

Re-Entry Transition

Are you graduating and going back to your country soon? Are you prepared for reverse culture shock?

We looked at a transition process when you came from your home country to the US in the previous newsletters (<http://cie.siu.edu/community-outreach-new/wellness-resources.html>). This time, we look at a transition when you go back to your home country.

When you return to your home country from the US, you may notice both your own changes and changes in the environment in your home country. Your changes may include subtle changes in your views, thoughts, and behaviors. Changes in the environment may include the ones in your family, friends, and the society. You may go through an adjustment process again. This is sometimes called "Reverse Culture Shock." You may feel difficult to "fit in" for a while.

Many of you may experience the following aspects in adjustment:

1) **Feelings about leaving the US:** You may start having feelings before leaving the US. You may feel excited with going back to family and friends. You may have some apprehension about leaving the US.

2) **Re-Adjustment to your home country:** You may experience your re-adjustment process happening.

a) You may notice differences in the rules for social interactions with family, friends, authority, and in public.

b) You may feel that others (family, friends, and co-workers) do not understand your experience in the US.

c) Your family and friends may also notice and need to adjust to your changes.

3) **Difference in gender role expectation:** Gender role expectations may differ between your home country and the US. Female students may experience greater difficulty in adjustment of gender roles in your family and in daily life.

4) **Career development concerns:**

a) Difficulty in obtaining career information of your home country while you are in the US.

b) Difficulty in integrating international experience with your career in your home country.

5) Changes in your perception: Your exposure to different ideas in the US may lead you to view cultural practices and/or the way things are in your home country in a different way from before on many levels. This may bring you a new appreciation and/or a critical view to your home country.

6) Changes in the relationship between you and the environment:

- a) Changes in your family (moving, ill, aging, loss).
- b) Changes in the society (disaster, war, economic changes).
- c) Changes in your position in family and the society (ex. as an independent adult).

You can prepare for the expected re-entry transition! These are a few tips.

- 1) Expect some degree of reverse culture shock.
- 2) Think about changes in yourself, at home, and in your country. Think about what kind of effects those changes may have.

Yuka Kato