

## **Journey Across the Seven Seas**

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The grass is greener on the other side. This is what it seems to many people. Humans now travel around the world in a couple of days and work and play far away from the place they just lived in a week before. They will make new connections and new experiences. A broadening in the opportunities to communicate is often exciting to people, it connects the world and helps us all to benefit from each other.

### *Self-Improvement*

For many people travelling and working or studying somewhere else can be helpful. Learning new information and new ways of doing things can increase one's tool set and enrich one's life. However, I have seen in many patients the belief that if they just go somewhere, their life will radically change for the better. Usually, that is not the case. Meaningful change also requires a change on the inside. A change from one day to the next does not change what we know and how we do things overnight. Any meaningful change requires a process on the inside.

### *From the Internal to the External Journey*

When the external journey begins with the product of an internal journey, one's values, interests and aspirations, the external journey can be a success in getting one to new places that can increase one's happiness in the long-run. This does not mean one has to have a specific goal in mind or a concrete destiny. It is just enough to know that one is getting closer to a point one where one can live according to one's values, interests and aspirations.

### *From External to Internal Change*

Changing the external situation can bring about internal change. However, often this is only temporary if there is no resonance with the values and basic interests we hold. Values change little over time, but learning new information can lead to new perspectives and new ways of doing things, which helps us to find more value and more happiness in the world. A change in seeing oneself and the world can lead to real change, because we act on what we see and perceive in ourselves and around us. This is also how therapy works. Lasting change often does not come from new information directly, but from adopting a new perspective on oneself and the world, which is the result of new information one is exposed to.

### *Where to find Valuable Information*

We find the places and the people that benefit us in our life by reflecting on what we value in life and what is important to us. Often this is the most difficult step, because many people have so many layers of what they “should” be doing on top of their true values and interests, that they lose sight of them. A good indication is that a true value or interest feels really relevant. It is not the feeling one gets when doing a task in work, one believes should be done, but truly believing in something and feeling good, and even happy, about it. It has to be found by oneself, and it is usually not enough to just assume a pre-formulated one. But using one’s true values, interests and aspirations as a compass means not getting lost on the journey of one’s life, and ultimately finding greater happiness along the way.



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