Travelling

I've spent the last year wandering around the globe and exploring this wondrous thing called life. Through 26 flights, I've managed to circle the globe twice, and touch 5 of the 7 continents. It's been an incredible experience. The journey led me from scuba diving for a month in Thailand to hitchhiking in African country. I've learned about the world and myself more than any book, teacher or person could tell me.

I've learned that the timing will never be perfect because rarely are we blessed with the perfect time to do something. When I was planning on leaving to travel for a year, it was never the "right time" when everything was going to be put on hold for my travels. I needed more money, or I would lose my job. I realized that I was never going to be "ready" to drastically change my life, as I was always going to have some new commitment or excuse. So I left at the "wrong time" in life and it turned out to be the best thing that happened to me. But once I got sick of missing out on things I wanted to do and see, I started to just do them anyway.

I've also learned that friendships are everything. I heard this one a lot before, but never really believed it that much. When I started looking back on my travels, I started to think "Wow, I've seen a heck of lot of cool places". I tried to think back to my favorites, which ones did I enjoy the most? They were always the ones where I had the best friends and really had nothing to do with where I was. The people around you contribute a great deal to your overall happiness. It was only when I had no friends that I realized their importance.

When travelling, you have complete freedom to literally do anything you want. You can relax everyday on the beach, you can be alone every day in your room, you can eat ice cream for breakfast every day, and you can drink all the time. This freedom can be quite liberating, but many people have a tough time balancing the party/drinking/vacation aspect with truly seeing and experiencing each country, because you have no responsibilities and no one around to tell you when you can't do something. I too fell into a similar kind of trap. I indulged in so many aspects of life. I took everything to the extreme until it had lost its excitement. I realized that balance was the key.

Another lesson I have learned is that life doesn't have to be "normal". Go to school, get a job, or buy a big house. When anyone strays from this path they are considered to be not "normal". It's only when I started traveling that I saw that a fulfilling and happy life isn't always a respectable job, with a big house and lots of money. I began to meet interesting characters from all over the world and saw firsthand how they had gone "against the grain" and succeeded. There are tons of other ways to live a fulfilling and happy life, but most of us have only seen the "big house" scenario. I saw and experienced how happy people are doing something completely different than normal jobs, because they get to wake up every day and do what they want to do in the place they want to be.

So, while travelling I realized that you can read about things, watch them on TV, or hear stories from a friend, but nothing comes close to first-hand human experience. You get a whole new perspective on what really matters and you feel this sense of adventure and excitement that reminds you just how many possibilities you have in life. To anyone who has not travelled, do it. And to those who have, continue to do so. It will teach you more about yourself and the world around you than you could ever imagine.

The most important thing the author learned during his travels was about...

1. ...balance.
2. ...responsibilities.
3. ...friendship.
4. ...freedom.