

The **Guided Journal** for **Solo Travelers**

Your pocket-sized travel buddy

The Guided Journal for Solo Travelers

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As a non-native English speaker writing my first book independently (with support from friends and family), I used AI tools to assist with refining the language. Still, every word had to pass through my brain, heart, and slightly over-caffeinated fingers.

Er is altijd een oplossing.

-Papa

*De richting van de wind kan je niet veranderen,
de stand van de zeilen wel.*

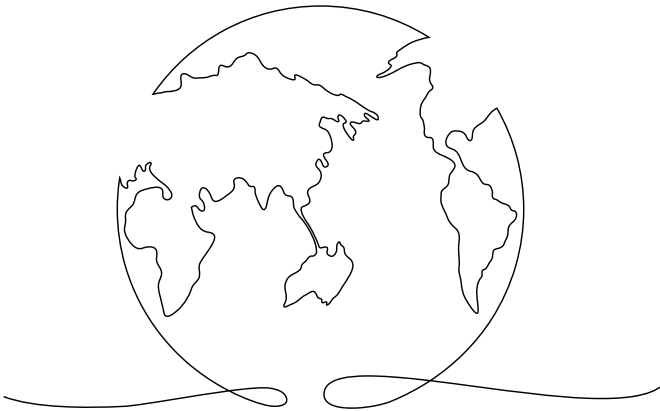
-Mama

*Als je je eenzaam voelt,
bedenk dan dat je schaduw altijd achter je staat.*

-Elsa

El camino de la vida no existe, el tiempo lo construye y lo
prepara y los obstáculos fortalecen el verdadero camino
del existir de la vida.

Y nunca de detengas.



*The path of life does not exist, time builds it and prepares it
and obstacles strengthen the true path of life's existence.*

And never stops.



This journal is both the start and part of What Society Taught Me Today – a project that explores what we can learn from the world around us. From strangers. From small conversations. From simply paying attention.

For more inspiration, check out my Instagram:
[@whatsocietytaughtmetoday](#) or visit
www.whatsocietytaughtmetoday.wordpress.com

Send me a message and add your collected mantra to the collection of insights. Who knows, you might inspire the next traveler.

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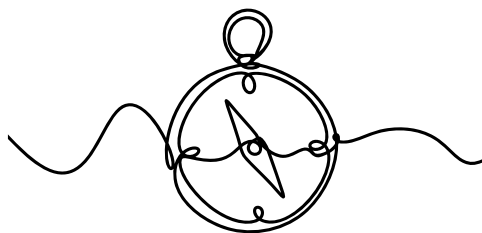
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Pensa molto bene ed intensamente a tutte le azioni che svolgi nella tua vita con razionalità e coscienza, ma datti un tempo massimo per farlo, dopo di che agisci! Altrimenti, il tempo dopo quel momento è tempo perso.

E...

Cerca di stare il più possibile nel momento presente.



Think very well and intensely of all the events that happen in your life, with rationality and conscience. But give yourself a massive time to do it, after which you act. Otherwise the time after that moment is lost.

And...

Try to stay in the present moment as much as possible.



INTRO

I'm so, so proud of you for starting this journey and making the decision to travel solo.

Traveling solo is basically a crash course in self-trust, freedom, and figuring out what you actually like, without anyone else's opinion in the way. You get to set your own pace, eat when you want, say yes to spontaneous plans (or proudly do absolutely nothing). Whether you're going on a long trip or just away for a couple of hours, it takes courage to travel by yourself. Courage which a lot of people do not have (or maybe do not want to have, let's put things into perspective). It takes trust in yourself and your instincts. It takes a desire to explore the world and to get to know yourself better. Even if you don't feel it, you're brave. Deep down, you know it. Throughout your travels, you'll realize this even more, and I hope to guide you on this journey by helping you reconnect with yourself and those around you. Your friend in your pocket, so to speak.

When we travel, we present ourselves with the opportunity to meet new cultures, new people, and to obtain new insights. The truth is, we all travel the world without knowing what's ahead of us. Traveling solo makes the experience even more unpredictable. Whilst that may feel uncomfortable, it is the zone where we will find peace and space within ourselves if we are only prepared to stop for a moment and understand how travel enriches our lives.

Since I'm your self-proclaimed friend, we might as well get to know each other a little bit better. I'm a Dutchie (hence, please don't condemn my English) and at the time of writing, sort of happily single, 34 years old and living in

my rental apartment. I've lots of friends whom I adore, although it gets a bit lonely sometimes as they are settling down and having kids. I'm very sure my time will come, and in the meantime, I will travel and focus on myself whilst enjoying the perks of single life! However, it has not always been this way.

I thought I had it all together. Or at least, I was trying frantically to have a picture-perfect life while all along I was working myself into destruction. Of course that part of the story didn't end well. I lost everything I had. Or at least, it felt that way. And the worst part was that I lost myself.

Traveling made me reconnect with myself and others around me. How? By being alone, faced with my thoughts, I realized that all I can rely on is myself, so I'd better make the best out of it. By reconnecting with others, I met incredible people from whom I learned a great deal, for which I'm forever grateful. Even when I thought they were a bit of a dweeb at the beginning. They all taught me so much, and it helped me through my darkest days and ugliest thoughts.

Because really, it doesn't matter who is in front of you. Every person has their own story. Every person has their own little backpack, carrying their own ziplock package of mental history. It may not look like it from the outside, but believe me when I say that 99% of people feel insecure, and what we all share is the need for connection. This especially applies when we are outside our comfort zone, which is exactly what we are when we are traveling.

It all depends on how open and honest you can be with yourself and how you adjust your communication when it comes to other people's characters and beliefs. It's

something I have to remind myself of every single day. No, traveling solo and connecting (with others as well as with yourself) isn't always an easy journey, but yes, you can do it.

Spoiler alert: by no means do I claim to be an expert. I'm not an influencer who's made a living out of solo traveling. I'm not a psychologist. What I am is someone who's taken quite a few solo trips. Someone who has rebuilt her life from scratch. And someone who knows firsthand what it feels like to ride the rollercoaster of emotions: from pure freedom to deep fear, from thrilling new beginnings to sudden moments of loneliness that hit you out of nowhere. I'm not claiming to have all the answers. I'm just someone who's been through it, felt everything (twice), and decided to turn it into a journal. For people like you, who are brave enough to travel alone and curious enough to reflect along the way.

So, take a step forward in the world, two steps back in your own mind. Let's reconnect and learn from society, regardless of wherever in the world you're traveling to. You can learn something new and meet new people every day. And you can reinvent yourself every day.

And remember: *a smile is international.*

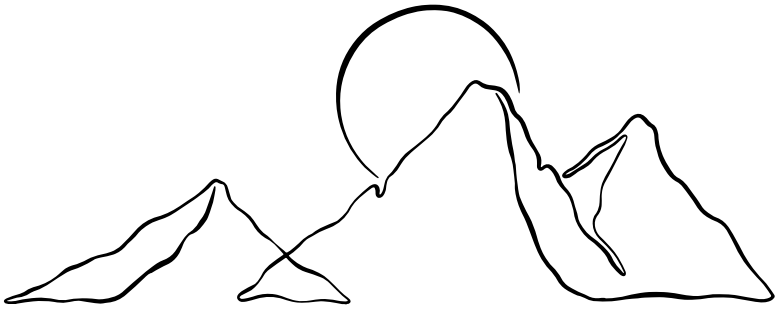
I'm with you, always.

Love,

Lara

- *What Society Taught Me Today*

Onartu zure pentsamenduak, nahiz eta zure gustokoak ez izan. Haiekin borrokatuz gero, handiagoak egingo dira. Zu ez zara zure pentsamenduak.



Do not be afraid of your emotions. Cry if you need to. Say 'I love you' if you feel it. It's okay to be angry, but don't go to bed without talking it out. Accept your thoughts, even the uncomfortable ones.

(Added in spoken words: If you fight your thoughts, they will only grow stronger and remember: you are not your thoughts).



HOW DOES IT WORK

While I was traveling solo, I realized I was never truly alone, unless I wanted to be. So unless you're lost in the desert or deep in the woods (then you've got bigger problems), I can assure you that you will always have people around you during your solo trip.

Let's say you're not lost in the desert or the woods, but lost in the fear of loneliness. Or fear of not being able to go through this journey alone. Can you make decisions independently? What if you hit a tricky situation? Spoiler: You can. My dad always says, 'There's always a solution.' (Don't tell him he's right though).

This journal is for solo travelers: whether it's your first or hundredth time traveling alone. This journal is for those of us who have overcome the hurdle of stepping out of our front door and taking a leap into the world alone. It might be a day trip or a long journey. Optionally but not necessarily required: you're also a tiny bit (or a shitload like I was) frightened of doing so. That's completely okay.

At its core, this travel journal is about (re)connecting with yourself as well as with others. Whether that may be other travelers, locals or aliens. What matters is that every person who crosses your path can add something valuable to your life, if you're open to it. This is why many pages in this journal focus on the people you'll meet along the way.

What helped me most was asking people about their personal motivations and life philosophies, their mantras so to speak. You'll find some of the ones I collected throughout this journal. At first, it might feel terrifying (it sure did for me), but trust me: people love talking about

themselves and if you're open to listening, you'll learn a lot. This journal also includes exercises to capture your travel experiences, insights to organize your thoughts, and practical tips to make the most of your adventures.

In conclusion, this journal is divided into three parts:

- **Before:** Mental and physical preparation for your journey. I will give you some tips and tricks when it comes to solo travel in general as well as on safety, sustainable traveling, health etc. You will also find some pages where you can write down important information, your itinerary and travel bucket list and some pages where you can doodle and draw the country you are traveling to.
- **During:**
 - Part 1 - What you taught yourself: some information on how to connect with yourself during your solo travel as well as exercises for self-reflection during your trip.
 - Part 2 - What society taught you: information on how to connect with people you will meet during your adventures and plenty of pages to write down the mantras you will learn from them. Also, there is space to reflect on saying goodbye to places and people you have met during your trip.
- **After:** Together we will look back on your solo journey and the lessons you've learned.

All three parts contain pages for notes where you can further elaborate on the above and write down your

thoughts and adventures. In general, we will be preserving memories together and organizing your thoughts to get the most out of your travels.

It will be amazing, I promise you. Why? Because I believe in you.

Also: hand this journal to your friends and family. Tell them to flip to page 173. You shall not read these pages until you're on your destination and starting to get feelings of despair/homesickness/longing. Pinky promise?

Ready? Let's go!