



## Travel and Learning

### Leading Learning Podcast Transcript for Episode 365

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:00:00] Travel is a field laboratory that learning business professionals can use to better understand and serve their learners. Whether a trip is short or long, near or far, done alone or with others, travel offers an opportunity to learn.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:00:18] I'm Celisa Steele.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:00:20] I'm Jeff Cobb, and this is the Leading Learning Podcast.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:00:28] In the last episode the two of us recorded, Jeff, you and I talked about reading as a way to not only avoid summer learning loss but to actually make gains, and then we each shared three books that we plan to read this summer.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:00:41] That's right, and another way to make learning gains during a break, like the long summer break traditional in North America, is through travel.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:00:51] I love to travel, and I know you do too, and so we decided to devote this episode to talking about travel as a learning opportunity.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:01:01] You and I have a mix of experiences to draw on. We've each traveled independently for work and for pleasure, and we've also traveled together for both work and leisure.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:01:10] Right—past tense. We have traveled solo and together for work and not work. And we also have some upcoming travel planned for this summer. Future tense. So we have plenty of fodder for our discussion. But an interesting question we had to grapple with was how to structure this conversation because I feel like there's a lot to say about travel and learning.

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**Jeff Cobb:** [00:01:33] Yes, definitely tough to structure, but we're going to attempt to give structure to our conversation around four main points: reasons for travel, types of learning travel, what can be learned from travel, and choices in travel.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:01:51] We'll use those four points as the framework for our discussion, and we'll dig in with that first point around reasons for travel. I feel like we need to acknowledge up front that not all travel is for learning. Some people might choose to travel more for relaxation, some might travel for rejuvenation, or some might even travel to fulfill a duty.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:02:15] And, of course, that's just saying that learning is not the direct purpose of those types of travel, those trips. But we're always learning, and you can certainly learn on those types of trips. But whether learning is a clear focus or not is going to inform the kind of choices you make about what to do or what options you have about how to spend your time when you travel.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:02:39] Right. And I know you recently pointed me to an interview with Kevin Kelly, where he specifically talks about travel as a means of learning.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:02:48] And talk about somebody who's an interesting traveler, just an interesting person in general, Kevin Kelly. Of course, a founder of *Wired* magazine and just a real icon in the whole tech world. It sounds like most of what he does now is travel. He actually started out as a travel photographer, and he's back to doing a lot of that work right now. And, as you said, he says he travels mainly for learning. One of the ways he describes it—and I think we'll talk about this some more in our conversation here—is that he views travel as a chance to encounter, to confront the other, otherness, things that are different from what he's going to get in his ordinary life, and says he comes back with a new sense of what's possible. I think that's a great reason to travel. I think it's a reason that I certainly share with Kevin. I don't think I've thought about it quite as explicitly before, but that whole idea of getting out there and just really seeing what the other possibilities are and starting to integrate those into how you think about your own life going forward.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:03:59] So, again, not all travel is for learning, but it can be a powerful tool for learning. And, if you put that lens on your trips, that's going to lead you to make certain decisions and choices about what you do or don't do and what you do or don't see. Now, the second area we wanted to talk about was types of learning travel, and just two big buckets that come to mind are formal and informal travel for learning.

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**Jeff Cobb:** [00:04:25] Obviously, you can choose to go on a structured type of trip, a study-abroad-type program. I know you've done that sort of thing.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:04:36] That's right. I spent my junior year of college in Bordeaux. So, for those months, I went and studied in France. I was practicing my French. I was a dual major undergraduate, both in English and French. I was doing all of that coursework in French, so even as I was also studying art and literature and things like that, I was doing it all in French, and that was a deeply immersive experience in the language and in the culture.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:05:04] I've done similar things in Russia and Poland back in the day. I have to say, that feels like an awfully long time ago. I'm not sure how much I still recall of the language aspect, but the culture aspect and what that opened up for me and, going back to that idea of otherness, just a different experience and how that influences your life forward. There are plenty of programs out there for people to engage in different types of formal learning. My folks have done those Road Scholar trips, with *road* being R-O-A-D, a clever play on the prestigious award [Rhodes Scholarship] that you can get for learning-related travel. And that's a nonprofit organization, Road Scholar, that provides educational travel programs that are primarily geared towards older adults. And, of course, we see a lot of this travel for learning—or, at least, the conscious, intentional travel for learning—often happens with older adults because they now have some time and some resources to be able to do that sort of thing.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:06:05] I said that we had these two buckets of types of learning travel: formal and informal. And yet, again, I think rather than buckets, we should be talking about a spectrum because you have something like a junior year abroad, which is more rigorous, that had multiple courses in that type of thing. Our son is going to study in Sevilla this summer. That's just two weeks. But it's still a structured class. It's a little less formal. I think it's only half a day, with the idea that the other half of the day is spent exploring the city and learning more of the cultural side of things. And then you have even more informal but still in the formal bucket, something like Road Scholar, where it's really a trip, and you're really there for the culture aspect of it, but it is structured, and it does have that educational, clear focus to it.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:06:53] I think it's nice when there can be a combination of the two. Even when we do travel as a family and are just going out on our own, we've got a schedule and an agenda, different things we're trying to do along the way to try to structure it some, which I think helps give some focus and bring a little bit of clarity to the chaos. But, then, so much of the stuff that's really going to be impactful is going to pop up in places you weren't even expecting, that you hadn't been thinking about, that you hadn't been planning for, those conversations you're going

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to have or those things you're going to stumble into walking down the street. I can remember, for example, being in Venice as a family once, and we discovered this little museum just because we happened to have a museum pass that would get us into it. And it was one of the absolute—

**Celisa Steele:** [00:07:39] And someone needed to use the bathroom.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:07:41] And someone needed to use the bathroom. So we weren't planning on going there, but it was someplace we could go for that purpose. And it turned out to be an amazing little place.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:07:47] Yes, it was a lovely museum. I think it was my favorite museum in Venice, that had some amazing little insect sculptures made of metal, and it was just a fantastical. And just to have stumbled upon it and not necessarily intended to go there. So we've started moving into what I originally called a bucket, the informal bucket. Now I'm talking more about it as a spectrum. On that informal side, I would put things like leisure travel, which I think we can talk about a little bit more in a minute. But I would also put the idea of travel that comes with a learning experience but isn't really the focus of the learning experience. For example, in place-based learning events. Think about that conference where you go to a specific city, and you're there for a number of days. We recently had the opportunity to do that. We went to a conference in Cleveland, Ohio.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:08:40] That's right. That was the Creator Economy Expo in Cleveland. And so, being in Cleveland, [we] wanted to take advantage of some of what's there. Obviously, we were going to learn things at the conference. We went to sessions and did that sort of thing. That was that formal part of it. But, just having that idea that we were going to do some things while we were there, one of the things that was there that was dear to my heart and on my personal bucket list was the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. So we did spend an afternoon in the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. And, of course, that's a museum. It's structured, so there's that formal element to it. But, just like anything, the experience of being able to walk around and see those faces that you recognize from the history of music, it provides this reflection space when you're in an atmosphere like that. But that was because we did take advantage of being in that place to access that particular resource.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:09:40] And that was on us. We carved out the time, we made the effort, and we booked the tickets to go see the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Sometimes you have conference organizers that do some of that lifting for participants. So they might organize dine-around-

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towns, where you meet up and go out to local restaurants with a group of other conference attendees. Or they might have that 5K that runs you through the city's downtown. Or do yoga with a great view of the beach. Sometimes those conference organizers are trying to take advantage of place and give you a view into where it is that you are gathering for this learning experience. I will say, as an aside, that if you are someone in charge of planning those kinds of things or working with people who plan those kinds of things, you have to carve out time to allow people to benefit from being in the location. We couldn't have gone to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame if there had been sessions scheduled all day and all night. There have to be breaks.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:10:39] It is something that, often, I find tough with going to conferences. You have the ones where things start at 7 o'clock in the morning and then run through receptions at 8 o'clock at night. And, unless you're just going to miss something, you really can't do anything else while you're there. But I think one of the key lessons in this, though, is that even if you're going on business travel, something that you know is not defined as or isn't explicitly about learning, you can decide that, aside from—if it's a conference, of course, you're going to do some learning at the conference—but aside from whatever you're going to be doing that is business-focused, there's plenty you can do that helps you learn in other ways, whether it's taking advantage of something like going to a museum or whether it's just like the last time I was in New York. I made a point of actually going out and walking around. I went running in Central Park and just getting a better feel of the place. Because, so often, if you're doing business travel, you can just get cooped up in the conference center or the hotel rooms or whatever and just don't get much of a feel for the place where you are. And that is a form of learning.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:11:37] Another type of travel on the informal end of the spectrum is this idea of leisure travel. And I will say that I have trouble with the term to use. I don't know. "Leisure travel" doesn't necessarily feel right because sometimes the kind of travel that we do in this category can feel a little too rigorous to feel like leisure. I don't know. Maybe "discretionary travel" is a better term here. But this is basically the kind of travel where you have more choice about where to go and what to see and do.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:12:09] I think with this kind of travel, you do have to be...and I think we'll get into choices about travel, but one thing here is that you don't want to choose to do too much with that kind of travel, as you're saying. It can start to feel, well, not like leisure very quickly, which may be fine, but you have to have your limits. Kevin Kelly says one of the main mistakes he makes in traveling is just simply trying to do too much, trying to go too many places, and see too many things in what's almost always a limited period of time. So, being conscious of that.

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**Celisa Steele:** [00:12:38] But this is where you get to choose activities that really do have an intentional learning bent to them—often things like going to museums to take in art, going to opera houses (or bars, for that matter) to experience live music, or theaters for plays. But you can also get into things like restaurants for food and local culinary dishes and focuses. You can also do things like go to farmers’ markets, where you get a real feel for what is in season or what are the different vegetables or fruits you might see that you don’t typically see somewhere else. So all of those things can provide ample ways to learn.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:13:24] I think a thread running through this, too, is that no matter what your reasons for traveling are—if you’re there to relax mainly, to rejuvenate or if you have some sort of duty you have to fulfill, whether that’s business or with relatives, whatever those reasons are that are driving you, even if you haven’t said, “I’m here explicitly to learn”—you can just find so many opportunities for learning in any of those situations. So much of it’s just about having the mindset and saying, “I’m going to take advantage of this as an opportunity to learn.”

**Celisa Steele:** [00:13:58] As someone who listens to the Leading Learning Podcast, you should know about the Leading Learning newsletter, which you can subscribe to at [leadinglearning.com/inbox](http://leadinglearning.com/inbox). The newsletter is inbox intelligence for learning businesses and helps you understand the latest technology, marketing, and learning trends and grow your learning business. Best of all, it’s a free resource. As a subscriber, you get Leading Links, our monthly curated collection of resources to help you grow the reach, revenue, and impact of your learning business; the podcast digest, a monthly summary of podcast episodes released during the previous month; plus, periodic announcements highlighting Leading Learning Webinars and other educational opportunities designed to benefit learning business professionals. Subscribe, for free, at [leadinglearning.com/inbox](http://leadinglearning.com/inbox). And, if you’re already subscribed, point a colleague to [leadinglearning.com/inbox](http://leadinglearning.com/inbox).

**Celisa Steele:** [00:14:59] Let’s talk a little bit about what can be learned from travel. One of the things that occurred to me as I was reflecting on this is that I feel like travel reinforces this idea of pre, during, and post, which we usually want to think about with any learning experience, when we’re trying to design that. There are going to tend to be things that you need to do beforehand. And then, of course, you’re going to be there and focused on the learning during it. And then, usually, there’s going to be something that you want to do after that learning experience. And I feel like traveling really reinforces that because it makes you live it out. You have to do some type of prep for traveling, even if it’s as simple as gassing up the car or booking a train or plane ticket.

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**Jeff Cobb:** [00:15:43] And I think it's just something that goes with getting older, particularly with having kids, I think the pre part has gotten much more intense than it used to be in the past. The first time I took a really big trip, it really felt like I was just getting on the plane with a *Let's Go* and figuring it out. And I don't think I could quite do that anymore for a lot of different reasons.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:16:06] Well, I think we'll talk a little bit later about the idea of who you travel with. Probably part of the reason you had more flexibility or didn't have as much need to do as much up front was the fact that it was just you, and you really only had to serve yourself. But, yes, that pre part can be fairly intense. You can, of course, spend a lot of time reading up on a location, and—harkening back to the episode that we released just before this, when you and I were talking about reading—you can read both fiction and nonfiction to get a sense of place.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:16:40] And, of course, if you're going someplace that speaks a different language, studying some of the language is a great way to get a better feel for it. Even if you're not somebody who feels like you're going to be able to show up there and truly be able to communicate, still, just having a little bit of a sense of the vocabulary and some of the common terms and even being able to have that in your mind as you then hear the language when you get there, again, is that otherness, you get a deeper sense of a place through knowing the language, and it can pay off to know a little bit of the language.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:17:13] Yes, we were traveling in Croatia, and we had spent time as a family learning a few phrases and keywords, just things like "please," "thank you," "good morning," and that type of thing. We were in a little grocery store getting some food, and I elbowed the kids to say "thank you" in Croatian at the end. This grumpy sales clerk looked at them—after they said thank you in Croatian—and reached down underneath and pulled out a box of candy and let them each pick out a piece of candy. I don't think she was going to offer them candy until they said thank you in Croatian.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:17:49] Generally speaking, people appreciate it if you're making some level of attempt to communicate in the native language. I fear Americans have a little bit of that image as the ugly American, where we expect everybody to speak English everywhere. And, of course, much of the world does speak English, but, still, people appreciate it if you make that effort to communicate.

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**Celisa Steele:** [00:18:13] Well, I love languages, and so I do get a kick out of trying to learn a little bit of the language anywhere we're going to be. But I will say that I am also a bit of a chicken when it comes to trying it out sometimes, especially if I only know a handful of words. It can feel like, of course, they're going to know much more English than I know of whatever their language is. A few summers ago, we stayed in a hogan on Navajo land, and I had been learning a little bit of Navajo through Duolingo, but I never actually busted any of it out with our hostess there. It just wound up not feeling quite appropriate. But I'm still glad that I put in the effort and learned a little bit about the language. I think that helped make that experience—staying in that traditional hogan on that reservation—that much more meaningful.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:19:00] So much about culture is embedded in language. Again, just knowing a little bit changes the experience. And a quick shout out there to Duolingo too. What you can now do with learning languages is absolutely mind-blowing. Back in the day, I had to rely on those little Berlitz phrasebooks or whatever, going someplace. And now you can really immerse yourself and get a decent command of a language before going somewhere.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:19:26] I will say that, on the pre side, I think there's a lot to be said for preparation prior to travel. It can help make sure that you do get what you want out of a trip to a place. But I do think that there's also a place for serendipity, and that can be okay, and sometimes it can pay off. We already shared about the museum in Venice we hadn't meant to travel to, but I will say that I think Louis Pasteur gets credited with saying "Chance favors the prepared mind." So I tend to lean towards the side of knowing a little bit about where it is you're going and that that can help you get the most out of it. And I know that we learned something after going to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame that, if we had done our homework in advance, it might have changed things a little bit.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:20:08] Sure. The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame had the Garage, where they had all these instruments hooked up—electric guitars, basses, and keyboards. They had studios with drum sets in them that you could just go in there and do whatever you wanted on, basically. And we just didn't really have enough time to take advantage of that. We didn't know it was there, and I would have loved to have spent some time doing that. I play the guitar, I play some keyboards, and I play some drums. It would have been fun to do all of that. I didn't get a chance to, but I think I've become more and more a fan of preparation because I think it does help trips pay off. But, to be honest, we could do many, many hours of this type of episode just talking about the serendipitous experiences that have come up during travel. And, I have to say, those tend to be the ones that I remember the most, that have the most impact on me.

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**Celisa Steele:** [00:20:59] So that's a little bit about pre and its relationship to traveling. If we talk about during and travel, again, that can be more or less intense. And so, if it's on the less intense end, it might just be more about showing up and going to the museum, going to the restaurant, or doing whatever you set out for yourself. On the more intense side might be making sure that you have time for journaling or at least taking notes about what you saw and did and beginning to build in some of that time for reflection but doing [it] while it's still fresh in your mind.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:21:35] I've always journaled to some extent as I've been traveling. Sometimes I've been sloppy about it or not done it as much, and I've always regretted it later because memory is just so, so poor, and it's nice to be able to go back and really have [it] documented. And it can be very simple—just a few points about what you did that day. It can help to spark your memories, bring back what was engaging about that particular place, and bring it back to life for you. So anybody who is traveling, taking notes can be the simplest thing, but doing that and then keeping it as a record to be able to go back to.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:22:11] I think there's whatever you will have on your agenda—a particular museum, a particular play, or a particular site—but then there's also what goes along with it, which can be things like the transportation. Or it can be even just the simple going to a grocery store. I remember that in Madrid, we went to the Reina Sofía Museum, and I remember some of the great art that was there. But I really feel like from my time in Spain, I learned probably as much at the Mercadona, which is one of the local grocery stores, because it was amazing. You had all this perfect, just-in-time learning opportunities because you had these little signs telling you exactly what that fruit was or what that vegetable was. And so it was helping me expand my vocabulary right there in the moment of need. So that was a great little learning opportunity.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:23:01] And I think that's always one of the best things to do when you're in a country that is not your native language. Really, the more "other" the country feels, going to places like the grocery store, the everyday things that people have to do, experiencing what that's like, is just always illuminating.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:23:15] And then, during travel, there are usually tons of opportunities to deconstruct the experience. There's this metacognition piece that can go along with travel. And I've been particularly thinking about this in light of your conversation with Dr. Susie Wise, Jeff. You talked to her about belonging, and, of course, the flip side of belonging being this othering. You've already mentioned Kevin Kelly talking about travel as a way to experience the other and otherness. I think it's really interesting to reflect on your own experience in a place—and that

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can be the city or country as a whole, or it could even just be more in the museum or in the restaurant—but how does a place make you feel?

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:24:00] Yes. And, of course, in some places that's much more a stark contrast than others. I can remember landing in Ghana the first time I went to Africa and emerging from the airport. It was really the first time in my life where I was just clearly the minority, a Caucasian male in the presence of Africans, and standing out clearly. I was the other at that point. A similar experience in China, being surrounded everywhere by Asian faces and Asian language. I'm clearly the minority. I'm clearly the other. And that's an impactful experience.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:24:41] A similar experience for me, I did a couple of summer language study programs in college, where I had probably some of my first experiences of just very visibly not fitting in. I did a summer in Irbid, Jordan, studying Arabic. Again, I just didn't really have a hope of blending in there. I stood out. And then I did another summer program in Seoul, South Korea, studying Korean. Again, I did not look like the other folks around me. Before I showed up in Jordan, I had been studying Arabic, so I was able to read and to speak. When I arrived in South Korea, I was just beginning to study Korean, and so I didn't look like others. I couldn't read. I couldn't speak. I was effectively illiterate. It was very humbling—this reminder of what it can be like when you don't know anything.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:25:32] Yes, definitely.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:25:34] I think that one of the other things that I find interesting about travel is the experience of time. And there have been a number of studies around this and folks writing on it. But the idea is that novelty tends to slow down time or slow down our perception of time. And so, if you're in a city that is new to you and you're dealing with transportation that's not what you usually take at home and you're dealing with the supermarket where you have to look for different foods, all that novelty can really slow down your perception of time, which in some ways can be a real gift. It means that you have this sense of a long period of time elapsing whenever you're someplace new.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:26:18] Yes, we've both been fortunate—and we should probably touch on that at some point. A lot of what we're describing here, we've been very fortunate to have the opportunity to do. The type of traveling we're talking about is obviously not open to everybody. I wish it were, but we've been fortunate to be in places for three, four, five, or six weeks or months at a time. I know on those three-, four-, or five-week trips, it feels like you're gone for months by the time you come home. And I think it is what you're saying about the

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time slowing. And, of course, the truth is, too, it can be draining to travel for any length of time. That novelty is tiring, particularly if you're dealing with a different language. That can be very cognitively draining as part of the travel experience.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:27:03] Again, I think that can be a good insight for us as learning business professionals to keep in mind—how learners might feel when they show up for some of our offerings, where they don't feel comfortable, where the cognitive effort we're asking of them is significantly high, and just how draining that can be, and just how othered they might feel.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:27:23] It's a great meta-exercise for anybody in the learning business to be thinking about those sorts of things. As you are in that othered experience, as you are having to learn things and experience things that are new and different, how is that making you feel? And, as you said, drawing an analogy between that and the types of experiences that you're asking people to participate in.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:27:44] We mentioned reading as part of the potential pre phase of travel, but, of course, you can read while you're in a location.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:27:53] And back to Kevin Kelly, again, this is what he says he likes to do, to read in a location and to read about the location that he's actually in. He likes really being immersed there. And I share that. I can remember—you mentioned Croatia earlier—when we were in Croatia, I read *Balkan Ghosts*, which is a piece of nonfiction about that region and its history, which was fascinating. I can remember I was very fortunate to be able to take the Trans-Siberian Railroad once upon a time from China into Russia, and I read Tolstoy along the way and arrived in Moscow and had this whole different perception of Russia by that point.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:28:29] And we already touched on this a little bit, but, during the during phase of travel, there can be the danger of doing too much. That's something that Kevin Kelly cited as his own weakness, is trying to do too much. And, again, if we want to apply the meta lens on this and think about it from a learning business professional standpoint, I think we might have to be willing to cut, just as we're going to ask our subject matter experts to cut down to the essential. You need to think about what is it you really want to get out of a travel experience. Because, sometimes, if you try to do too much, it can all just blur together. You don't really have a crisp memory of any particular site, museum, or anything because you tried to cram in so much.

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**Jeff Cobb:** [00:29:13] And, speaking about memory, we should talk a little bit about the post phase here because I find that I do forget a lot from my travels. It's one of the reasons that I do something like journal along the way. But, just like with any learning experience, you've got to go back. You've got to review. You've got to reflect. You've got to re-cover that territory. So, going back to journals occasionally and going back to photos occasionally. We try to make a point—we need to be better about it with our family—going back and looking at the photos from past trips, just to jog everybody's memory, have some conversation about it, keep that alive, see how it feels to us now with having some distance and some perspective on it, and continuing to read about places. All of these are part of the overall learning experience that travel can provide.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:30:11] The fourth and final area we wanted to give some attention to is choices in travel. And one of the key choices is the choice of where. And so, with reading, there's always the choice of a new book, or do I go back to a book that I love and re-read it? And, of course, the same can apply to travel. Do you return to a place that you've already been, or do you go to a new place?

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:30:38] I'll insert here again, too, that simply having the choice to travel, of course, is a privilege and something that shouldn't be taken lightly. But I'd also say that even if you can't choose the big, grand international trip, make that choice to say, "Okay, I'm going to Cleveland for a conference, and I'm going to make this a learning experience." So be conscious of the choices that you do have available to you, and make them. But, yes, those questions about, if you are able to travel with some frequency, do you go back to that same place, or do you visit a new place? I know I wrestle with this quite a bit. I have to say that I am a lover of London. I could probably go back to London again and again and again, which I know is probably not the ideal scenario.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:31:23] And what's that quote on the mug that you have?

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:31:25] "When a man is tired of London, he's tired of life." And I'm not tired of London.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:31:32] I think that your point about privilege is an important point. And some of our examples have perhaps pointed folks to larger, farther-afield trips, but I do think that this same type of thinking about travel and thinking about place can apply to much shorter and much more local trips. Even just going to the town next door, if you really apply that lens of

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“Let me go and see what it’s like to be there for a day” and to settle in, that can be illuminating and educational in its own way.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:32:06] It’s micro travel.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:32:08] Micro travel.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:32:08] Draw the analogy to microlearning.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:32:10] Absolutely. And so, I guess related to that, another choice beyond where, is then length. Again, there’s a certain amount of privilege here. You may not be able to always decide how long, but, if you do, then there’s a choice between a short trip versus the longer settling in. I think, again, both can have their educational value to them, and I think, like we were just saying there with micro travel, this is the distinction again between the fuller course being that longer stay versus the microlearning module being maybe you just have two days in a town or a city.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:32:50] Yes, and everything depends on your situation, depends on your context, depends on what you’re out to achieve, as to what is actually appropriate. So there’s probably some concept of travel design that parallels with instructional design here. It really is about that, in a way. Another factor is movement. How much are you going to be moving around versus staying put? I think this aligns with what Kevin Kelly is saying about doing too much. He’s always in motion, moving from one place to another or just doing a ton of stuff even in the same place that he’s in. But I know over time I’ve gotten more and more attached to the idea of going to one place and really staying put, mostly, and going deep and not trying to hit 10 different cities in a country. Maybe hit one city and maybe a couple more on a smaller basis to get a deeper experience. Move around less.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:33:45] It feels a little bit like a hedgehog-versus-fox decision there.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:33:49] I’ve become more of a hedgehog, I guess, as I’ve gotten older.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:33:52] And then, of course, there’s the issue...or, I shouldn’t say “issue,” the question—

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:33:57] The question.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:33:58] The opportunity of travel companions. We talk about in the learning world that the people learning with you in a course or a conference session, that's a heavy influencer of what you get out of that learning experience. And the same applies to travel.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:34:16] Yes, absolutely. I've been fortunate in my life to have some great travel companions, yourself included, Celisa. But you have to make sure that who you're traveling with is a fit for you and, also, that the trip is a fit for whoever is traveling. We have friends who took the father of one of them on a trip in Europe, and they did a boat trip on a river because he's quite a bit older and really couldn't do a lot of rigorous stuff while traveling, so that worked for him. He's somebody who's a great companion in just about any situation, and so the three of them together on a boat traveling as companions worked well.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:34:58] And there have been times where there are things that I would like to do, but I have to succumb to the realities of my travel companions. For example, I love a good, long hike. When we were at the Grand Canyon, I would have loved to have done the rim-to-rim day-long hike. But I knew that was not going to work for one of the younger folks in our travel group, and so I opted for a shorter hike instead. Maybe someday I'll have the opportunity to go back and do the longer hike. But it is about what adjustments do you make to travel so that it works for you and your companions. And I think here, too, to go back to the peer learning example, there's opportunity for both giving and getting. There are things that I can share with our kids as we're traveling, and there are things that they can share with me. They can truly point out aspects of the location where we are that I wouldn't have noticed on my own. And so I think that's a really powerful part of traveling with other people.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:35:57] I think it can be a great part of traveling with kids, particularly younger kids, who are just going to see the world a little differently and are going to notice and engage with things that you might not be inclined to as an adult. And I'll say, on the flip side, our penchant for long hikes, I think, is the bane of our children's existence. But, one of these days, I suspect they're going to look back and remember that fondly. Travel is a field laboratory that learning business professionals can use to better understand and serve their learners. Whether a trip is short or long, near or far, done alone or with others, travel offers an opportunity to learn.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:36:41] At [leadinglearning.com/episode365](http://leadinglearning.com/episode365), you'll find show notes, a full transcript, other resources, and options for subscribing to the podcast if you're not already subscribed.

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**Jeff Cobb:** [00:36:52] We'd be grateful if you would take a minute to rate us on Apple Podcasts or wherever you listen, especially if you enjoy the show. Celisa and I personally appreciate reviews and ratings, and they help the podcast show up when people search for content on leading a learning business.

**Celisa Steele:** [00:37:07] And please spread the word about Leading Learning. You can do that in a one-on-one note or conversation with a colleague, or you can do it through social media. In the show notes at [leadinglearning.com/episode365](http://leadinglearning.com/episode365), you'll find links to connect with us on Twitter, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

**Jeff Cobb:** [00:37:22] Thanks again, and see you next time on the Leading Learning Podcast.

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