

# UNLOST

## Book Club & Discussion Guide

---

A resource for readers, libraries, travel enthusiasts, cycling communities, and discussion groups inspired by *UNLOST: Roaming Through South America on a Spontaneous Journey* by Cory Mortensen.

**Cory Mortensen**

Travel Memoirist • Wanderer • Storyteller

[www.corymortensen.com](http://www.corymortensen.com)

## About the Book

*UNLOST* follows Cory Mortensen as he backpacks solo through South America, drifting through Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Patagonia, and beyond with little more than curiosity and a loose sense of direction. What begins as travel slowly becomes something deeper — a meditation on solitude, uncertainty, identity, movement, and the strange freedom that can emerge when life stops following a predictable path. The memoir blends humor, discomfort, philosophy, buses, border crossings, hostels, remote landscapes, and chance encounters into a story about wandering through both geography and adulthood.

### Major Themes:

- Solitude and self-discovery
- Wandering and uncertainty
- Backpacking culture and long-term travel
- Identity and reinvention
- Freedom versus stability
- Human connection across cultures
- Humor, discomfort, and unpredictability
- The emotional realities of solo travel

---

## A Note from the Author

Thank you for reading *UNLOST* and for bringing it into your conversations and communities. This book was written during a season of life where maps mattered less than curiosity. It became a story about solitude, movement, uncertainty, and the realization that sometimes being “lost” is simply another way of paying attention. I hope these questions encourage conversations about travel, freedom, identity, loneliness, reinvention, and the places that stay with us long after we return home.

## Discussion Questions

1. What does the title *UNLOST* mean to you after finishing the memoir?
2. How does solo travel affect the narrator differently than ordinary life back home?
3. Would you personally find this style of wandering exciting, exhausting, lonely, or liberating? Why?
4. The memoir often embraces uncertainty and spontaneity. Do you think modern life leaves enough room for either?
5. How does South America itself become a character within the story?
6. What moments in the memoir felt the most emotionally honest or vulnerable?
7. Did the book challenge your assumptions about success, stability, or what a meaningful life looks like?
8. How does humor help balance difficult, uncomfortable, or uncertain moments throughout the journey?
9. What role does loneliness play in the memoir? Is loneliness always negative?
10. The book frequently contrasts tourism with immersion. What do you think separates the two?
11. Which country, city, or landscape from the memoir stayed with you most and why?
12. How does movement shape the narrator's identity throughout the book?
13. Do you think wandering without a clear plan is irresponsible, courageous, or necessary at times?
14. What does the memoir suggest about freedom? Is total freedom possible?
15. After finishing the book, did it make you think differently about travel or your own life choices?

# Ideas for Community & Reading Group Conversations

## **Suggested Group Activities:**

- Share a travel experience that changed your perspective
- Discuss whether uncertainty is something modern life tries too hard to eliminate
- Create a map tracing the route through South America
- Talk about the emotional realities of solo travel
- Share books, films, or music that capture the spirit of wandering
- Discuss whether discomfort and uncertainty are necessary for growth

## **For Libraries, Travel Clubs & Discussion Groups**

Cory Mortensen is available for select virtual and in-person conversations related to:

- Travel memoir writing
- Backpacking and long-term travel
- South American travel experiences
- Reinvention and uncertainty
- Independent publishing and storytelling

For speaking inquiries and reading group events:

[www.corymortensen.com](http://www.corymortensen.com)