



## Clarity From an 18,000-ft View

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My expedition to Mount Everest Base Camp in Nepal and Kala Patthar, the Earth's highest mountain and a landmark in the Himalayas between Nepal and Tibet, began 15 days ago. On the long 25-hour return flight, I'm thinking about what I've learned and what a life-changing experience it was. It will take a while to absorb it all, but I wanted to put into words the lessons I took from it to share with you.

I always like to do something that will challenge me, so I run a marathon every year to celebrate my birthday. Race routes have taken me through Boston, New York, and ancient ruins in Machu Picchu in Peru, Athens, and Israel. I truly believe that to grow personally and professionally, you need to put yourself outside of your comfort zone. This trip accomplished that.

Long days of hiking and even longer, cold nights provided ample opportunities to reflect on my own personal journey. Coming from a small town in Israel to a foreign country and developing into who I am professionally with all of your help to grow Utelligent to what it is today.

It took 10 days to hike up the mountain to Base Camp, culminating with a peaceful sunrise after spending the night sleeping there to prepare for the three-day journey back down the trail. The trek surpassed all my expectations. The atmosphere is stunning and tranquil. The Nepalese people are open-hearted, giving, and gentle. The quiet aura of Everest is something that's hard to describe.

Despite the difficulty, every single minute I knew that I was having a transformative journey and felt very blessed and privileged to be there. So, what did I take away from the experience?

1. **Our World is a Beautiful Place:** Most days I rush around focusing on what needs to be done and I forget how lucky I am to be here. Taking three weeks away from my usual life (and for the first time ever, being completely without email or phone communication for that long) allowed me the space to reflect, to slow down and to really appreciate the beauty around me. Despite taking hundreds of pictures, they really couldn't do the scenery justice.



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2. **Asking for Help is a Strength:** I was on this adventure with eight others: three wonderful Nepalese guides, one sherpa yak guide (yaks carried our nights bags, we carried our own day bags with water and clothing layers), and four fantastic fellow trekkers. I didn't know any of them beforehand so asking for help and support would be even harder.

We need to remember that most people are inherently kind, generous, and supportive. More can be achieved in life and career if we work together, collaboratively lifting each other.

3. **Show Humility & Empathy:** It's not just the sheer magnificence of Mother Nature and the gigantic, beautiful mountains in the Khumbu region that humbles you. It's the local people: The sherpas, porters, guides, and their beautiful families who are so welcoming and make it all possible.

There's so much to learn from these people, and their deep respect for the mountain and their environment. The will, desire, confidence, and hard labor they put in with a smile on their face despite almost insurmountable, harsh conditions makes every trekker's dream possible. Their job is immeasurably tougher compared to what I do normally, and is nothing short of greatness. You can't help but be empathetic, compassionate, and inspired by them.

4. **We Can Push Ourselves Far More Than We Think Is Possible:** Mt. Everest's terrain was extremely difficult combined with gaining elevation each day to ultimately reach 17,600 ft/5,364 m at Base Camp. It made breathing difficult, and progress was very slow. The severe cold walking up Kala Patthar in below 0-degree weather, and sleeping inside tents in minus 10 degrees was very hard for someone who lives in Texas.

So, was the experience life-changing? I think it was more life-affirming. I made a pact with one of my childhood best friends to go on this journey together for our 60<sup>th</sup> birthdays in 2020. The pandemic and my friend's death changed things. To honor him, I did this for both of us.

It's reminded me of everything I value, everything and everyone I love, and everything that I still want to achieve. It's made me want to do more, explore more, and inspire more. It's made me more grateful for all that I have.

It's challenged me to continue to help others to reach their summits, whatever they may be.

