

# ARRIVING IN GIVEN FOREIGN COUNTRY AND LEAVING THE SAME COUNTRY

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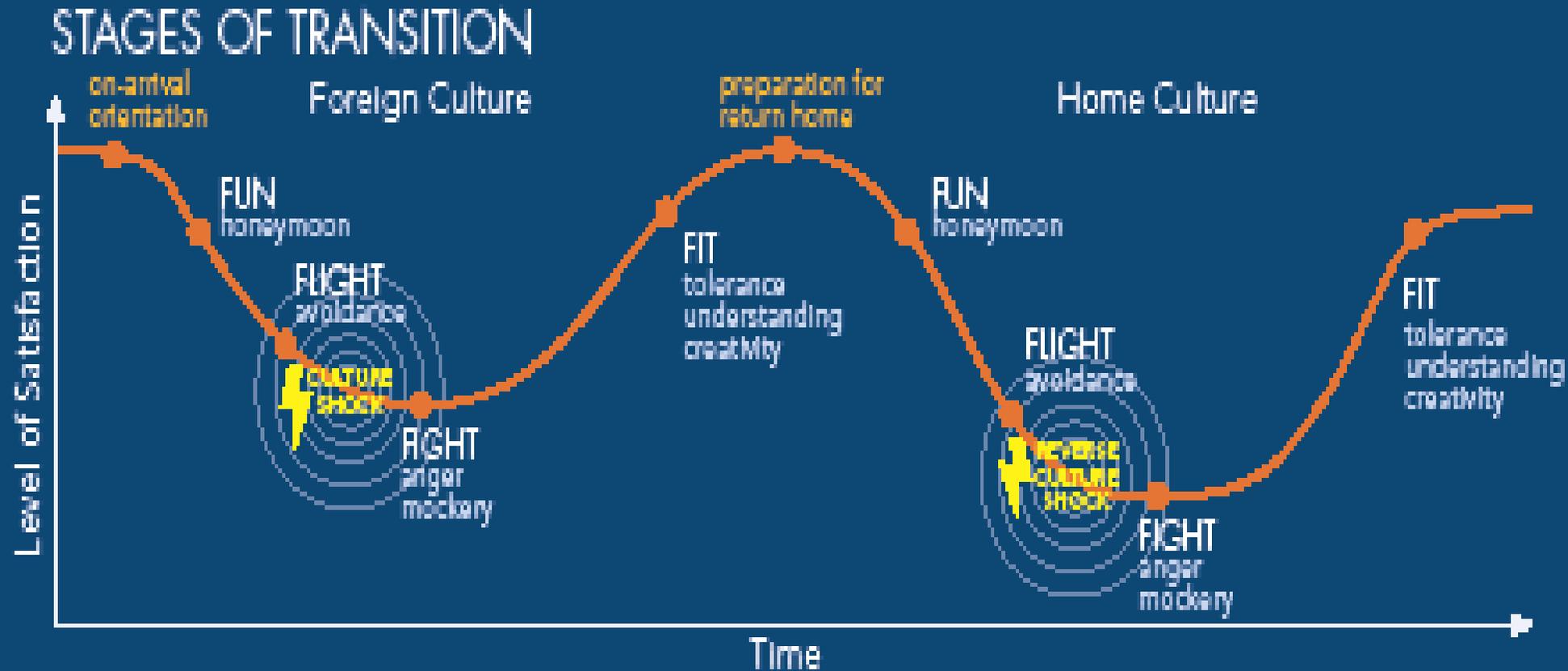
# WELCOME TO A HOST COUNTRY

- ▶ Introducing myself (student in France, professor in US)
- ▶ Your dream is becoming a reality, you are facing several new challenges in a New country
- ▶ You have many questions!
  - ▶ Will people welcome me?
  - ▶ Who will be my friends?
  - ▶ How will I survive the cold/ Winter or hot Summer?
  - ▶ What will be academic pressure be like?

# YOUR EXPECTATIONS WHILE AWAY FROM HOME

- ▶ Academically
- ▶ Spiritually
- ▶ You imagined making new friends
- ▶ You left your country with a promise to return and put your education in a better way
- ▶ You are in the very first time in a new country (Jumping into cold water, fish out of water or for me in France, it was like being a plant, uprooted and transplanted to a different soil.)
- ▶ My lecture is to help you, a transplanted person to succeed in your new life in a new country where you are studying

# THE CROSS-CULTURAL PATH-THE U-CURVE



One may actually experience several high and low points in each transition. Also, multiple and simultaneous "U" curves may be experienced, with academic adjustment happening at a different rate than social or emotional transition, for example.

# THE FUN STAGE

## DIFFERENT IS GREAT AND WONDERFUL

- ▶ This is the "life is great" stage.
- ▶ You are happy and excited because everything is new, pleasant, and nice.

# THE FLIGHT STAGE

## DIFFERENT AND UNPLEASANT

- ▶ This is the „life of confusing” stage (people not really interested listening to your answers ).
- ▶ It could be that your education expectations are not being met, or you are not succeeding in making friends with locals.
- ▶ Perhaps you are confused by a different education system and you may be disappointed by the politics of your specialized departments.
- ▶ This feeling is „culture shock”.
- ▶ It is the emotional response to new ways of doing things and activities.
- ▶ It is also a feeling of being lost because of different social and cultural rules.
- ▶ Sometimes it is accompanied by physical symptoms like headaches, stomachaches, and sleeplessness.
- ▶ It is understandable, at this stage, to want to avoid contact with locals on your campus and just want to be with people from your country or other international students.
- ▶ You may begin to say yourself, and even to others, „I don't like this place”.

# THE FIGHT STAGE

## DIFFERENT AND BAD/DIFFERENT AND FOOLISH

- ▶ This is the „life is hard” stage. Maybe you will start to say, „I hate this place”.
- ▶ Perhaps your difficult experience is with you roommate or professors.
- ▶ Maybe your English is not improving as fast as you want.
- ▶ Or worse, the winter has come and you are depressed and lonely, angry with your situation.
- ▶ At this stage, you could be tempted to make fun of the new culture and the way people do things.

# THE FIT STAGE

## DIFFERENT BUT REASONABLE/DIFFERENT BUT OPEN TO INTERACTION

- ▶ This is the „life is good” stage. With time, patience, perseverance, and the help of new friends, you feel better about yourself and being in a given new country.
- ▶ You have become more tolerant of many different things around you. It does not mean you approve of those things, but it means you are able to accept them as part of the host culture. Because you understand more you criticize less.
- ▶ At the Fit Stage you find yourself open to new experiences. You are ready to join a sport team, lead a group project, share your ideas in class, or travel to other parts of the country or in Europe.
- ▶ You have made friends and your English is improving.
- ▶ Your confidence is up and you are feeling good about being in the new country.
- ▶ Please to believe me, -The Fun, Flight, Fight and Fit stages, it is grateful to know that these stages are normal experiences when entering a new culture!!

# HOW LONG?

- ▶ The cross-cultural adjustment period will vary from person-to-person, depending on language skills, prior experiences, similarities of home culture to host culture, and presence of support system.
- ▶ My experience on cross cultural transition, under normal conditions, it could take from three months to six months, but one year also is possible in certain conditions.
- ▶ Transitions are not always neat and predictable. You may yourself at different stages at the same time. For example, you could be fitting well in the academic area, but be in the Fight Stage socially and emotionally .Or you are having fun socially, but you are Fight Stage academically. It will the time and perseverance to feel normal in a new culture.

# YOUR RESPONSES: IMITATION, ISOLATION OR INTEGRATION

- ▶ **Imitation:** Copy the behavior and began to introduce yourself to others. You imitate only what you are comfortable with. And as you understand the meaning behind the behavior, you will learn to adjust and adopt the Germany, Holland, Spain..... ways in you life.
- ▶ **Isolation:** Is another response when you are separate yourself from cross-cultural encounters. For me, isolation meant visiting Vienna and being with my compatriots, speaking own language and eating national dishes very weekend. But this activity does not keep you from learning through the cross-cultural experience. Excessive isolation can also lead to intense loneliness and even depression.
- ▶ **Integration:** Happens when you feel confident to interact with the new culture. You mix easily with locals. You may still feel like an outsider, but you know that you have the respect and trust of your local friends. Your new confidence leads you to participate in events, share you views, tell stories, or even tell joke. The will be cultural tensions along the way, but you are learning how to deal with them.

# CROSS-CULTURAL STEPS-1

- ▶ 1. Enter your culture with openness, humility, and curiosity. Gently give yourself time to adjust.
- ▶ 2. Explore your new environment. Open your eyes. Walk around and observe your new surroundings. When you are exploring, you are not making judgement, you are simply observing and asking questions like:
  - ▶ What do people enjoy doing alone or together?
  - ▶ How are women, children, or older folk treated?
  - ▶ What do students like to do on weekends?
  - ▶ How are professors viewed by the students?
  - ▶ Where are the centers of activities on campus?
  - ▶ What issues do students care about?
  - ▶ What article are in the campus newspaper?
  - ▶ Where do other international students gather?
  - ▶ Who is popular on campus?
  - ▶ What seems to be important in your city or town? Cleanliness, order, beauty?

# CROSS-CULTURAL STEPS-2

- ▶ 3. Experiment and try new things. Expand your taste in food. Accept invitation to meet locals or go on tours. Try a new word each day. Imitate a local behavior that is different from your culture, such as opening doors for others.
- ▶ 4. Engage and interact with your new culture. Get to know the local people and other students. International students advise joining clubs and accepting place and formed lasting friendship with people from around the world.
- ▶ 5. Exit. Before you know, it is time to move on. You may choose to return home, stay for advanced degrees in a visited country or move to another country.

# IN SUMMARY

- ▶ Be kind and gentle yourself. You just made a major move to a new country.
- ▶ Find friend who can explain the local culture and habits to you.
- ▶ Join a group that meets your needs(campus, religious, or community)
- ▶ Be a friend to someone.
- ▶ Pay attention to your health(sleep, eat well, and exercise).
- ▶ Remember that your transition is many-layered-academic, social, emotional, physical, spiritual, political, and financial.
- ▶ Enjoy your journey with good sense of humor and attitude of learning and adventure.
- ▶ Embrace all that this opportunity offers, personally and professionally.
- ▶ **REMARKS:** As an international student you have to learn to be brave to take initiative, and to be independent.
- ▶ You can make lifelong friends from among local students and the other international students on campus.
- ▶ I hope your abroad education and experience will be successful and use to serve others in your nation and make significant contributions to your organization!!!!

# RETURNING TO YOUR HOME COUNTRY

- ▶ „ But I just arrived in a new country, so why should I be thinking of returning home???” you might ask.
- ▶ When you preparing your reentry, basically you are looking for two questions.
- ▶ 1.How do I reconnect with my people?
- ▶ 2. How do I use my foreing education to serve effectively:
- ▶ **One opinion:** „I realized I had changed while studying in a new country and I needed to know how to reengage with my compatriots. Other one:” I think my life has reprioritized since I came to a new country”
- ▶ **My remark:** Your time in abroad will bring changes, great and small, in how you live, think, work, and relate with others.

# YOU NEED REENTRY PREPARATION

- ▶ Thinking about reentry will help you recognize the changes, in you and how those changes will help or hinder you reentry. By preparing for your reentry now, you also will have time to think through ideas and plans you may want to accomplish back home, and perhaps in the process make dreams come true.
- ▶ YOUR Dreams?
- ▶ I don't know what your dreams are, but I have met amazing international students who have serious goals and ambitions on how to improve the lives of their people and contribute to the greater good of their countries.

# THE W- CURVE

- ▶ As I discussed earlier, In reentry, you also will experience similar feelings, which are illustrated by the second „U” of that W curve.
- ▶ You may go through the same transition stages, except you will be experiencing them back home.
- ▶ Cultural chock will now be „reverse culture shock” Often reverse culture shock id harder because you did not expect it to happen since you were just returning home.
- ▶ As I mentioned earlier, referring to the different stages in going to a new country, and consider the possible ways you may experience them when you return home.
  - ▶ What may the FUN STAGE look like for you?
  - ▶ What could your thoughts be in the FLIGHT STAGE?
  - ▶ What may be some difficulties for you in the FIGHT STAGE?
  - ▶ What do you imagine life to be like when you are in the FIT STAGE?
- ▶ You will have choices on how to respond during your reentry. At time, you may choose to imitate the behavior of people around you. Other times, you may isolate from them or enjoy the company of other returnees who have travelled abroad. But you also will integrate as you mix people as a changed person. You need all „3 step dance” to move gracefully back into your culture as a result cross-cultural living experience.

# REENTRY PREPARATION GUIDELINES

## Pre-Departure

- ▶ 1. Identify the ways you have changed while away from home.
  - ▶ What changes will be received will back home? Why?
  - ▶ What changes will bring challenges and potential problems? Why?
  - ▶ What changes are you willing to give up for a greater good (e.g. your increased independence vs. Your family expectations and relationship)
- ▶ 2.Changes happens both ways. You have changed and people back home have changed. (e.g. Your friends and colleagues moved on with their lives, they mad new friends or they were promoted at work while you were) You may need to adjust to political changes.
- ▶ 3.Have proper closure before you leave for home. Closure is the process bringing to satisfying end your time in abroad. Part of healthy closure is the opportunity to say, Thank you, Goodbye, or I'm sorry.

- ▶ 4. Learn from others who have returned home: find out what they found helpful and what you should avoid. Check returnee networks which may exist in your country.
- ▶ 5. Recall what builds trust in your culture. What attitudes will help you relate well with your family, friends, and colleagues? What activities do they enjoy? What gifts from the new country would they appreciate receiving from you?
- ▶ 6. Make plans( e.g., list the names of people you really want to see and spend extended time with), but be ready to make adjustments.
- ▶ 7. Collect and organize your photos. Consider a slide presentation or carry a small album for easy access.
- ▶ 8. Prepare yourself for different and surprising responses from people. Your family may be more demanding than you remember. Your friends may have different expectations than you thought, Your colleagues may be jealous or suspicious.

- ▶ 9. If you want to implement changes in your home, at work, or in your community, make sure you have thought through your strategy. Consider the following questions as you make your plan:
  - ▶ Why are changes necessary?
  - ▶ What cultural values should you consider when introducing change?
  - ▶ Who agrees with you that changes need to be made?
  - ▶ How will you introduce and communicate the advantages of these changes?
  - ▶ Who will be benefited or threatened by your new ideas?
  - ▶ What will be the effects of the changes you want to introduce?
  - ▶ Who should check with first before making changes?
  - ▶ Can the changes be done incrementally (slowly) and not all at the same time?
  - ▶ How much are you willing to pay to make these changes happen? What will be the cost to your time, energy, reputation, career, values, and relationships?
  - ▶ Who can help you? Who can assist you finding others to help you?
- ▶ 10. Review the Stages of Transition W-curve, (distributed)

# POST RETURN

- ▶ 1. Enjoy the opportunity to return home. Eat all the food you missed and appreciate all the attention you are receiving.
- ▶ 2. Communicate as soon as you are able with your friends in abroad. Use whichever methods work best for you and you friends (texting, Facebook, other apps, and online services).
- ▶ 3. Do not be surprised when you feel sad, lonely, and even depressed. This is a normal part of reentry. You feel the pain of separation from friends. You grieve over not being able to enjoy the many benefits of being an international students. You miss your life back in visited country.
- ▶ 4. Take care of yourself (sleep, eat, exercise, and stay active). If you are bored or overwhelmed, establish and follow a simple schedule while waiting for life to normalize.
- ▶ 5. Find someone you trust who will listen to your Hungarian experience. Share both good and difficult, the fun and frustrating, the opportunities and challenges.

- ▶ 6. Focus on others. Your friends, family and colleagues have their stories to share as well. Show genuine interest. Listen and ask questions.
- ▶ 7. Reenter, Explore, Experiment, and Reengage. Find reentry equivalents to these cross-cultural transition steps. (remember cross-cultural steps).
- ▶ 8. Connect with others who have travelled or studied abroad. They can serve as your reentry support group.
- ▶ 9. Remember you have choices: imitate, isolate, and integrate.
- ▶ 10. Keep journal or start a blog of your reentry experience. This is a good place to share and process your observations, failures, and successes in the reentry process.

# EXPECTED RESULTS

- ▶ Remember for two answers of two questions. You can see, it became clear that was really important was not my advanced degree but my attitude about my abroad education. If I returned with a humble attitude than could listen better, relate quicker, and readjust more smoothly to life back home.
- ▶ Of course, you missed your new foreigner friends and your whole foreign experience.
- ▶ You went through the Stage of Transition and had reverse culture shock.
- ▶ You made cultural mistakes, you were sad. But by keeping a learner's attitude. You were able to find your way back home, not exactly as the same person who left some years before, but as a changed person.
- ▶ You can be more confident about who you were, grateful for the blessing you received, and to serve others.
- ▶ There is much to enjoy when you return home, There are also many challenges to face and ways to grow. But in the end, you will be returning as a better human being.
- ▶ In addition, your cross-cultural skills will have been sharpened, your English will have greatly improved, your compassion for people in need may have been awakened, and you may have discovered a new cause or goal.
- ▶ Do not forget! Your family, friends and colleagues, and country will want you back!

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION**



**BE SPECIFIC NOT GENERAL**