

New Perspectives: Lessons Learned from Travel



Travel Series | Episode 4

PRE-LISTENING | Warm-up

Prepare before you listen to the conversation.

Brainstorm

1. Look at the topic of this episode. Do you have any personal experiences related to this topic? If not, do you have any thoughts or opinions about it?
2. Below, write notes about what comes to your mind.

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Vocabulary

1. What vocabulary do you think will come up in this conversation? If you can't think of the English word, check it in a dictionary.
2. Write the vocabulary that you came up with in the table below.

LISTENING | Exercise

Listen to the conversation – feel free to pause any time or go back if you miss something.

Colin and Su talked about what they've learned from their travels. They think that travel teaches us to be more understanding of others, which they call "empathy." When you visit a new place, people are usually patient and kind if you don't know how to do things or speak the language. Colin and Su say that this empathy also helps them be patient and helpful to travelers they meet in their own country.

They also mention "tolerance." This means being patient and not getting upset when people make mistakes or do things differently. They both learned to appreciate this because they've been in situations where they didn't speak the language well.

Another lesson from travel is reevaluating what's important in life. When they travel, they see that experiences matter more than things. So, they've become less focused on owning stuff and more on having new experiences. They think travel can change how you view people and help you make better choices in your life.

Note-taking

Identify the key points of the conversation and add notes on some details. Try to keep it short.

Key Points	Details

Quiz

Choose the correct answer – you can check your answers at the end of this PDF.

1. What is one of the first things that comes to Colin's mind when he thinks about lessons learned from travel?
 - a. Language fluency
 - b. Empathy
 - c. Culinary skills
 - d. Public transport
2. According to Colin, when you travel to a new place, what do you often find in people's behavior?
 - a. They are impatient and unkind
 - b. They are indifferent to your difficulties
 - c. They are patient and kind
 - d. They refuse to help strangers
3. How does Colin relate empathy to his travel experiences?
 - a. Empathy only develops when you travel
 - b. Traveling decreases one's empathy
 - c. Traveling has no impact on empathy
 - d. Empathy grows when you help others as you were once helped
4. What does Su say about experiencing empathy?
 - a. Empathy makes people less kind to strangers
 - b. Empathy leads to bad feelings
 - c. Empathy can inspire kindness and helping others
 - d. Empathy is feeling indifferent to others' struggles
5. According to Colin, what is the key to a successful conversation when language skills are limited?
 - a. A conversation is 50% each, and tolerance is important
 - b. Both participants should speak fluently.
 - c. The conversation should be 100% perfect.
 - d. One person should do all the talking.
6. What lesson does Colin learn from living in countries where he doesn't speak the language fluently?

- a. He should avoid situations where language is a barrier.
- b. He should expect perfection from others in language.
- c. He should be impatient with language learners.
- d. He should be patient and understanding towards language learners.

7. What does Su say about tolerance when people make mistakes or don't know something?

- a. She advises getting angry at them.
- b. She encourages helping them out and being patient.
- c. She suggests avoiding people who make mistakes.
- d. She thinks tolerance is unnecessary.

8. What is one of the lessons that can be learned from travel, according to Colin?

- a. The importance of keeping routines intact
- b. The insignificance of cultural experiences
- c. The value of new experiences and reassessment
- d. The need for material possessions

POST-LISTENING | Resources

Review the language used in the podcast

Word/Phrase	Class	Example Sentence
new perspectives	noun phrase	Travel can offer new perspectives on life and culture.
A fresh way of looking at or understanding something.		
empathy	noun	Empathy allows us to connect with people on a deeper level.
Understanding and sharing the feelings of others.		
tolerance	noun	Tolerance is essential for peace in a diverse society.
Patience and acceptance of differences or mistakes.		
reassessment	noun	Travel often leads to a reassessment of one's life priorities.
The act of reconsidering something.		
materialistic	adjective	She realized she was too materialistic and wanted a simpler life.
Believing that objects are very important.		
declutter	verb	I need to declutter my closet; it's too full of clothes.
To remove unnecessary items and organize a space.		
shiny new car	noun phrase	Many people dream of owning a shiny new car.
A brand new and attractive car.		
outsider	noun	As a foreigner, I often felt like an outsider in the new country.
A person who doesn't belong to a particular group or place.		

POST-LISTENING | Activities

Shadowing

Choose one part of the conversation and listen to it again. Try to repeat what you hear out loud. Make sure you copy pronunciation, pauses*, and stress*.

*Use the transcript to mark the **pauses** with a slash / and the **stress** with an underline ___.

Speaking Practice

Below are two questions you can use for speaking practice.

1. Read each question and write some notes. Keep them short and only use bullet points or a mind map – these notes are just to help you organize your ideas.
2. Record yourself answering the questions. Try to speak for at least 2 minutes for each question.

Q: Do you think that experiences are more important than material possessions? Give some examples and reasons for your answer.

Q: Have you ever learned a valuable lesson from a stranger while traveling? How did this encounter impact you?

Transcript

Colin: This is episode four of our travel series and today's topic is new perspectives: lessons learned from travel. Hello, Su.

Su: Hey.

Colin: How are you?

Su: Good. How are you?

Colin: I'm very well. Um, when I think of this, one of the first things that comes to my mind is empathy. Um, what I mean by that is when you travel to a new place, you don't know how to do things. You don't understand the food or how to use the public transport or whatever. Maybe the language as well. There's many, many things that you are not familiar with, but you find that people are quite patient. People are quite kind, um, and they help you get through difficult situations. Quickly, they see that, ah, he doesn't know what he's doing or he doesn't know how to do this. Um, and generally people are kind and they will help you. And empathy, kind of being able to put yourself in, in other people's shoes. I think the empathy comes when you're back in your home country, and you meet somebody who is visiting, and they don't know what they're doing, or they're a bit confused, or maybe their language skills are not great. You find that you're a bit more patient with them, and you can actually, uh, show some kindness, and help them understand your culture. So, I think empathy was a big thing that I learned from traveling. Um, what do you think about that?

Su: Absolutely, yes. Empathy is experiencing feelings and then knowing that other people are feeling this at certain times. I've been through this. I've experienced this. It wasn't nice, but, you know, with a little bit of help, that can change. And then that empathy, you know, kind of brings this kindness in you. I wouldn't want to be in that situation without help, so today I'm going to help. That would be that empathy part. And Yeah, because you had had this like bad feelings, you know how other people feel and you don't want them to feel bad, so you go and you, you know, you give some kindness, uh, you are kind to them, help them out.

Colin: I think you also remember how you felt when you received certain kindness from the, from strangers. And you know that, you know, you meet somebody in your home country and they're struggling, you know, that if you take two minutes of your day to help them through this situation, how they will feel, you know, they will have that same feeling that you did.

Another word that comes to mind is tolerance. Um, and I think this is, for me, it's related to language. I've lived in countries where I don't speak the language fluently. And when you live in that place, you have to do things. You know, living in Japan, I have to go to the bank. Or I have to go to the city office. Or go into situations where it's going to be difficult for me to explain myself. So I know what it's like to be a language learner, uh, in a situation where I struggle to explain myself. And again, if, if I meet somebody who maybe doesn't speak English, uh, very well, I'm quite patient with them because I know what it's like. I know what it's like to have something you want to say, or, you know, there's something important you have to do, but you don't have the language. Um, it's important for me to take time and try my best to,

to understand that person. You know, a conversation – this is what I always say to my students – a conversation is 50 percent you and 50 percent the other person. Um, you don't have to say everything 100 percent correct. You just need to give 50 percent and the other person, they have to come to you and they need to try to understand what you're saying. Um, and I am very tolerant with people who try their best, but maybe they're not perfect. Um, and I will give them time to explain themselves.

Su: Yeah, I think you, you said it is about being patient and not expecting perfection and not expecting things to work as you know they could work perfectly, right? Um, language is definitely one, but also tolerance in making mistakes, um, or not, or, or going the wrong way, or don't, don't be angry at that. And, you know, sometimes people don't know. And that's fine. You just help them out. And that's the tolerance. Don't get angry. Don't be impatient.

Colin: Yeah, absolutely. Um, another lesson that can be learned from travel is this reassessment. Thinking again about what is important in your life. Um, and I think when we are at home and we're working, going to work, doing things related to our home life. We get into our routine and you know, life is the same day-to-day, everything's kind of the same. But when you travel, you go to somewhere new, you see things, you have new experiences, it's a chance to remind yourself that there are so many different experiences that you can have. There's so many different ways to live life. And when you come back to your home country, you might think - actually, I want to change some aspects of my life. Maybe I want to be a bit more adventurous, or maybe I want to be a bit more healthy in the way that I live my life. Um, or I want to spend time learning this, uh, skill. Um, so travel is a nice chance to, to go see new things, have new experiences. And then decide, do you want to take any of those things and add them to your home life?

Su: I think for me, some priorities are also about things. Maybe I didn't, it wasn't that important to have that thing. I was able to go, you know, through this travel, uh, this month or this week. I was able to do without it. It was fine. Uh, and that's kind of a reassessment. Maybe things are not as important as you thought they were. I think for me that was a great lesson. It was fine. I was okay without them. They're not that important outside the context I was in.

Colin: Right. Yeah, I think the, the word that we can use here is you became less materialistic. Yes.

Less worried about actually the, the things that you own and more about kind of the experiences that you can have in life.

Su: Exactly.

Colin: Um, and yeah, you might go home and, and you might declutter. You might get rid of, uh, some things that were filling your house up. Um, and maybe even change the way that you spend money. You might decide that you're going to rather than saving for a shiny new car, you might decide that you're going to save up a bit of money to go on your next journey, your next trip. Um, so yeah, your priorities change the things that you think are important might change. Um, and this I think is really, it's really interesting how just from getting out of your

normal day-to-day life, you can change your attitude in terms of how you interact with people, the way that you view people from other places, because you've had that experience. You've been the outsider. You've been the one who didn't understand, who didn't know. Um, but also you can look back at your life and think - are there things that I want to change? Are there things that I can improve? Are there things that I want to cut out of my life? So yeah, there's a lot to be learned from traveling.

ANSWERS – Multiple-Choice Questions

1. b 2. c 3. d 4. c
5. a 6. d 7. b 8. c