



WELCOME BACK Reintegration Workshop



IOR Global Services
650 Dundee Road, Suite 360, Northbrook, IL 60062

www.iorworld.com

All rights reserved.
2014

Welcome Back! Youth Reintegration Workshop

Table of Contents		Page
Section 1		
	Coming Home: Assessing Expectations	3
Section 2		
	Just a Matter of Perspective	9
Section 3		
	On Hold: What's New, What's Changed	27
Section 4		
	Exploring My Adventure: What Happened Abroad	35
Section 5		
	Transitions	43
Section 6		
	Coming Back as a Third Culture Kid	53
Section 7		
	Sharing My International Experience	57
Section 8		
	Where Do I Fit In?	63

SECTION 1

Coming Home: Assessing Expectations



*Thus grew the tale of Wonderland:
Thus slowly, one by one,
Its quaint events were hammered out--
And now the tale is done,
And home we steer, a merry crew,
Beneath the setting sun.*

-Lewis Carroll

Congratulations!

Congratulations and welcome back home! Though you are ending an international assignment, your experience has only just begun!

Your international experience is like a gift that keeps on giving. As the years go by, you may re-encounter, reflect upon and use your international experience in many wonderful ways.

Though readjusting to life in your home country may be difficult at first, remember that this wild, wonderful, difficult, and exciting experience has challenged you to grow and mature. It has enabled you to develop a unique perspective on the world with which you can help spread international understanding.

Enjoy this gift and share it with others!



Remembering: Expectations and Impressions

Preconceived notions and first impressions are useful to revisit as a way of benchmarking shifts in our perceptions, values and attitudes over time.



1. Before you left your home country, what did you expect your international assignment to be like? How did you feel about going?

2. When you arrived in your host country, what were your first impressions about your new home? How did you feel about this new place?

Beginning to Understand Your International Experience

After many months, your expectations and initial impressions of your host country give way to a deeper awareness, and often appreciation, of that country's culture.

1. What were some aspects of the host country culture, which were harder for you to recognize and understand? When did you become more aware of this "hidden" culture?

2. How did you perceive your host country when you left for home leave from time to time? Did you miss it? Was it difficult or easy to return to the host country after spending time on home leave? Why?

Reintegration

Coming home can be the hardest part of living in another country. It's difficult to understand because you feel like going home should be easy! You think it's going to be familiar, but do you think things will have changed? Or will you have changed?

Sometimes it's hard for your family and friends who didn't live in another country to understand your experiences.

Here's a hint: you are not the same person you were when you left! Even familiar things will seem different. And you'll seem different to other people. You've experienced a lot.



SECTION 2

Just a Matter of Perspective



Just a Matter of Perspective

Sometimes, we make assumptions or jump to conclusions about what **we think** we see. But if we take the time to look **closely and observe**, another picture may begin to form. In the world around us, there are many subtle details that we would otherwise miss if we didn't take the time to look closely.

This activity is designed to sharpen your **observation skills** so you can begin to get a clearer picture of the world. It will also help you to recognize the differences in your **perception** or how you understand and experience the world around you.

What do you see?



Credits: Created by cartoonist W. E. Hill, originally published in *Puck* in 1915 as "My Wife and My Mother-in-law."

How about this? What do you see?



Credits: Unknown.

What do you see?



Relative Perception

The way we each perceive or see the world is called our “perception.” Depending on background, people perceive the world differently. It is like we are born with an imaginary pair of sun-glasses on, that we don’t know we have, that we cannot remove. For example, in one culture, people may see everything through a pair of blue tinted glasses. In that culture, everything looks **BLUE**. In another culture, people may have on yellow tinted glasses. In that culture, everything looks **YELLOW**. It is completely natural for people from different cultures to see the world in the color in which they are most familiar.



Key ideas to remember:

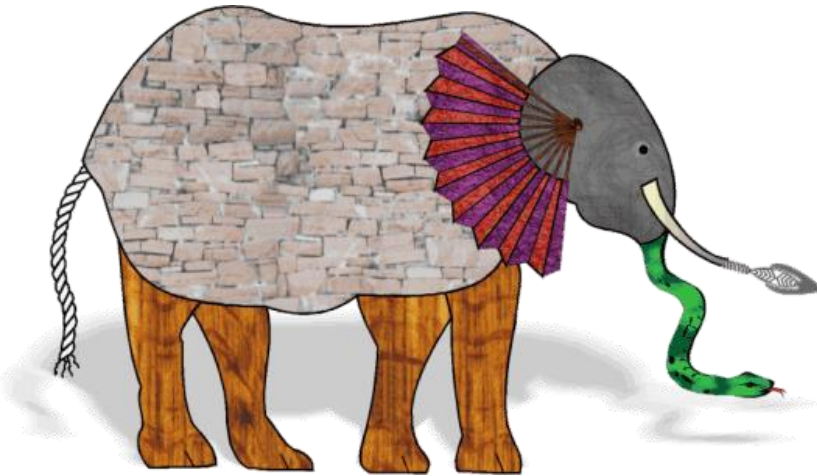
- Perceptions are relative. (There is more than one way to see the world.)
- It is dangerous to say something is “right” or “wrong.” It is better to say, “That is just different.”

Slowing Down/Reserving Judgment

Slowing Down/Reserving Judgment is an important ability for “Intercultural Explorers.” When we discussed the concept of *relative perceptions* earlier, we learned that there are many different ways to see the world. And, no one way is right or wrong or superior or inferior. It is just **DIFFERENT**.

When we are so quick to judge, based only on our perception, it makes it more difficult to learn about things. It can also make others, with different points of view, feel like they are wrong. This can make our interactions with others more difficult.

Our perception and our judgment are an automatic and natural process. So, it is not bad to see things a certain way. However, it helps to slow down and reserve judgment when we are dealing with people from different cultures.



The Blind Men & The Elephant *(A Hindoo Fable)*

It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the elephant
(Though all of them were blind).
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.

The first approached the elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
“God bless me! But the elephant
Is very like a wall!”

The second, feeling of the tusk,
Cried, “Ho! What have we here
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me ‘tis mighty clear
This wonder of an elephant
Is very like a spear!”

The third approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:
“I see,” quoth he, “the elephant
Is very like a snake!”

The fourth reached out an eager hand,
And felt about the knee.
“What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain,” quoth he;
“Tis clear enough the elephant
Is very like a tree!”

The fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,
Said: “E’en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a fan!”

The sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
“I see,” quoth, he, “the elephant
Is very like a rope!”

And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!

Moral:

So oft in theologic wars,
The disputants, I ween,
Rail on in utter ignorance
Of what each other mean,
And prate about an Elephant
Not one of them has seen!

What's All This Talk about Culture?

By now, you have heard the word ***culture*** a million times. But, you may be asking yourself what exactly culture is. Take a few minutes to write down your own definition in the space provided.



Can you come up with examples or evidence of culture in your own life? You may use single words, phrases, or drawings.

Culture is...

...the learned behavior of a group of people. It is everything that the group thinks, says, does, and makes.



Culture Consists of:

- Manners
- Customs
- Beliefs
- Ceremonies
- Laws
- Language
- Accepted Ways of Behaving
- Concept of the Self
- Tools
- Religious Beliefs
- Myths and Legends
- Knowledge
- Superstitions
- Values
- Art
- Artifacts and Crafts



The Iceberg of Culture

In understanding the concept of culture, it is helpful to compare culture to an iceberg. Merriam-Webster Online dictionary gives the following definition: (Icebergs are) “large floating masses of ice detached from glaciers”.

An iceberg floats in water. About 10 percent of the iceberg is above the water level; it is easy to see from a ship. The picture below shows the other 90 percent of the iceberg that is below the water line. That part is harder to see from a ship’s helm because it is underneath the water level. It would require having special equipment to be able to see the whole iceberg from the ship. Therefore, by looking at an iceberg from a ship, it is difficult (and nearly impossible) to understand fully what the iceberg as a whole looks like.

In this regard, culture is like an iceberg. There are things that are obvious and easier to see, such as language, food, and customs. There are also things that are difficult to see, such as people’s attitudes, beliefs, and values. At first glance, things may seem one way. However, it is important to remember that there are a lot more things that we may not be seeing or understanding. The more we understand what is below the water level, the better we are able to understand a culture. So, it is important for us to try not to judge right away and look for the things that may not be very obvious.



“It Doesn’t Seem Right”



Most of the time we do not know our own **values**.

When we experience something that **does not seem right**, we explain **why** it does not seem right.

The *why* indicates our cultural heritage, values, and attitudes: **where we come from**.



Values

A value is a principle, standard, belief, or characteristic that is considered to be desirable or worthwhile. Values describe what people consider to be **right and wrong**.

Can you name a value that you hold highly? In other words, can you give an example of something you think is either absolutely right or absolutely wrong?

Why do you feel that way?

Where do you think you learned that value?

Do you think everyone does (or should) feel the way you do? Why or why not?

STEREOTYPING

What is STEREOTYPING?

...Putting people into categories without looking at them as individuals.



Can You Stereotype People?

When you think of a basketball player, what do you think of?



When you think of a ballerina, what do you think of?

When you think of a student, what do you think of?



Generalizations

To understand the nature of culture, **generalizing** about common characteristics is unavoidable. It is a part of the way we learn about and understand the world of people. But while there are “norms” that describe **generally** how members of a given group or culture think, communicate, or act, there is also considerable **variation** in these characteristics, whether among individuals or over time.

Generalizations are tools for understanding. Generalizations are a **starting point** for cultural understanding. The more we are exposed to members of a culture, the more refined, diverse, and rich our understanding becomes.

One common obstacle to the process of successful culture learning is the tendency to **stereotype**. Stereotypes are simplified, partial, and rigidly held over-generalizations about a group of people that tend to have a negative bias and which resist change, even in the face of contradictory evidence. The more we open ourselves to learning about other cultures, the less we will tend to limit ourselves through stereotyping.



Tentative Terms

In talking about differences between cultures, it is impossible to avoid generalizations altogether. But it is important to avoid negative stereotyping and acknowledge the fact that you are speaking in general terms.

One way of doing this is through the use of ***tentative and comparative language***.

Some examples of tentative words and phrases:

Generally speaking

Most

Some

The majority of

In comparison to

Tend to

Sometimes

From my point of view

More than

These phrases help you avoid over-generalizing and criticizing and allow you simply to observe and compare.

Trying Out Tentative Terms

Directions: Practice using tentative language by rewriting a few of the stereotypes from the previous exercise.

For example:

Japanese children are very serious students.

becomes

Most Japanese children spend more hours studying **than American students.**

or

Japanese students **tend to** study more **than children in other parts of the world.**

Use the space below to rewrite the sentences.



If the world were a village of 100 people, there'd be:

- 57 Asians
- 8 Africans
- 21 Europeans
- 14 Americans (North, Central, and South)



SECTION 3

On Hold: What's New, What's Changed



Back in your Home Country: What Has Changed?

While you were gone, what are some of the things that happened to family and friends in your home country?



What's New

Identify the changes you have noticed since your return. Which is the most difficult to adjust to?

1. Words and phrases
2. T.V. and movies
3. Music
4. Trends in clothing
5. Technological changes
6. Food fads
7. Politics
8. Books and magazines

Different Perceptions and Interpretations

When we are outside of our home culture, we miss the opportunity to experience and process significant events in the same way as others who remained in our home culture. Your perceptions of these events may always remain different from those who remained behind.



In each of the following four areas, list the significant events that you missed while abroad.

National Events

School Events

Neighborhood Events

Family Events

How is School Different?

THERE



HERE

Size of School

Dress/Dress Code

Homework

Teachers

Rules

Lunch

Courses

Report Cards

Sports Teams

Extra-Curricular
Activities

Days Off

Special School Events

Dances

Transportation To and From

Other

What Else is Different?

THERE



HERE

Holidays

Food

Music

Sports/Games

Dating

Parties

Driving

Peer Pressure

What to Do for Fun

Other



“We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.”

T.S. Eliot

CONSIDER:

People tend to take their own culture and language for granted until they move to another country. When they return, they view their own culture in a new way.

SECTION 4

Exploring My Adventure: What Happened Abroad



“So, How Was It?”

1. Did your mother have a good time on the international assignment?
2. Did your father have a good time on the international assignment?
3. Did you have a good time on the international assignment?



Things I Have Done

1. I visited these countries:

2. I saw some historic places and special things. They are:

3. Some of my school trips included trips to:

4. These people came to visit:

5. I learned many new things during my international experience. Some of the things that I learned to do are:

Here and There

Draw a picture of yourself that represents you when you first arrived overseas.

Draw a picture that represents you now.

CONSIDER:

How have you changed under the water of the iceberg?

My Favorite Things

List or draw some of your favorite memories of things in your **host** country. How can you keep these memories alive?

Favorite Foods

Favorite Games and Sports

Favorite Places to Go

Favorite Activities with Mom, Dad, siblings

List or draw some of your favorite things from your **home** country.

Favorite Foods

Favorite Games and Sports

Favorite Places to Go

Favorite Activities with Mom, Dad, siblings

What I Learned

By living overseas, did you learn about:

- Yourself?
- People in other countries?
- Other places?



What did you do to get along with people from other backgrounds and nationalities?

What customs has your family adopted from the country you used to live in (table manners, ways of doing things, greeting people, etc.)?

How Have I Grown

Place a check in front of each statement that describes how you have changed.

- I have a more international perspective regarding people and issues throughout the world.
- I have more self-confidence.
- I am more open—minded.
- I have more patience.
- I have more respect for the beliefs of others.
- I am more willing to accept a different way of doing things.
- I am more willing to put myself in someone else's shoes when making judgments.
- I am able to keep my sense of humor when things get tough.
- I am able to ask for and receive help.
- I am able to deal with failure.
- I am more willing to face problems and seek alternative solutions.
- I am willing to take a chance and make a mistake.
- I am more willing to try new things.
- I know myself better.
- I have a greater understanding and appreciation of my own family.
- I have a better understanding of my own values and lifestyles.

What Have I Accomplished?

Take time to examine yourself...

Your experiences have helped you to grow and accomplish many things. Skills such as: navigating maps, public transportation, new languages, handling introductions, being exposed to diversity, etc...



List some of your biggest accomplishments here:

Transitions



“Home” May not be what you expected

You will have changed and everyone else will have changed, too. When no one seems to understand what you’ve been through or you feel confused:

- Look for other people who have just moved or who have lived outside their home countries. Help them get adjusted and they will help you!
- Become a guide for new people moving into your school, including exchange students from other countries.
- Send letters, photos, videos, and CDs to friends you just left.
- Write down your experiences and how you feel about coming home, and send your writing to your old school’s newspaper.
- Join an international club at school, or start one.
- Write a letter to yourself describing your feelings. Save it and read it a few months later.
- Talk to others you know who are moving.
- What other ideas do you have?

Emotions Experienced

It is normal to experience a wide range of emotions during repatriation. Some people feel excited, enthusiastic and glad to be home. Others experience negative emotions. Some people even experience a mixture of positive and negative emotions about being home. Have you experienced any of the emotions listed below?

_____ Fatigue

_____ Anger

_____ Feeling out of it

_____ Frustration

_____ Insecurity

_____ Withdrawal

_____ Resentment

_____ Confusion

_____ Discouragement

_____ Dissatisfaction

_____ Anxiety

_____ Depression

_____ Embarrassment

_____ Irritability

_____ Denial of feelings

_____ Rapid mood fluctuation

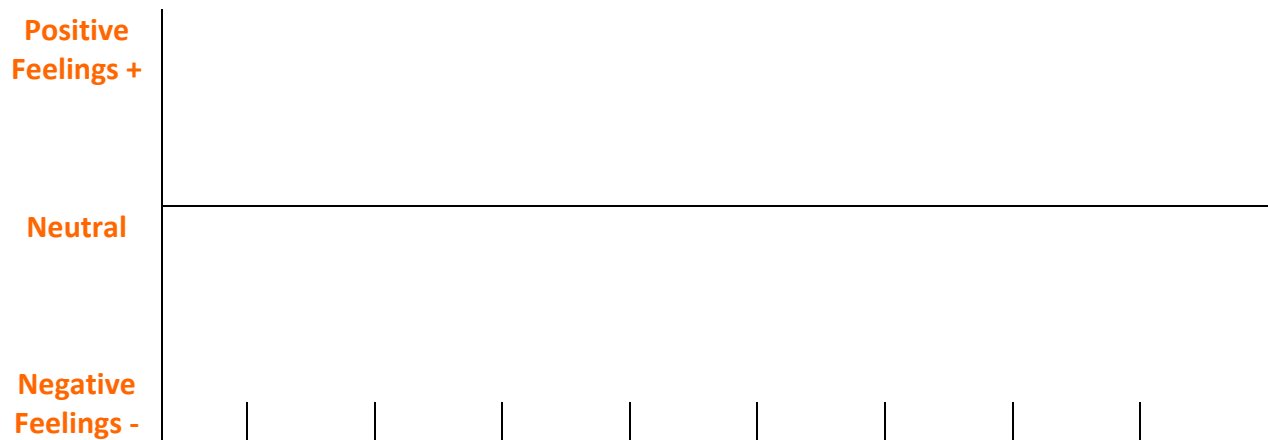
Culture Shock and Reverse Culture Shock



The ups and downs of returning home.

Transitions Cycle Exercise

As a result of the move, you have probably experienced many changes in emotion ranging from excitement to enthusiasm to sadness and depression. It is important to remember that these mood swings are completely normal and expected. Sometimes it is helpful to chart out your feelings and reactions to all the changes going on in your life. The transitions chart helps us get some perspectives on everything we are going through, how we are coping, and what we anticipate for the future.



Storyline/Timeline of Your Expatriate Experience

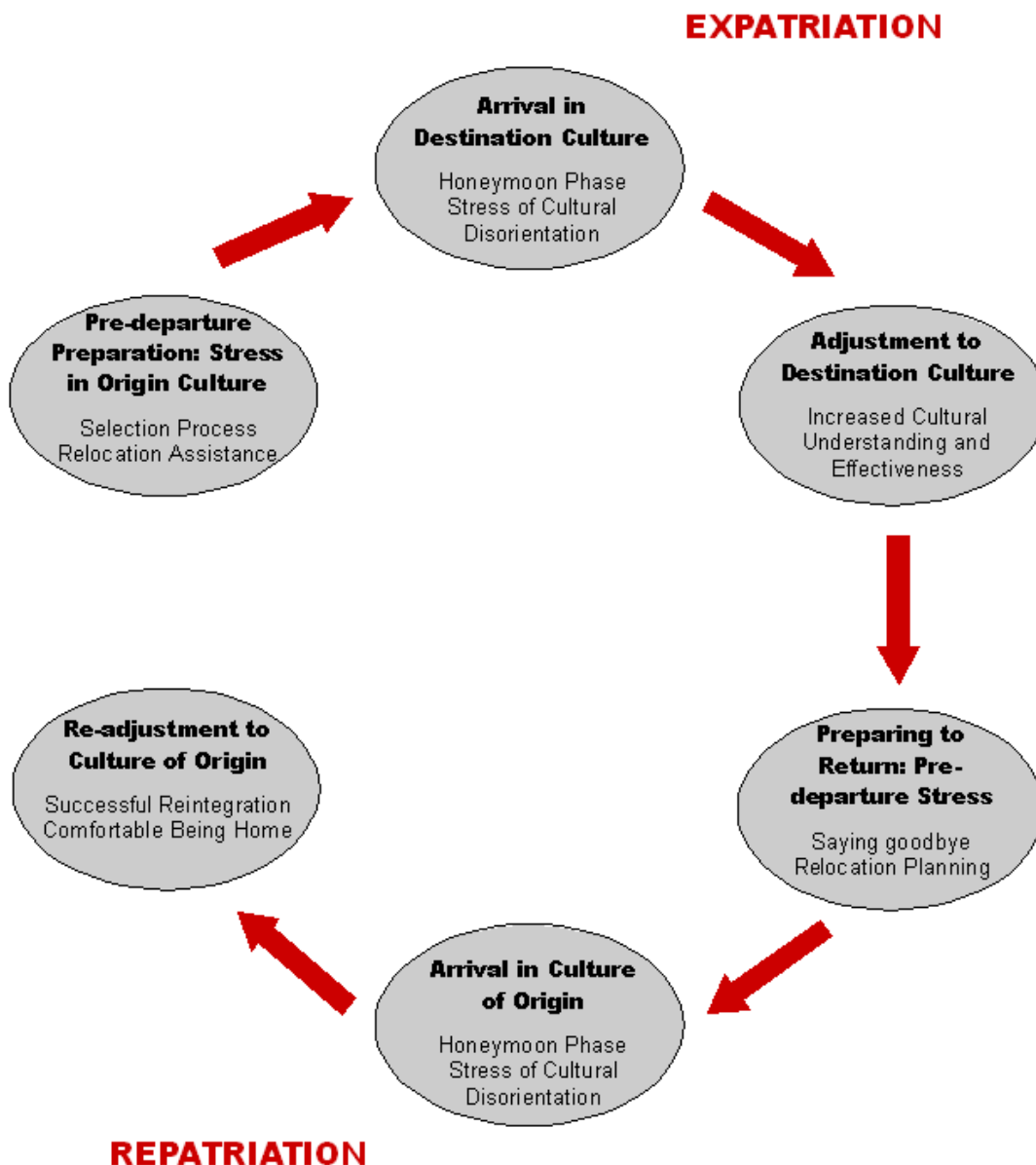


Culture Shock "W" Curve



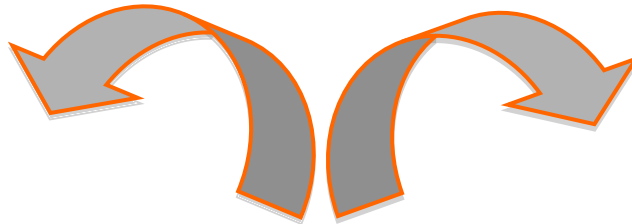
International Transition Cycle

It is important to view an international relocation as an entire process beginning with pre-departure procedures and concluding with successful reintegration into the culture of origin.

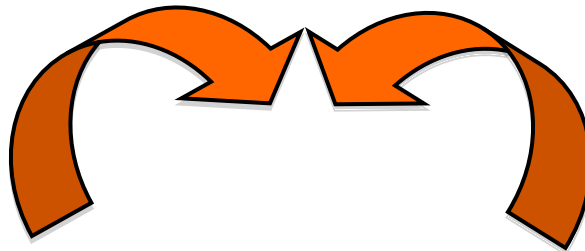


Shifts in Relationships

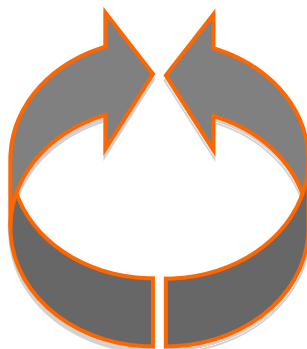
Relationships are formed and fostered by common experiences. When experiences or interpretations of experiences cease to be similar, relationships change.



Some relationships, that may have been strong pre-departure, may grow apart upon your return home.



Some relationships, that may not have been particularly strong pre-departure, may grow now that you are home.



Some relationships that were close pre-departure, may have drifted apart, but are now strengthened upon your return.

Reverse Culture Shock is a Feeling

- Things are unfamiliar
- Situations are confusing
- Different things are important to you and to others
- You don't always understand the way things are done

Did you feel like this during your move to the other country?

Do you feel like this now?

SECTION 6

Coming Back as a Third Culture Kid



You Are a Citizen of the World

After living internationally you will have developed an **international perspective.**



What is an *international perspective*?

- Interest in other people, cultures, and countries
- The ability to see what is the same and respect what is different
- Trying to understand different views on international issues
- Wanting to continue international education through travel

After you return home, think about yourself as an international citizen with international perspective a – Citizen of the World!

Growing Up Globally

Researchers who have studied children who have lived in different countries, have found that the following traits and characteristics are commonly held by those children:

- They become closer to their family members.
- They are interested in and like to learn other languages.
- They like to learn about and to celebrate the traditions and customs of other countries.
- They enjoy meeting, interacting with, and working with people from different backgrounds.
- They look for and find educational experiences which make use of and build on their international living experience.
- They make friends with people from different social and ethnic backgrounds.

What other points have you found to be true among your international friends who have grown up in different countries?

Third Culture Kids

Children who have lived in other cultures often think of themselves as having several cultures in their lives. Why do you think the phrase “third culture kids” (TCKs) has been created to describe children like you?

How many cultures do you think you have in your life?

Hint:

- *Think about the culture where you were born and lived the first part of your life.*
- *Then, think about the culture to which you moved.*
- *Now consider what we have been discussing today about how you are a different person.*



SECTION 7

Sharing My International Experience



Sharing My International Experience

First, let your family and friends share what happened to them while you were gone. It is important for them to know that you're interested.

Then, share your experiences. It may seem like they are not interested, but it may be because they don't know anything about where you lived. Share everything slowly: don't try to tell it all at once.

What are three key things that you would tell them about living in another country?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Here are some ways to share your experience:

- Share photos, souvenirs, artifacts, music, and videos.
- Dress in clothes from your host country.
- Teach them things children in your host country like to do.
- Make some typical food and share it.
- Write an article about your experience for your school newspaper.
- Give a talk at a school assembly or a group you belong to.

Can you think of other ways to share your experience?

Your Representation of the International Experience

There are several ways in which returned expatriates can choose to integrate an international experience into their lives:

Alienation: Rejection of your culture of origin by assuming the attitudes, practices, beliefs, and values of the host culture are better.

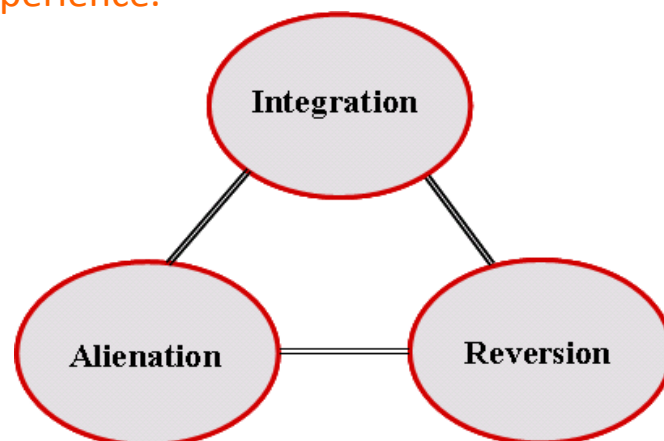
Remember – You have become so used to your host country that you do not realize you are experiencing cultural adjustment again.

Reversion — Rejection of the attributes of the host culture by adopting none of their attitudes, practices, beliefs, and values.

Remember – You will always be who you are but will also grow from new experiences.

Integration — Selectively combining the experiences, attitudes, practices, beliefs, and values from both the host culture and culture of origin.

Remember – If you can do this, you have accepted the fact that you are in transition and that returning home is another growth experience.



Maintaining Former Connections & Establishing New Ties

Maintaining your international interests is a valuable means of perpetuating your international experience. The following suggestions may be useful:

- _____ Join an international club/intercultural group.
- _____ Join a club and/or conversation group from your host country.
- _____ Keep a journal that outlines your significant overseas experiences.
- _____ Host a foreign exchange student.
- _____ Live in an international community.
- _____ Enroll or continue to study the host country language.
- _____ Incorporate international customs into your family's traditions.
- _____ Travel internationally.
- _____ Invite international friends to visit you in the United States.
- _____ Write or phone international friends.
- _____ Read international newspapers/magazines.
- _____ Seek out or establish personal/professional networks.
- _____ Locate ethnic grocery stores and restaurants.
- _____ Join an ethnic cooking class.
- _____ Attend foreign movies/plays or rent foreign videos.
- _____ Explore international art/music/literature at museums or the library.
- _____ Volunteer to teach English as a Second Language.

Valuing Those Who Stayed Behind

It is important to give recognition to those who stayed behind while you were away. Think about whom you would like to give special credit to:

It is also helpful to remember the following points when you communicate with those who did not accompany you on your assignment.

- They too have changed.
- They too experienced their own ups and downs.
- They managed without you.
- Consider their needs and their perceptions.

SECTION 8

Where Do I Fit In?



Adjustment Strategies

- Look for the positive!
- Eat and sleep regularly!
- Make an effort to spend time with friends!
- Keep busy!
- Find a new hobby!
- Try not to focus on what you don't like and make an effort to rediscover the things you do like!



When There Are Roadblocks to Settling In

You can use your newly acquired skills to generate strategies for effective adjustment. When there are roadblocks to settling in....

- Define the problem or situation.
- List some possible strategies and solutions.
- Choose one or more strategies that seem logical and try them out!
- Remember, you're not alone. Talk to your family about your feelings.

Practice below:

PROBLEM

STRATEGY / POSSIBLE SOLUTION



Making and Keeping Friends

A friend is someone who likes you. You have to be a friend to make a friend. How do you make friends?

- Show interest.
- Use their names when you talk to them. Use nicknames only if they say it's okay.
- Listen. Listen and look at them when they talk.
- Help them feel special and important. Congratulate them when they do something well.
- Accept your friends as they are. Don't try to change them.
- Put yourself in their position. Try to understand how they feel and why they feel the way they do.
- Apologize when you need to.
- Forgive them when you need to.
- Do special things for them.



Looking Ahead

What does your future hold for you? Former expatriates will find unlimited future applications for their international experiences. Many keep up international friendships and are drawn to people from different cultures. Others study international relations or join international volunteer organizations. Still others may choose to work internationally after school or even attend college in a foreign country. In the space below, list the goals that you hope to accomplish in the future. Have these goals been shaped by your international experience?



6 Months:

1 Year:

5 Years:

Reintegration Recommended Resources

Repatriation Websites

- Global Nomads
<http://www.gng.org/>
- Third Culture Kids
<http://www.tckworld.com/>



Country Specific Websites

- <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide>
- <http://www.worldatlas.com/>
- <http://www.culturgrams.com/products/index.htm>
- <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/>

Repatriation and Moving Books

Parents

- Raising Global Nomads: Parenting Abroad in an On-Demand World
Robin Pascoe
(2006)

Young Adult +

- Art of Coming Home
Craig Storti
(2004)
- Moving Abroad, Living Abroad, Returning Home
Elizabeth Fernandez & Diane Ferrabee
(1990)
- Repatriation: A How-to Guide for Returning Wisely
Jill Kristal & Liz Perelstein
(2007)
- Third Culture Kids: The Experience of Growing up Among Worlds (Revised Ed.)
David C. Pollock & Ruth E. Van Reken
(2009)

- Unrooted Childhoods: Memoirs of Growing Up Global
Faith Eidse & Nina Sichel
(2004)
- When Families Cross Borders: A Guide for Internationally Mobile People
Jennifer A. C. Patterson
(2006)

Age 9-12

- Blow Out the Moon (Moving from NYC to London)
Libby Koponen
(2006)
- When Abroad, Do as the Local Children Do: Ori's Guide for Young Expats
Hilly van Swoll-Ulbrich & Bettina Kaltenhause
(2004)
- We're Moving Where? An Adolescent's Guide to Overseas Living
Ben Voegele
(2004)

Age 6-8

- Let's Move Overseas: The International Edition of Let's Make A Move!
Beverly D. Roman
(1999)