Unexpected Re-Entry

Support Chat

Kelly Nelson
Jake Koelzer
Agenda

- Icebreaker/Introductions
- Cultural Re-adjustment Review
- Reflection & Action Sheet for Returnees
- Discussion
- Resources
Icebreaker

- Name
- Where you studied
- Name of organization you studied through
- Favorite food/drink you had while abroad
Describe how you felt when you first heard that you’ll need to leave your host-country?

What have your ups and downs been since?
Cultural Re-adjustment “Worm”

**REENTRY “WORM”**

- Initial Excitement: Enjoy being at home
- Judgmental Stage: Nothing at home seems good; finding fault.
- Realization Stage: Noticing significant changes at home and in oneself.
- Balanced Re-adaptation: Integrating the experience abroad with living at home or finding other ways to cope with reentry.

© Margaret D. Pusch, 1997
Unexpected Re-entry: Coping with Cultural Re-adjustment

- Acknowledge that it takes time to work through this phase
- Stay connected to your host country’s culture
- Stay connected to friends from study abroad
- Take advantage of available resources

Source: USAC Blog: Dealing with Reverse Culture Shock & Mental Health During COVID-19
Mental Health During COVID-19

- Allow yourself time to grieve
  - Recommended Article: “That Discomfort You’re Feeling is Grief” from the Harvard Business Review
- Consider limiting news intake
- Stay active!
- Take advantage of resources through your study abroad program or U-M!
  - U-M CAPS Mental Health Care Package
Reflection & Action Sheet for Returnees

- Would you like to share any of your responses?
- Were any of your feelings not covered by these reflective prompts?
- What did you think about this activity? Was it helpful?

Source: Small Planet Studio (Dr. Cate Brubaker): “Reflection & Action Sheet for Returnees”
**Discussion Questions**

- How did your feelings about the COVID-19 crisis shift (if at all) when it came to the U.S.?

- How can the International Center support you during this time?

- What advice do you have for others going through this?
Re-Entry Resources

- USAC
  - Dealing with Reverse Culture Shock & Mental Health During COVID-19
  - How to Combat Loneliness After Studying Abroad
- IES Abroad - U-M student’s blog
  - “The Tears Come Easily These Days” and “A Letter from Quarantine”
- API Abroad
  - Re-Entry Toolkit - great exercise in identifying skills gained from this experience!
- KAHAL: Your Jewish Home Abroad
  - Students Impacted by COVID
Important skills that you may have gained through this experience

- Navigating ambiguity / uncertainty
- Problem solving under pressure
- Managing high-stress situations
- Resilience
- Adaptability during change and uncertainty
- Collaborating across difference

Source: AFS Webinar: "Re-entry in Crisis: How to best support students during and after COVID-19" - April 9, 2020
"When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it."

- Henry Ford