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Situation cards (1)

Cut out. Draw a card, read the adventure, and discuss the four questions together

Cycling across Europe

You set off from the Atlantic coast with everything you own strapped to your bike, and you won't stop pedalling until you reach the Black Sea. There are no support vehicles and no hotels booked, just you, your legs and a tent. Some days you cross mountain passes in the rain; on others you roll through vineyards and sleepy villages where no one speaks your language. The whole journey could take two months.

A month of silence

For thirty days you live at a retreat high in the mountains, and you do not speak a single word. No phone, no books, no music — only meditation, simple meals and long hours alone with your own thoughts. The days are strictly scheduled and begin before sunrise. Many people find the first week almost unbearable; a few never want to leave.

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Situation cards (2)

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Crossing the Atlantic by yacht

You have joined the crew of a small sailing yacht for a three-week crossing of the open Atlantic. Once land disappears behind you, there is no turning back and no help within reach. You take turns at the helm through the night, ration your fresh water and learn to sleep as the boat pitches in heavy swell. For days at a time, the nearest other humans may be the astronauts passing overhead.

Backpacking on a shoestring

With just a rucksack and a budget that somehow has to last two months, you set off across Southeast Asia. You sleep in crowded hostels, haggle in night markets, eat where the locals eat and travel by whatever is cheapest — night buses, rickety trains, the back of a truck. Plans change by the hour. Every day brings a new city, a new face and a new small disaster to solve.

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Situation cards (3)

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A long trail, alone

You are walking a 900-kilometre pilgrimage route entirely on your own, and you have given yourself six weeks to reach the end. Everything you need rides on your back. Each morning you choose how far to walk; each evening you find somewhere to sleep, from a simple hostel to a patch of grass under the stars. Blisters, loneliness and doubt are all part of the deal — and so, people say, is a strange kind of peace.

A winter in Antarctica

You have taken a job at a remote research station in Antarctica, and you will be there for six months — right through the polar winter, when the sun never rises and the temperature plunges far below zero. The same small handful of colleagues are the only people you will see. Once the last plane leaves in autumn, no one can reach you until spring, whatever happens

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Situation cards (4)

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Camper van road trip

You and three friends have pooled your savings, bought an ageing camper van and set off to cross the country with no fixed route and no schedule. You cook by the roadside, argue over the map and sleep wherever you happen to park. The van breaks down more often than you would like. Four people, one small space and weeks on the road: it will either cement your friendship or test it to breaking point.

Volunteering abroad

You have committed to six months volunteering in a remote rural village, far from any city, helping to build a school and teach the local children. You live simply, without many of the comforts of home, and slowly pick up a new language and a new way of life. The work is hard and the progress is slow, but the welcome is warm and the sense of purpose is very real.

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Situation cards (5)

Cut out. Draw a card, read the adventure, and discuss the four questions together

A guided mountain expedition

You have signed up to climb a 6,000-metre peak with a guided expedition team. For weeks you trek towards base camp, acclimatise to the thinning air, before the final push to the summit. The cold is relentless, the altitude turns every step into an effort, and mountain sickness can end your climb at any moment. Reaching the top is far from guaranteed.

Slow travel by train

Instead of flying, you decide to cross an entire continent by rail, giving yourself a whole month to do it. You stop in a new city every few days, and let chance meetings on station platforms decide where you go next. There is no rush and no fixed itinerary — only the rhythm of the tracks, the landscape shifting past the window, and the freedom to stay an extra day wherever you happen to fall in love with a place.

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Situation cards (6)

Cut out. Draw a card, read the adventure, and discuss the four questions together

Off-grid in the forest

You are leaving modern life behind to spend an entire season alone in a forest cabin, with no electricity and no running water. You chop your own wood, carry water from the stream and grow or forage most of what you eat. It is just you, the changing weather and the slow daily work of staying warm and fed — a test of practical skill and of your own company.

A desert trek by camel

You have joined an organised week-long expedition across the desert, travelling the old way — on camelback, with a small group and local guides. By day you sway across endless dunes beneath a burning sun; by night you sleep out under a sky thick with stars. Water is precious, the heat is punishing and the silence is vast. It is an ancient landscape that has swallowed unprepared travellers for centuries.