

Capstone Project: Transformational Travel Design

Healing through travelling

My WHY :

To activate the transformative magic within humans, fostering a ripple effect of positive change that extends to the very fabric of the Universe.

(To ignite the magic in each individual, thereby empowering the entire Universe.)

The guidelines in every experiences:

Inviting travellers seeking a new way to travel that would help heal themselves, others and the world.

It all starts with the seed of a tree back home in a special place where the “tribe” would meet in real life to plant roots and good intentions. Sharing the stories about our life that we are trying to change

....self and spirit

Then we travel. To another reality where humans, culture, nature and time are different. Living and learning alongside different communities exploring their way of living. A twin seed will be planted in this new life over there

.... others and bridging

Coming Back home, the “tribe” go back to see how our trees have grown. Reflect on our own growth and how we can now help our own communities.

Knowing that our roots are spreading way further now!

... systeme and stewardship

Japan experience : The way of the Samurai

Location: *Musubi No Sato*

Step into the footsteps of ancient warriors as my son and I invite 10 travellers (and perhaps parent-and-child duos) to embark on a life changing 3-week adventure with one of Japan's last master samurai. Immerse yourselves in the artistry of samurai training and unlock the wisdom of these noble sages.

Embracing the Tribe's Essence: (Where Am I and Why I travel)

We take the time to know each traveller, forging bonds that will shape our tribe's voyage. To facilitate this connection, we share practical trip details and curate a survey to explore the essence of each traveller's journey.

What kind of story do they say about themselves that they would like to change ?

Prepare for Transcendence: (How I plan and prepare)

Gathering two weeks before the grand expedition, we gather for a sacred seed ceremony at a wellness and healing haven (perhaps nestled within the captivating aura of the Hope Wellness Resort). Together with Lauren, our horticulture therapy guide, we plant our own little forest of dreams, cultivating intentions that will flourish long after our return.

Bound as One Tribe:

Through a group chat or forum, we foster an environment of support and encouragement. We share our hopes, fears, and reflections, weaving a tapestry of experiences that connect us in a profound way. Together, we form an inseparable tribe, united by our stories, skills, and shared aspirations.

Setting Intentions and Letting Go:

At the airport, a "letting go" ritual awaits us. We release energetically and spiritually what no longer serves us, symbolically leaving behind burdens on pieces of paper, casting them away. Setting our intentions alight, we embark on our journey with hearts and spirit unburdened.

Embrace the Journey: (How we go)

Embarking on a flight of 20 to 24 hours, we traverse across oceans and borders, transcending time zones and embracing the novelty of the transformative path that lies ahead. The journey is an initiation, paving the way for growth and metamorphosis.

Together, we embark on a pilgrimage of the soul, where healing could take the form of a new story for ourselves. The essence of our journey lies not just in the destination, but in the collective experience that binds us as one, forever transformed by the wisdom of the past and the promise of the future. Let the magic within you ignite and illuminate the Universe!

Day 1: Tokyo - Settling in and Overcoming Jet Lag

Travellers begin their journey by immersing themselves in the vibrant city of Tokyo. As they settle into their modern hostel, they will have the opportunity to observe and adapt to the new environment, fostering a sense of openness and adaptability. The initial challenges of overcoming jet lag and navigating a foreign city encourage patience and resilience, setting the stage for embracing change.

Day 2: Tokyo - Rest and Wander - Embracing Contrast

Taking a day of rest and wandering allows travellers to appreciate the contrast between their own culture and the dynamic modernity of Tokyo. This exposure to contrasting elements could prompt self-reflection and curiosity about the upcoming experiences, encouraging travellers to question their assumptions and approach the journey with an open mind.

Day 3: Tokyo - Street Food and Mythology Excursion.

Engaging in a culinary and spiritual exploration will awaken the travellers' senses and connect them to the rich cultural heritage of Japan. Learning about mythology and spirituality will encourage them to reflect on their own beliefs and explore the potential for personal growth and transformation.

Day 4: Travel to Osaka - Reflection and Connection

As the group travels to Osaka, they have the chance to share their initial experiences and realisations with each other. This reflection and comparison enable them to understand their unique perspectives, respecting the diversity within the tribe. A brief exploration of Osaka offers a glimpse into the regional culture, deepening their connection to Japan's multifaceted society.

Day 5 to 8: Pilgrimage on the Kumano Kodo - Personal Growth and Exploration

The pilgrimage on the Kumano Kodo invites travellers to embrace a slower pace and introspection. As they journey through nature, each individual can find moments of solitude to delve into their thoughts and emotions. The challenging terrain prompts self-reliance and determination, providing opportunities for personal growth and discovery.

Day 9: Musubi No Sato - Rest and Appreciation

Upon reaching Musubi No Sato, travellers will be settling in, meeting the community, and the master samurai. The rest of the day will be for cleansing, and self-care to allow the travellers to recharge their bodies and minds, preparing them for the transformative experiences in this community.

Day 10 to 20: Living like Samurai - Cultivating Resilience and Wisdom

During this period, travellers are invited to embrace the samurai way of life. Engaging in various tasks that support the community cultivating a sense of responsibility, teamwork, and humility. Martial arts training develops discipline, focus, and self-control. As they learn and share their own skills and talent from the community, travellers embrace the idea that everyone has something valuable to offer, breaking down barriers and reinforcing the sense of belonging and interconnectedness.

Exploring Shrines and Temples - Humility and Spiritual Understanding

Visiting sacred sites and experiencing rituals offer profound encounters with Japan's spiritual heritage. These experiences cultivate humility and a broader understanding of different belief systems. Travellers learn to approach spirituality with an open heart, acknowledging the diverse ways people connect to the divine.

Questions During Travel - Self-Awareness and Growth

The thought-provoking questions asked during the journey prompt travellers to examine their values, beliefs, and desires. This process of self-awareness and introspection enables personal growth and self-discovery, as travellers confront their own uncertainties and embrace their unique strengths.

List of 10 thought-provoking questions for travellers to ask themselves during their transformative journey:

1. What fears or limiting beliefs can I transcend on this journey?
2. How can I cultivate a deeper connection with nature and the world around me?
3. What aspects of the local culture inspire me, and how can I incorporate them into my daily life?
4. How can I become more present and mindful, savouring each moment of this transformative experience?
5. What parts of myself do I wish to let go of, creating space for new growth and transformation?
6. How can I embrace discomfort and uncertainty as catalysts for personal growth and resilience?
7. What contributions can I offer to the community I am part of, fostering greater connections?
8. How can I balance personal growth with the understanding that transformation is an ongoing process?
9. What lessons can I draw from moments of solitude and introspection?
10. How can I integrate the essence of this transformative journey into my daily life long after I return home?

Day 21: Planting the Twin Seed - Gratitude and Future Intentions

Conducting a ritual to plant twin seeds for future trees in the community and leaving a message for the future will symbolise growth, renewal, and embracing change. This act of leaving behind intentions will encourage the travellers to envision their desired future and set positive intentions for their lives.

Day 22: Travel Back to Tokyo - Integration and Adaptation

The return to Tokyo provides an opportunity for travellers to integrate their experiences into their current lives. As we gather at a restaurant to celebrate the journey, share stories, acknowledging the changes we have experienced. Preparing for reintegration into their daily routines, they reflect on how to adapt and apply their learnings within their home communities.

Day 23: Farewell Japan - New Beginnings and Continuing Growth (How we return)

As the travellers bid farewell to Japan, they carry with them the memories of a transformative journey. The experiences they shared, the connections they made, and the wisdom they gained will continue to shape their lives. Hoping that travellers return home with a sense of purpose, empowered to embrace new beginnings and continue their personal growth journey in their own unique way.

Two Weeks Later - Reconnecting and Continued Support

During the post-trip reunion at the special tree planting spot, travellers have the opportunity to reconnect with each other and share how the journey has influenced them. The support and camaraderie within the tribe serve as a foundation for continued growth. They discuss how to incorporate their learnings into their daily lives and in their communities, not as a guarantee of success but as an ongoing process of transformation and self-improvement.

Starting from scratch: Collaborating with Musubi No Sato

Creating a collaboration with the samurai community requires a thoughtful and respectful approach. The following steps outline how this collaboration can be established in advance:

Step 1: Introduction Email

In the initial stage, an introductory email is crafted to reach out to the samurai community. The email introduces the transformative travel project and its mission, emphasising the desire to learn about and honour the samurai traditions and way of life. Expressing genuine respect for their culture and seeking permission to collaborate in a culturally sensitive and sustainable manner.

Step 2: Cultural Liaison

To ensure effective communication and understanding, a local cultural liaison could be identified. This individual has a deep understanding of the samurai community's traditions, values, and sensitivities. The cultural liaison acts as a bridge between the transformative travel project team and the samurai master helping to navigate cultural nuances and mediate conversations.

Step 3: Meeting the Master Samurai

Building on the introduction email, a face-to-face meeting would be arranged with the samurai community representatives. This meeting would be scheduled during a visit to Musubi No Sato. Myself, along with my son (test travellers), would personally express our commitment to respect and preserve the samurai traditions. We would share the project's vision of fostering cultural exchange, learning from the samurai's way of life, and promoting cross-cultural understanding.

Sharing the Vision

During the meeting, I would explain the itinerary and objectives of the transformative travel experience. Highlighting the carefully curated activities, including training sessions at the school, cultural immersion, and community exchanges. Emphasising the transformative and educational nature of the journey, I would explain how the project aims to create a positive impact on both the travellers and the samurai community.

Benefits for the Samurai Community and Preservation of their Way of Life:

Our transformative travel project can be an opportunity for the Samurai community to share their wisdom, heritage, and way of life with a broader audience. As travellers engage in meaningful interactions, the community's traditions and practices can be celebrated, ensuring their preservation for future generations. By supporting the local economy and culture, the community can thrive, strengthening their sense of identity and pride.

Benefits for Nature at the Destination and Upon Return:

Throughout the journey, we would prioritise eco-conscious practices, encouraging responsible tourism and sustainable interactions with nature. By respecting natural sites and minimising environmental impact, we contribute to the preservation of the destination's pristine landscapes and biodiversity. Moreover, our transformative travel experience aims to inspire participants to become eco-conscious ambassadors in their daily lives, championing environmental stewardship in their own communities upon return.

Benefits on the Inside:

The transformative impact of this journey extends to each participant's inner growth and personal development. Immersed in the Samurai way, travellers will learn valuable life lessons on discipline, mindfulness, and resilience. Encountering new perspectives and confronting challenges fosters empathy and compassion. The shared experiences within our tribe and the samurai community could cultivate lasting connections, forging a global network of individuals committed to positive change.

Step 4: Test Traveller Experience

To demonstrate the genuine intentions of the project My son and I would act as test travelers. During our visit, we would participate in activities with the samurai community, engaging in cultural exchanges and immersing ourselves in the samurai way of life. This firsthand experience will enable us to refine the project's offerings based on feedback from both the samurai community and us.

Step 5: Finalising the Collaboration

Following our experience and ongoing discussions with the samurai community, the collaboration details are finalised. Agreements on the itinerary, cultural protocols, and mutual expectations are made with utmost respect and consideration for the samurai community's traditions and preferences.

By establishing a genuine relationship with the Samurai community at *Musubi No Sato* (Village of Musubi) and being mindful of the broader impacts on nature and personal growth, this transformative travel project seeks to create a harmonious and reciprocal journey where participants and the host community mutually benefit, leaving a positive and enduring legacy for generations to come.

I would like to end by sharing one of the Master Samurai's profound philosophies that lies, encapsulated in the essence of this single word which became the name of his village...

Musubi 結 :

A link that tie one heart to another in harmony
In that moment, something new is born.

Takashi Araya - Master Samurai

Budget :

1st draft of a budget breakdown using Chat GPT.

I still have to do my own research to provide a better overview of the cost per traveller and It will be adjusted after our test trip to Japan.

Both My son and I would have our travel paid for in this budget.

Healing through travelling - The Samurai Way		
Budget Breakdown (Canadian Dollars)		
Item	Cost (CAD)	Price per Traveller (CAD)
Flights to Japan (12 travellers)	\$19,050.00	\$1,905.00
Accommodation (22 nights)	\$8,470.00	\$847.00
Meals	\$13,370.00	\$1,337.00
Local Transportation	\$2,680.00	\$268.00
Activities and Excursions	\$8,040.00	\$804.00
Guides and Interpreters	\$5,360.00	\$536.00
Seed Ceremony and Wellness	\$3,350.00	\$335.00
Travel Insurance	\$1,680.00	\$168.00
Miscellaneous and Souvenirs	\$3,350.00	\$335.00
Travel Designer Fee	\$7,010.00	\$701.00
Total Budget	\$72,360.00	
Total Price for 10 Travellers		\$7,236.00