

Part 9: Our Best Selves

Simply traveling and going to a different place doesn't change who we are or make us better people. Ultimately, we take ourselves wherever we go, and we have to decide to be our best selves no matter where we are. Sometimes, it's a challenge that presents itself in different forms. Barcelona was inspirational and vibrant and a place I warmed up to quite easily. On the other hand, Rome was challenging me physically and mentally from the beginning, and I couldn't pretend to be somebody else or that I was back in Barcelona. At the same time, I was able to meet people like myself and come back to some of the cultural things I nearly missed, namely the food and wine. When I realized that traveling, particularly, Roman Holiday, was a life experience bigger than just the site seeing and socializing, I was becoming my best self. Even with swollen legs and not being in the shape I was used to, I was still able to have self love. Even being introverted, I could still be open and outward in different ways that attracted people. And even when I was worried I wouldn't be able to afford this trip, I still had enough money. By the end of the trip, those walls I was seeing weren't even there.

Whether we're seasoned travelers or traveling for the first time, we should always remember to look at traveling as an opportunity to learn something about ourselves and the people around us. We'll find that many of the interactions we have, situations we come across and even the food we eat reveals something about ourselves. So try something new, talk to different people, eat wonderful food, stop and smell the espresso and of course, be safe. More importantly, we need to let go and be who we are. There is no way to really enjoy this experience without being our best selves. Finally, I say this lesson beyond traveling: when we find ourselves in the position where it seems the walls are coming down, it is important to trust we are still safe because of our strength within. The walls coming down are just the barriers in our lives that are now no longer there. We only need to open up and let all that's good come to us.

