



PRACTICAL TIPS FOR READJUSTMENT & HANDLING REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

Tips for You:

- Remind yourself that Reverse Culture Shock is difficult and normal. Stay positive and know that just like you adapted in the US, you will feel comfortable again in your home country.
- Keep in touch with your American friends and family; they will also remind you that you adapted well, and you can do it again.
- Keep in touch with the other exchange students that you met through YFU. They are facing the same challenges and understand what you are going through. Get involved and volunteer with YFU in your home country.
- Ask a close friend or family member to help you readjust. Explain that you need a special friend to help you through what can sometimes be a difficult time. Explain the concept of reverse culture shock so this friend knows why you may feel certain ways.
- Remember that you have changed a lot; it may take some time for friends and family to get to know the new you. Be patient as this occurs and be active in strengthening your relationships.
- Journal and write down your feelings; think about what you learned about reverse culture shock and recognize your progress in adapting back to your home country. If you wrote a journal or blog during your exchange experience, review it now as some of the strategies you used to adjust to your American life may help you again back in your home country.
- Keep a sense of humor; laugh at your mistakes as you readjust.
- Seek out opportunities to share your experiences with others. Ask teachers if you can do a presentation about your experience; talk with the local library or community center about opportunities to showcase your photos and souvenirs.
- If you enjoy writing, offer to write an article about your experiences in the US for your school newspaper, or your local newspaper.
- Seek out new relationships with the international community; find new restaurants or cultural centers to learn more about other cultures; volunteer with service groups that serve international clients.
- If you are very sad and are often crying, talk to your doctor. Sometimes people can become very depressed and it is a good idea to get some professional help.

Tips for Interacting with Friends and Family

- Often friends and family are overwhelmed by all your stories. Develop “short” stories about your life as an exchange student. Think about how you can share little tidbits about your life in the US, without overwhelming people with too many details that do not make sense to them.
- Share photos, videos, music and souvenirs with friends and family; but be prepared, they may not be ready to spend hours trying to understand why all of these items are so significant to you.
- Reassure people that there are many stereotypes about America, but they are not all true. Explain some of your own surprises as you built relationships with Americans.
- Reassure people that there are no “dumb questions” and that your whole experience was about learning new things about America. Encourage friends and family to ask questions.
- Show interest in others and don’t feel the need to tell everything to everyone all at once.
- Ask friends and family about what you missed while you were away. How did the local sports teams do, what were the big events at school, are there any new shops or restaurants in town?
- Ask friends and family about what significant things they experienced while you were away? How did they feel about you being gone for so long?
- Make plans with friends and family to do new, exciting activities together. This will help you develop new memories and strengthen your relationships.