOR YOUR MIND

Maybe they are afraid to be alone with their mind because it ticks

incessantly and terrifies them with their fears and insecurities.

Your mind can be a very scary thing. But instead of talking it away; learn to master it.

The best way to do this is through silence. The silence gives you the opportunity to observe. You can watch the thoughts as they enter in noticing how much power they have over your life.



Awareness the first step to change.

SILENT STILLNESS FOR CONVERSATION

The silence that may arise between the conversations with a friend may be considered awkward, and so one party hastily rushes in to fill the space with meaningless conversation or chatter.

Silence is meant to be part of the conversation; it is where the conversation comes from.

The silence gives you a moment to absorb your connection with another, to ponder what they are saying and acknowledging that you are present with them. It gives you time to consider a thoughtful and connected response. Silence is the namaste of conversation.

Make room for silence and stillness in your relationships; it will help to strengthen them.

There will be less likelihood that your friend sitting across from you will be saying in their mind, "When is she just going to shut the hell up. What is this nonsense he keeps dribbling anyway?"

SILENT STILLNESS FOR YOU

Swinging in a hammock in Thailand and listening to the waves close out the day, taught me the value of stillness and silence.

The silent stillness gave me the opportunity to absorb my day and feel gratitude and love for my life and a magical planet. It allowed me space to dream about my future.

I crave that Thai hammock almost daily.

It is through the silent stillness that your higher self can communicate with you.

How can you hear these guiding messages if you fill your life with noise?
How can you learn to trust your inner voice if you keep covering it over with chatter?

Go to the stillness and rest in its power. Listen to the calming sound of your breath and find the still place that many refer to as being Nirvana.

When you are silent and still, you can hear the message, and you know what to do.

*Rest in the power of
stillness and just be*

18. THE ONLY PLACE WHERE LIFE EXISTS IS NOW. LIVE IT!

Life is not present in the past. The past is dead energy.

Life is not present in the future, as it doesn't exist.

The only place life exists is NOW. This very second.

Travel puts you in the place of NOW very easily. There is so much change happening when you are traveling, so many new things to become aware of and experience that you are constantly living in that place of now.

There would be no point spending all that time and money to go on a round the world adventure if you spent the whole time mulling over your past, trying to change it or planning and mapping out your future. You'd miss out on everything.

I believe that is the reason why so many people are addicted to travel – they are truly living life. It's a heightened sense of awareness like nothing else. It's not really what they set out to see or learn, but really who they are in that present state.

It's why you can always travel without even packing a suitcase or leaving your home. Just get present. I do it every morning for 20-40 minutes through meditation. It is blissful, and it helps me be more grounded and present throughout the rest of the day.

The thought world serves no other purpose than to distract you from experiencing life now.

Life is power, and from that power, everything comes. You receive access to that power when you are awake and present.

Leave the past in the past; take with you only the lessons that you can use for now.

Forget about your future; let the now take care of it for you. If you live in the

present, you will learn all you need to know to prepare you for any future that comes along.

If you think about it, the future takes care of itself, and often in ways you could never have thought about or controlled. You create your future with this present moment. So, stay focused in the moment and create consciously. That way you never have to worry about the future as you are taking care of it now.

When you are present in the now, you are very capable of dealing with any problems that come your way.

Remember what your teacher used to say as you stared out the window in class, thinking about your plans for the weekend. "Pay attention. Jimmy. Focus on the now so you can learn."

Eckard Tolle, writes about this truth in his book "The Power of Now" and a "New Earth."



*All you need for an empowered life exists
NOW.*

Hold onto and use that power by living in the present. It is the **only** place where life exists.

*Live in the Power of
Now*

19. ENTHUSIASM, JOY, AWE AND GRATITUDE ARE OUR MOST POWERFUL EMOTIONS

Travel opens a doorway to magic.

When I travel I live in a state of awe - this is also part of the rush that keeps travelers going back for more.

Awe is an extremely powerful emotion. Awe shows recognition and appreciation for something that is more powerful than yourself, yet still a part of you.

Travel is a process of continual learning and trying new things, which also brings awe. We become like our two-year-old self, who used to sit and stare at bugs all day and be in awe of their spindly little legs scurrying across the concrete.

When you live from these higher states of emotions great things are naturally attracted to you.

I think everyone would agree that when you are traveling, no matter how you define this to be, you experience high levels of joy and enthusiasm.

It's why we find it so hard to return home. We feel that returning to the normalcy and routine severs our ability to feel this joy. It feels harder to celebrate life with the same enthusiasm and awe.

Even though travel presents many challenges and tribulations, it is incredibly difficult to feel depressed or sad. These disempowering emotions don't uplift or inspire your life in any way shape or form.

Enthusiasm and joy bring lightness to your life. It is your greatest gift to God.

Living through these four emotions - joy, enthusiasm gratitude, awe - says to

our higher power

I love this life you have given to me. Every moment is full of magic and beauty. I want this for everyone, and I just want to experience more of it.

When you live through these emotions, your ability for inspired creation elevates.

It increases your ability to embrace others and share the joy.

Your ability to deal with problems is much better, as you see it as just another thing to be in awe of and grateful for.

Living from these emotions increases your energy vibrations, which is what attracts good or bad into your life.

The higher your energy vibration, the better the things that will come to you.

Think about the last time something great or bad happened to you. I bet you could match the outcome with the state of your mood at the time. They rarely are out of sync with each other.

Dr. Eckart Tolle. And Dr. Wayne Dyer talk a lot of this concept through their writings.

I highly recommend you take a trip to the local library or bookstore and read their empowering work to see for yourself just how the magic of this thing called life works.

*Live with Passion and
Gratitude*

20. GOD EXISTS EVERYWHERE

I feel nervous talking about God as I think it's a personal relationship each person has with the divine.

But, it's a truth I learned through travel, and it just might help if you have are still seeking.

I am a deeply spiritual person, and I believe there are many paths to God.

I don't believe in religion. No one can tell me where I find God or how to worship him/ her. That is my personal relationship with the divine and can't fit into any doctrine.

I grew up Catholic and found myself sitting in the pews every Sunday in a dark, cold building reciting words and prayers that held no relevance or meaning for me. I questioned what this all meant and asked

"Why would God be here? And why can't I use my own words to speak to him? These words don't come from my heart and have no meaning to me at all. Why would I speak to God in this way?"

I felt being forced to worship God in a way I did not resonate with or believe in was a complete betrayal of God. So, I searched. I looked at others way of finding God and found many similarities and differences, but none I could relate to.

Through my personal questioning and travel experiences, I learned that



God is in me; God is in you; God is in everything.

When I recognized the true omnipresence of God, I understood that I could talk to her and praise him whenever and wherever I please.

Knowing the divine is present everywhere, helps me to be kinder to others and to myself, and to be more respectful of the Earth.

When I know that God lives in me, I can use that power to live up to my potential and live my purpose. I am never separate from Her and He is never

separate from me.

I have a higher power living within me and guiding me to be a shining light.
I'm never let down, I'm never punished, I'm never hated; I'm supported, and
loved and encouraged.

I think when you travel you discover that by living each moment in the
present you are recognizing and living with God.

You are **saying Yes to life** ... and that is all God really wants us to say.

Namaste

ABOUT CAZ



Caroline Makepeace wants to live in a world where people fearlessly follow what's in their heart.

She believes travel is a way to find a deeper connection to the planet, to other people, and to yourself. It also helps you feel a lot of joy and freedom.

Caroline has been living and travelling around the world since she graduated from University in 1997 as a primary school teacher. She's lived and taught in five countries – Australia, UK, Ireland, Thailand and the USA - and travelled through 52.

Her teaching experiences have ranged from K-6 – whole class and small group instruction, ESL teaching (including high school and adults), and leadership roles including Grade Chairperson and Cultural Education Facilitator.

She is the co-founder of one of the world's most influential travel blogs, yTravelblog.com with her husband Craig and has one of the world's biggest [Pinterest](#) communities [of 4 million](#) followers.

Her work has been recognized and featured by brands such as the Today Show, CNN online, Lonely Planet, National Geographic online, Virgin Australia, Expedia, Huffington Post, and various radio stations.

Caroline has produced several eBooks and courses to help people create their ultimate life. They include [How to create a travel life you love](#), [Step into Sacredness](#), [the 30 Day Money Cleanse](#), and [How to move from blog to business](#).

Caroline speaks at various conferences on topics related to travel, blogging, social media marketing, and online business.

She often travels with her two children proving that you can create a travel lifestyle no matter your life circumstances. They recently finished an epic 18-month road trip around Australia and are preparing for a 2-3 year road trip of the US called [America Unplugged](#).

Caroline uses her skills and knowledge as a teacher, and her experiences as a global and life educator to homeschool her daughters. She's focused on helping them to become independent, empowered human beings.

When she's not travelling and writing about it, you can find Caz swinging in a beach hammock at sunset to the tunes of Jack Johnson or buying another crystal to meditate with at a local market. Connect with her on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Pinterest](#).



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