Camino de Santiago as a portal to the inner world: A heuristic inquiry into the experience of transformation for solo female travellers

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Pilgrimage, one type of long-distance walking, has long been associated with transformation. Despite the growing number of female pilgrims and anecdotal evidence, little research has been directed toward understanding their experience. Using Moustakas’ (1990) qualitative method of heuristic inquiry, this study explored solo female travellers’ experience of transformation associated with walking the Camino de Santiago. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven co-researchers. Five of them contributed additional material, such as poems, blog posts, and journal entries. The findings show that participants became more authentic, connected deeply with others and nature, and discovered a new appreciation for their bodies. They reported implementing various lifestyle changes upon return and spoke about wanting to be of service and make a difference in the world. Although they all experienced moments of profound realisation along the way, the co-researchers acknowledged that transformation is an ongoing process. After discussing the findings in relation to previous literature, the study concludes by recommending pilgrimage as an antidote to the epidemic of busyness, materialism, and alienation from self, others, and nature. Limitations are discussed, and future research suggestions including the investigation into whether going on a pilgrimage periodically fosters the transformative process are made.

Keywords: authenticity, heuristic inquiry, long-distance walking, pilgrimage, transformation, transpersonal, solo female travel, soul, spirituality

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On my first pilgrimage in 2021, it dawned on me that it was usually on a walk (the longer, the better) that I could turn my inner critic’s voice off. Having struggled with perfectionism my entire life, I finally understood why, despite the physical discomfort at times, I felt so at home on those walks. To better understand the process I was in, I embarked on a scientific peregrination. Therefore, this research is my humble and genuine pursuit of comprehending the experience of transformation associated with walking the Camino de Santiago as lived and described by solo female travellers.

Long-distance walking is an ancient act that has evolved over millions of years. However, in the last paltry fraction of this evolution, humans have been distancing themselves from their walking selves (Amato, 2004). Although there is no consensus on what constitutes a long-distance walk, it is commonly referred to as a walk of a certain distance (e.g., 30 kilometres) or of a particular period (e.g., a couple of days) (Mau, Aaby et al., 2021). One study (Crust et al., 2011) found that long-distance walking elicited positive emotions, reduced the effects of stress, and promoted an increased sense of well-being and personal growth. A sense of belonging to the small walking community was also reported. Additionally, the journey prompted the participants to reappraise aspects of their lives and gain a new perspective. Similarly, the findings of another study (Saunders et al., 2014) suggest that long-distance walking facilitated processes of relief and disengagement from everyday stresses and helped people resolve their issues and build confidence.

Even though it has certain idiosyncrasies, pilgrimage falls under the generic term of long-distance walking. Within virtually every religious tradition and geographical area, one can find pilgrimage sites with prominent reputations which attract pilgrims in the present day. Over the past half-century, the Camino de Santiago – which corresponds to a network of routes across Europe, all coming together at the tomb of Saint James in Santiago de Compostela, in north-west Spain – has become one of the most popular pilgrimages (Lois González, 2013). In 2019, more than 340,000 pilgrims completed the Camino, more than half of whom were women (Pilgrim’s Reception Office, n.d.).

Many researchers studying personal transformation have used Turner and Turner’s (1978) concept of liminality – an ambiguous and disorienting phase. This was inspired by the similarities the Turners saw between pilgrimage and van Gennep’s (1960) notion of rite of passage described as a three-phase process of separation, transition, and reincorporation into society. Leaving behind their everyday lives and social networks, the travellers immerse themselves in a state of liminality, usually living within a self-organised community called communitas (Turner & Turner, 1978). The Turners focus their analysis on this transitional period, during which reflective processes of self-questioning and self-change occur (Beech, 2011). Eventually, there is a reintegration into society as someone transformed. Using liminality as a theoretical framework, the findings of a recent study (Mau, Nielsen et al., 2021) illustrate that long-distance walks may be similar to entering a liminal space, facilitating a reflection process with transformational
qualities. Although some experienced a sense of uncertainty or losing control, in light of nature’s slow pace and quietness, they felt more secure embracing it.

Schlitz et al. (2007) define consciousness transformations as “internal shifts that result in long-lasting changes in the way you experience and relate to yourself, others, and the world” (p. 14). The researchers note that most transformations begin with an experience that shakes the foundations of one’s current way of thinking. Often carrying an unusual level of authority, these profound experiences can shift how we view ourselves and our place in the world. However, it can take a lifetime to grow into those changes. Over time, people who undergo a profound alteration of their sense of self move from “I to We,” wanting to attend to the well-being of all (Schlitz et al., 2007).

Despite the growing number of female pilgrims and anecdotal evidence, little research has been directed toward understanding the experience of transformation for solo female travellers walking the Camino. One notable exception is a recent study (Hetherington, 2018) examining the experiences of four Australian women. The results suggest that the participants took ownership of their journey despite the consequences or others’ beliefs and that the trip allowed them to quiet their busy minds and live in the moment. Furthermore, the simplicity of the Camino encouraged them to let go of material things.

The current research seeks to extend the exploration of transformation for female travellers who walked the Camino on their own. More specifically, it aims to understand the outcomes and benefits of the journey by elucidating the processes and experiences associated with their transformation and identifying the positive changes the female participants made in their life following their pilgrimage.

Method

This research project used the heuristic inquiry method known for its autobiographical, embodied, holistic, and creative approach (Moustakas, 1990). Additionally, the heuristic discovery is known to enable the researcher’s personal transformation (Moustakas, 1990). Ethical approval was granted by Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) Research Ethics Panel. The following research question guided the inquiry: What is the lived experience of transformation for solo female travellers walking the Camino de Santiago?

Sampling

The co-researchers were recruited via a Facebook group and an online forum dedicated to the Camino. I sought female travellers who walked any of the Camino routes for at least two weeks, completed the journey in the last five years, described their journey as life-changing, and were willing to share vivid, accurate, and comprehensive portrayals of their experience of transformation. The final sample consisted of seven women (Table 1). The mean age
among participants was 51, with ages ranging between 23 and 65. Most were Caucasian, living in Western countries, well-educated, and with multiple Camino experiences.

### Procedure

Heuristic inquiry involves six phases (Moustakas, 1990). The first phase, initial engagement, is about discovering what calls out to the researcher. During the second phase, immersion, I formulated my research question, read books about walking/pilgrimage, and attended the online meetings of a Camino association. I then conducted the literature review, prepared the interview protocol, interviewed the participants, and began analysing the data. During the third phase, incubation, I took long walks, practised yoga, photographed, and journaled to let the “seed undergo silent nourishment” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 29). The fourth phase, illumination, was about being in a receptive state of mind and allowing new discoveries to emerge. During the fifth phase, explication, I prepared the individual depictions of the core themes illuminated from each co-researcher’s raw data (Moustakas, 1990). To ensure validity, I shared them with the participants. I then created a composite depiction representing the shared experience of the phenomenon among the co-researchers (Moustakas, 1990). Finally, the creative synthesis, which represents the sixth phase, came in the form of a poem (Marusanici, 2023). Besides bringing the data analysis to a natural conclusion, it was a spontaneous and profound experience of freeing myself, at least momentarily, from my inner critic.

### Table 1

**Overview of co-researchers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Co-researcher/Pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Ethnicity/Location</th>
<th>Religious/spiritual orientation</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Camino experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lapelerine</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Caucasian/Canada</td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>College</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunny</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Caucasian/Netherlands</td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>One in 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shira</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Caucasian/USA</td>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verde</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Caucasian/Germany</td>
<td>Agnostic/Spiritual</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Caucasian/Canada</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>College &amp; University</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofia</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Caucasian/Canada</td>
<td>Not religious</td>
<td>College</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elly</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Asian/Italy</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>College</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data collection
A semi-structured interview was chosen as it allowed space for the emergence of new questions (Sultan, 2019). The interview items, developed from the literature and my own experience, revolved around their motivations, how the journey changed their lives, transformative experiences along the way, feelings and thoughts upon return, and integration. The interviews were conducted over Zoom and lasted between 80 and 120 minutes. In addition, five co-researchers contributed secondary documentation such as blog posts, poems, and journal entries.

Data analysis
I read the transcripts/artefacts and listened to the interviews several times before coding them (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Next, I organised the codes/themes and quotations into a narrative which would later serve as the foundation for the individual depictions. Although I started noticing patterns while still conducting the interviews, numerous immersion-incubation-reflexivity cycles were required to develop a composite understanding of the data. Once I had a list of main themes, I constructed a thematic map (Braun & Clarke, 2006) which helped me identify relationships between them and see how they fit together to tell a bigger story.

Results
The findings of this heuristic inquiry are presented in individual depictions, a composite depiction, and a creative synthesis. Below is the composite representing the shared experience of the phenomenon among the co-researchers. The raw data revealed six core themes and several subthemes (see Figure 1).

Journey to authenticity and freedom
For the participants, the Camino was more than just a long and arduous walk, it was a sincere and deep inward journey. A sense of “freedom” (six participants explicitly used the word) and authenticity permeated the co-researchers’ experience of transformation. As they got in touch with their authentic self (five of the co-researchers used the word “soul”), they began to honour it by removing whatever was not in alignment with that core self: “It’s kind of like I got a new outfit, but it wasn’t a new outfit at all, it was the real me, but now the real me is trying not to fit into the cultural norms I don’t care about anymore” (Shira). Similarly, Sunny said: “When I was on the Camino, I felt like I was the most me version I’d ever been.”

Permission to be imperfect (subtheme)
The new self the participants uncovered seemed to understand that perfection does not exist. All the co-researchers shared how hard they had been on themselves, yet something shifted on the Camino. They became more flexible, curious rather than judgmental, and self-forgiving: “I kind of felt like I gave myself permission to not be perfect” (Ms.). Elly said: “I began to accept myself a little more.”
### Themes and Subthemes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journey to authenticity and freedom</th>
<th>Permission to be imperfect</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Giving the rational mind a break</td>
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<td><strong>Blurring the Self-Other boundary</strong></td>
<td>Genuine connection with others</td>
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<td>Connection with one’s surroundings</td>
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<td><strong>Appreciation for a simpler and more intentional life</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Return to the body</strong></td>
<td>Transformative experiences along the way</td>
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<td><strong>Transformation as an ongoing practice</strong></td>
<td>Camino blues</td>
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<td>Integration</td>
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<td><strong>Sharing and service</strong></td>
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### Giving the rational mind a break (subtheme)
All participants were accomplished women who knew well the role of planning, strategising, evaluating, and thinking. Walking the Camino made them realise that the mind is a servant, not a master. As a result, they now allow intuition to have a more prominent voice. Concurrently, they began trusting the flow of life in which they are co-creators instead of worrying about things they cannot control: “I used to spend most of my mental energy trying to figure out what to do. And I could never figure out what to do. So, now I just keep living, and something opens up.” (Sofia). Similarly, Ms. thinks that “fate is going to intervene in a lot of cases, and you need to be able to roll with it.”

### Blurring the Self-Other boundary
Not only did the co-researchers experience a sense of connection within themselves, but they also connected with the outer world more deeply. Sunny and Shira even spoke about
a Camino “feeling” or “state,” referring to a fundamental union with others and the world. In Sunny’s words: “It’s that Camino feeling that kind of comes back, you’re in nature, you understand that there’s a relationship with nature, people, and you have to nurture it”. For Shira: “It’s that connection that you have with the energy of the world. You’re at one with everything and the people that come into your life, you know?”

**Genuine connection with others (subtheme)**

Although they went alone on their pilgrimage, and some needed more solitude than others, all the co-researchers reported that connecting with pilgrims and locals was a significant part of their journey, one that altered their perspective on human connection. For Lapelerine, “it was like a reconciliation with the humankind.” They used words such as “spiritual friend” (Lapelerine), “brothers and sisters on the Way” (Sofia), “angel” (Sunny), or “this villagey thing” (Shira) to describe the deep and meaningful relationships formed. Released from the mundane structure and social roles, they connected empathically with others, received and offered help, and shared without fear of judgment. Verde said: “I have never experienced a group where from the beginning you meet someone, you can be so intimate in a way just opening up about things that you might not have told anyone in your circle of friends or your family.” Some of them also talked about feeling a connection with those who have walked before them.

**Connection with one’s surroundings (subtheme)**

All the co-researchers spoke about tuning in to their surroundings and feeling a strong connection with the natural world: “I lived in big cities for 55 years. The stress, the suffering...no more of that for me. I tasted nature, and now I can’t leave because nature is me [...] I am nature” (Elly). Ms. stated: “There is something so calming, and peaceful, and serene about listening to water as you’re walking, that’s like babbling along beside you.”

**Appreciation for a simpler and more intentional life**

The life of a pilgrim was perceived as monotonous, simple, and slow. From the interviews, it was evident that the Camino introduced all the co-researchers to the deep pleasures of an ordinary and quiet life. After finishing the journey, they all made lifestyle changes. As Lapelerine explained: “We accumulate so much stuff that we don’t really need [...] You just have to move to realise how much stuff you have that you don’t really use.” For others like Sunny, living a more intentional life meant being more socially selective or slowing down, as in Shira’s case: “It has caused me to go so much slower and to think through.”

**Return to the body**

For the participants, the Camino was a highly physical and sensory experience. The walking body of a pilgrim encountered discomfort and, at times, pain and hardships. After walking daily for hours, the participants spoke about finding a new appreciation for the body. The co-researchers expressed how they gradually shifted from being stuck in their heads to inhabiting their bodies more deeply. For most, including Elly, walking became a mindfulness practice: “I enjoy completely that moment with my whole body.”
When I asked Sofia what she meant by transformation, she defined it as: “Allowing myself to expand into more than I am. That I can let go of what’s held me in place and see more of myself and actually feel that in my body. Like it’s not just a thought, it’s not just something passing but it actually is an experience that comes into my body. Like a mutation…” This “experience that comes into the body” was something the rest of the participants also spoke about when referring to the profound or surprising moments they had on the Camino.

**Transformation as an ongoing process**
As noted by the co-researchers, transformation is an ongoing process that requires vigilance and practice: “I started the journey of knowing myself. Am I afraid? Yes, of course! Because this is still my ego. Am I judging? Sometimes I do. Am I getting angry? I do” (Elly). The participants engaged in different activities that helped them integrate the experience into their day-to-day life. A couple of them clearly stated that they were trying to live as if they were still on the Camino. Some, like Sofia and Elly, burned the bridges and started anew upon return, while the rest brought the “Camino version” of themselves into daily life. As Verde explained: “This is the Camino of life! And it’s not all rainbow colours. You have your metaphorical blisters, snowstorms, heat, tendinitis, difficult encounters in your everyday Camino.”

**Transformative experiences along the way (subtheme)**
All participants spoke about pivotal moments or experiences that broadened their perspective and made them see themselves and life in a different light: “When I reached the ocean...when I reached the ocean and I lifted my arms, I knew that my life would not be the same after that” (Lapelerine). In Verde’s case: “I knew from that day on that this power is in me and always has been. Even though I may not always be able to feel it, I know it is there and it will help me through all adventures to come.”

**Camino blues (subtheme)**
The co-researchers reflected on how difficult it was when the physical journey on the Camino ended, and they had to come back. For some, the end and post-journey transition were more difficult than the challenges they had encountered along the Way (e.g., breaking one’s ribs or toe). Besides the restless feet that were not done walking, they spoke about feeling disoriented, out of this world, lost, or sad: “I came back, and it was this last one that I had the hardest time coming back from because I felt it so fully and so completely. And then I came back and kind of went...how in the world am I gonna live this life this way anymore?” (Shira). For Lapelerine: “The return...feeling like an alien in my...in my environment here with my family and friends.”

**Integration (subtheme)**
The Camino was just the beginning of their journey of transformation. As Elly said, “The Camino is like a door, you know? So, I entered the door when I finished”. For some, it was writing a blog (Verde and Ms.) or a book (Sunny and Elly); for others, it was walking and spending more time in nature (all of them), getting tattoos that served as Camino
reminders (Sunny), joining a Camino association (Lapelerine), or creating and drawing cards from a Camino card deck (Verde). Still, whatever their practice (or practices) was, they all discovered ways to stay in touch with and continue growing into the “Camino version” of themselves. Sunny said: “As I was writing, even if it was just writing like a few paragraphs, I’d immediately be transported back into that feeling.”

**Sharing and service**

When they decided to go on the Camino, the co-researchers felt they needed to take some time off and do something that was only for themselves. Some of them mentioned how society perceives this as selfishness, but as Shira explained: “Society might perceive it as being selfish, but you know that it’s not. You know that you’re gonna give back more wholly and more fully if you take care of yourself first.” That is precisely what happened: they all found or are looking for ways to contribute and share their gifts more authentically following their journey. For Sofia, who has not had a permanent home since her first Camino in 2005, being of service has been an essential aspect of bringing the Camino into her day-to-day life: “I know now how I want to live my life. As if I am always on the Camino. Totally trusting the process. Sharing what I have. Knowing I am provided for and loved and an integral part of the whole.”

**Discussion**

The findings indicate that the participants became more authentic and found a sense of freedom by letting go of other people’s expectations, allowing themselves to be less than perfect, and understanding the critical yet limited role of the rational mind. They connected deeply with other pilgrims, locals, nature, history, and Spanish culture. Furthermore, following their journey, they all implemented various lifestyle changes. The participants also reported finding a new appreciation for the human body and its vital role in the process of transformation. Although they all experienced moments of profound realisation along the Way, the co-researchers acknowledged that transformation is an ongoing process whose hard work begins upon finishing the journey. Finally, they all spoke about wanting to be of service and make a difference in the world.

Supporting Schlitz et al.’s (2007) transformation model, the Camino journey can be described as one of shedding false selves and, consequently, integrating those aspects congruent with one’s core self. A notable finding was five of the co-researchers’ explicit use of the word “soul” when reflecting on the reconnection with their authentic essence. Moore (1992) describes the soul as “a quality or dimension of experiencing life and ourselves [that] has to do with depth, value, relatedness, heart, and personal substance” (p. 5). In this sense, the soul reminds us that there is another primordial world, far deeper than our so-prized logical and rational processes (Elkins, 1995).

The participants’ previous overreliance on mental processes was gradually replaced with the understanding that, although a powerful tool, the rational mind has its limitations.
Inevitably, a sense of freedom was experienced. The unpredictability and loss of structure made them aware of the limited control they had over their lives. Supporting the descriptions of being in a liminal phase (Turner & Turner, 1978) and the findings of Mau, Nielsen et al. (2021), my co-researchers gradually embraced the ambiguity of pilgrimage. However, the outcomes described in the current research provide a more comprehensive understanding of how the participants’ lives were transformed by showing how they all adopted an attitude of pilgrimage in their everyday life.

A somewhat unexpected finding was the participants’ rebellion against unattainable perfection. For many years, I believed I was alone in my struggle with perfectionism. However, my co-researchers’ reports showed that this is a more widespread phenomenon. According to Mitchelson (2009), women are more likely than men to experience feelings of inadequacy. Indeed, some of the co-researchers mentioned that there are different expectations for women, which might explain why this gender difference in relation to perfectionism exists. Away from their daily obligations and roles – which corresponds to the liminal removal of social norms and expectations (Turner & Turner, 1978) – the participants were able to develop compassion, acceptance, and forgiveness for themselves.

The reports of my co-researchers also suggest that they experienced a sense of community – or what the Turners (1978) called “communitas” – characterised by mutual understanding and acceptance of their fellow pilgrims, free of any social markers of difference. These findings appear consistent with those of Crust et al. (2011), Saunders et al. (2014), and Hetherington (2018), indicating that the participants felt a sense of belonging to the small walking community.

One of the findings that most stood out in my interviews with the co-researchers was the simplicity of the Camino that prompted them, in various degrees and forms, to make lifestyle changes upon finishing the journey. Hetherington’s (2018) study found that the Camino encouraged the participants to let go of attachment to material things. Although my findings match those observed by Hetherington (2018), they also indicate that living a simpler life was not limited to decluttering the drawers and closets of one’s home. My co-researchers also spoke about cultivating the right friendships and eliminating those that no longer served them or living more intentionally by slowing down and expressing gratitude.

Another notable finding of this study concerns the physical aspect of the journey. All the participants reported discovering and cultivating a deeper appreciation for the precious human body. The studies of Crust et al. (2011) and Saunders et al. (2014) have linked the participants’ gained sense of achievement and confidence to the physical nature of the task. My findings are consistent with these previous reports, yet they also extend the current understanding of the phenomenon by suggesting that transformation does not happen only at the mental level but is also deeply felt in the body. After all, the body is “the home of the complete human being” (Ferrer, 2017, p. 78); it would then perhaps be more accurate to acknowledge the living body as essential in the process of transformation (Ferrer, 2017).
Supporting the argument of Schlitz et al. (2007), the current findings suggest that transformation is an ongoing refinement of one’s being that usually begins with what the researchers call a noetic experience – an intuition or epiphany that can help guide one to new understandings and new ways of being. A recent comparative survey-based study examined the life changes reported by 630 respondents (62% female) who walked the Camino de Santiago (Brumec, 2022). The findings indicate that the pilgrimage experience may compare in aftereffects to other types of exceptional human experiences (EHE). Coined by the transpersonal scholar Rhea White (1993), the concept of EHE encompasses spontaneously emerging unusual experiences, and some types of EHEs (e.g., mystical EHEs) are known to carry noetic qualities (Braud, 2012). Echoing Brumec’s (2022) findings, the present results suggest that these transformative experiences led to a deeper appreciation for life, heightened quest for meaning and purpose, more concern for others, and decreased concern for worldly achievement.

In this unfolding and returning to what Shira called the “real me,” the co-researchers did not become self-indulgent or selfish. On the contrary, as Schlitz et al. (2007) note, once the sense of self is redefined, people move from “I to WE,” thus lessening the attachment to a separate sense of self. It is a movement from “a single individual swimming upstream” (Schlitz et al., 2007, p. 165) to seeing oneself as a member of a transforming community who feels moved to contribute from a place of authenticity and genuine care.

**Limitations and suggestions for future research**

This research provides descriptive accounts of a specific population group; therefore, the study results should not be generalised to a broader population of pilgrims. Also, the education level was relatively high across the group, which may have led to a more homogenous representation of their experience. Furthermore, except for one participant who was Asian, all of them were Caucasian. Another limitation might be that six co-researchers completed more than one pilgrimage; it was beyond the scope of the study to examine whether their experience of transformation was the result of all their journeys combined. Additionally, it could not be determined decisively if it is an enduring experience as the time between completing the pilgrimage and the interview varied across the group. Lastly, the investigation relied on self-reports rather than quantitative measures.

It is important to note that not all pilgrimages are life-changing and need not be, as some people are content with their lives. However, research into understanding why it is life-transforming for some but not for others might be worthwhile, as are the ways in which transformation could be facilitated. Furthermore, a longitudinal study might better understand the long-term effects and whether going on a pilgrimage periodically encourages the transformative process. Lastly, quantitative research may be able to measure these transformative outcomes.

**Personal reflections**

In many ways, this research project mirrored my Camino quest. It not only gave me enough opportunities to befriend my inner critic but also made me realise that when we strive for perfection, we miss the inherent beauty that comes with flaws, the freedom that is found in not knowing, or the invaluable lessons offered when making mistakes.
Conclusion
This study extends the limited existing research on the solo female travellers’ experience of transformation associated with walking the Camino. The results indicate a radical shift in the co-researchers’ perspective and attest to the multidimensional nature of transformation, involving a person’s whole being and ultimately affecting how one experiences and relates to self, others, and the world. Based on these findings, I argue that the Camino pilgrimage could serve as an antidote to the current epidemic of busyness, materialism, and alienation from self, others, and nature.

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Claudia Marusanici holds a BA in Communication and Public Relations from the West University of Timișoara and an MSc (distinction) in Consciousness, Spirituality, and Transpersonal Psychology from Liverpool John Moores University in partnership with Alef Trust. Originally from Romania, she moved to New York City in 2015, where she

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