

Tips for Dealing with Culture Adjustment and Shock

1. Anticipate it
2. Learn more about where you are going.
3. Keep a flexible and learning attitude- adjust your expectations
4. Give yourself time and grace. Making mistakes is normal.
5. Bring something from home that is familiar -i.e mug/pictures
6. Push yourself to be uncomfortable-talk to others/don't stay inside.
7. Find accountability- talk to your site coordinators and mentors
8. Self-care- (see Envision blog)
9. Remember you are not alone! God will help you navigate it.
10. Remember it's a process!

For reference: <http://www.weareenvision.com/blog/transition-1>

Take a moment to think about the country or context you are going to. Start to think through some things about the culture that may cause some adjustment difficulties or feelings of culture shock:

Failure to be flexible and learn can lead to adjustment difficulties. Identify personal areas of inflexibility that may cause difficulty. *Examples of inflexibility: I must get everywhere on time and want others to do the same (you are going to a culture where this may not be possible)*

Unmet expectations can also lead to adjustment difficulties. Identify some expectations you are carrying that you may need to let go. *Example of expectations: I am going to become fluent in French or I can't wait to be very busy and have a packed schedule.*

What is your default way of coping? How do you process difficult emotion or event? What is your action plan when you are uncomfortable? What areas of self-care do you want to implement?

Tips for Dealing with Re-entry/Reverse Culture Shock

1. Debrief well
 - a. Guard your last two days. Don't leave in a frenzy!
 - b. Take time to process the things you've learned
2. Anticipate it!
3. Walk through the grief stages. Grieve well! Be ok with what you are feeling.
4. Give yourself time and grace!
5. Get into a new routine/schedule
6. Find a trusted mentor/friend who will listen and help you process your experience.
7. Adjust your expectations!
8. Create a picture book to help tell the story.
9. Accept that this experience is now a part of who you are.
10. Allow the Lord to lead and guide. He has seen the whole journey

For reference: <http://www.weareenvision.com/blog/4-things-to-be-aware-of>

Simple Debrief Questions and Exercises:

- What did I learn about God?
- What did I learn about the country and people?
- What new insights have I gained about my own culture?
- What did I learn about myself
- What will you do differently going forward after this experience?
- What do you know now that you didn't know before?
- Have you gained new insights into overseas work?
- What have you learned or appreciated in the things you saw?
- What are your takeaways: memories, experiences, lessons
 - Write a list of your top favorite memories and experiences
 - Pull out what you learned from these/why are they important to you?
 - What is God calling you to do now?