



## Barcelona Mindset

Imagine having a lens that can deepen your outlook on life. One that unlocks your potential using resilience, sufficiency and playfulness. A perspective that places you in the driver seat of your experience.

I call it the *Barcelona mindset*. A set of values I use as a compass to carry me through life's vastness. I used to think that we were limited by how much money was in the bank. No money. No movement. However, I've learned over the years that money alone doesn't dictate the trajectory of our life. There really isn't a lack of anything except imagination. Scarcity is a myth. We undermine the skills of being resourceful and the great lengths it can take you. The consensus still feels like we're waiting until we have "enough" to get started. This lens helped me see beyond those limitations.

If you discount opportunities because you think you can't afford them, then it's going to be a long uphill battle to complete anything. You'll quit as soon as you see the price tag and count yourself out. It used to feel like a nuisance to not have the money I wanted to explore the world. How could I possibly live a fulfilling life without the capital to fund it all? It took accepting that life is happening now and we already have everything we could need.

I started to consider questions that went beyond my default way of thinking and developed this mindset. This came from my most recent backpacking trip to Europe.

## Sufficiency

My trip was a great example of how sufficiency played a crucial role in shaping this mindset. During my three-month European adventure, I realized that the Barcelona mindset had developed out of a necessity to become the agent of change for my life. I wanted to improve the quality of my experiences, and I understood that it was up to me to take action on that desire.

Booking the flight brought a bucket of overwhelm as I bounced back and forth on whether I was going to go through with it. It was only meant to be a week and after a split decision, I extended it to three months. As I started to plan, I realized that even if it didn't turn out as expected, it would make for a great dinner conversation. I turned the focus into a creative retreat. A chance to explore and see how this journey could shape my future and help me grow as a person.

This was the ultimate lesson in sufficiency. I recognized that I had enough resources, knowledge, and skills to move forward. By turning my focus on the desire to explore, my dread turned into curiosity.

As I traveled, I encountered several challenges that tested me. For instance, when my phone got stolen in Spain, I had to navigate the country without it. I met other travelers online and opened myself to new conversations with people whom I had never met. I improved my Spanish by putting myself out there more, and I wrote a single, [Covering My Tattoos](#), while I was in Berlin.

The turning point of my trip was when a friend visited me for the weekend. During that time, I was enrolled in an entrepreneurial startup cohort for a production studio I wanted to build up. My anxiety about the final showcase had me yanking at my hair to get it perfect. I filled in my friend on my dilemma and she eagerly had me share my pitch with her. Barcelona was the perfect backdrop to my begrudges around the lack of representation in media. Her feedback was invaluable and encouraging. That night I felt the high of sharing my passion with the virtual audience and was grateful to have a companion in the same country as me. That weekend showed me that I already had enough knowledge about my idea. And that I could have

an amazing day exploring Park Guell with a close friend without having to stress about the showcase.

All in all, my trip to Europe taught me about perspective and the way other people lived. It helped me incorporate the value of sufficiency into my life, which means not worrying as much and finding where I can be my best. When something goes wrong, I remember to be open to each experience. I recognize that life can be mundane and as wild as the seas at any given time. At the end of the day, we're all human, and can instill the Barcelona mindset to help us thrive in any situation.

## Resilience

I spent most of that trip in Barcelona where the prominent languages are Catalan and Castellano (Spanish). Although I'm Mexican-American, I haven't always felt confident in speaking Spanish. I knew there would be a gap in my understanding and it would be an interesting challenge to take on.

I didn't have a traditional Mexican upbringing. Since my parents moved to the US during early childhood, they learned English in school and it was our main language at home. Unfortunately, this created a language barrier with other relatives who only spoke Spanish. At times the shame welled up when I felt left out in conversations. My dad usually ended up translating for me and my brother. My words would stumble before they could form any coherent sentence that anyone could understand. So, I took it upon myself to practice Spanish throughout high school and college. It's still not perfect, though you can drop me in any Spanish-speaking country now and I'll be just fine.

Being in Spain threw me in the deep end. I didn't have my dad to translate anymore. I had to trust myself that I knew enough to get by. And with lots of trial and error, I gained more confidence in articulating myself.

I started off with baby steps, asking for the time or directions to a local metro entrance. After a few of these instances, I felt the words ease through my lips picking up the language quickly through immersion.

After a few weeks, I splurged in spontaneous conversation with strangers. Asking what they were doing for work or hearing about the history of Barcelona from locals.

What stood out the most was that I didn't have to be perfect at all. Once I got going in conversation my words started to flow with ease and rhythm. I met a friend there who was from Italy and she also wanted to test her fluency. All of our interactions were in Spanish and neither of us minded the occasional mispronunciation. It felt liberating to know that I was already good enough with what I had. As long as I could get my idea across, she understood and vice versa.

## Playfulness

Throughout my trip I made it a point to be open to opportunities I came across. I wanted to embrace a playful approach to life. Where I could go outside my comfort zone to be spontaneous in my choices and try on this new lens.

One memorable example occurred during my birthday week when I stumbled upon a flyer for a local concert with an artist I was familiar with. Without hesitation, I decided to attend, simple because I could. This mentally allowed me to break free from my usual routine and explore life in a more adventurous way.

Even moments of mishap and uncertainty became opportunities to exercise my playful perspective. When I lost my phone during a date, I didn't panic. Instead, I jotted down directions and landmarks on post-it notes to navigate the city. I hopped from cafe to cafe exploring different parts of the city.

the city. Hopped from care to care exploring different parts of the city despite going on the wrong bus from time to time.

## Coming Home

My mindset has helped me travel all over the world, direct my first short film, and enjoy what's in front of me. For many, it can feel as if money or time are the biggest barriers to any idea worth pursuing. However, by booting up a new mindset centered around these three values, you become keen to find ways to do more with what you have.

These experiences taught me that life doesn't have to be so serious and there's always room to explore. I continue to seek uncertainty, embrace the unexpected and relish in the journey. I'm grateful for the lessons learned during my adventure and grateful for the Barcelone mindset I developed along the way.

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