

## REBOUND WEEKEND SCHEDULE—YOUTH EXCHANGE FLORIDA

Friday

2-3 p.m. Rotex training

3-5:30 p.m. Check in/registration

5:30-6:30 p.m. Supper

6:45-7:30 p.m. Meet in main room-Larry

--welcome

--overview of weekend, goals and purpose

--The goal is to complete the full training for inbounds who are now rebounds to successfully complete and integrate their exchange experience.

Objectives:

1. Provide a structured opportunity for rebounds to gather together to share and compare their exchange experiences.
2. Learn opportunities within and outside Rotary to further integrate and benefit from the exchange experience such as becoming a Rotex.
3. Develop and have the opportunity to practice a speech and letter to the editor reflecting their exchange experience suitable for numerous settings.
4. Renew friendships with fellow rebounds and Rotarians that may serve as a support system in the post rebound period.

--Hoops Around a Circle exercise—entire group forms a circle holding hands. A hula hoop is introduced into the circle and must be passed around the entire circle without releasing hands. When done a second hoop is introduced directly across from the first and must be passed in the opposite direction until both arrive at their initial position.

--Introduce country coordinators

--Have CC's name countries they represent. Youth who spent year there come forward and give name, country and city they lived in and one memorable experience from exchange year. They should also say something in that language and explain its meaning.

--Introduce Rotex in same way as Rebounds but also explain why they decided to be a Rotex.

--Count off into 2 or more groups as necessary insuring no more than 12 in a group—Identify Rotex that will be facilitating each group.

--Al's minute—introduce other Rotarians present, housekeeping details and welcome

7:30-9 p.m. Meet in small groups—post “Ground Rules for Rebound Group Outsiders” on outside door (see appendix) Ground rules and discussion guide (see “Discussion Guidelines” in appendix)

- Distribute folders—have students and Rotex put names on outside but keep folder in small group room always. Encourage them to embellish cover however they wish to reflect their exchange experience and personality.
- Discuss contents of folders—In order these include:
  - 1. Human shield
  - 2. Reflections on Rebounding
  - 3. Rotary Youth Exchange rebound Interview
  - 4. How Have I Changed From My Experience?
  - 5. Goals for my rebound year
  - 6. Letter to the Editor template
  - 7. Where do I go from here?
  - 8. Rebound Weekend Evaluation
  - 9. Going Home
  - 10. So You Think You’re Home again
  - 11. Rebound training (all 11 in appendix)
- Go around circle, introduce self, where went, highlights of exchange, best and worst experiences, what you learned about yourself and what you learned about others.
- Human Shield exercise and discussion (see Rebound Shield Directions and Six Phases of Debriefing in appendix)—Have group tape shield to chest and mingle with other group members and discuss shields with other Rebounds individually. When finished debrief experience with entire group.
- Complete “Reflections on Rebounding” sheet and share results with group

9:00 Free time until bedtime

Saturday

7:30-8:30 a.m. Breakfast

8:45 a.m. Meet as large group

--Yurt circle exercise—form one large circle. Count off as 1 or 2 with full extension of arms and feet at shoulder distance apart. On count of 3 all ones lean forward as much as possible with entire body while twos lean backwards. Do this several times and when proficient when group is in leaning position count to 3 again and have each group reverse positions.

Debriefed by Larry:

1. What was the task?
2. How successful were you in completing the task?

3. What worked well?
4. What didn't work well?
5. Was your exchange year like this in any way?

-- Reverse Culture Shock game show format. Gather in small groups to answer Jeopardy questions. Select leader to raise hand if thinks group can answer correctly. Rotex keep score on a white board with numbers added or subtracted based on accuracy of answers. Winning team gets reward. (see appendix for questions and answers).

9:15 a.m. Meet in small groups—have Rotex share how they dealt with/are dealing with Reverse Culture Shock including how long it took them to resolve and lead discussion on following areas:

1. What has been the biggest challenge so far?
2. What has worked well in addressing this?
3. What hasn't worked well?
4. Who has been most helpful in addressing this?
5. How do you make new friends and maintain old friendships?

--Complete rebound survey and turn in. Name is optional.

--Tangle knot exercise and reflection—Have group form into 2 smaller ones and form a small circle. Have them reach across and grab the hands of 2 different people. They then are to untangle the knot without speaking except they are allowed to use the language of the country they spent their exchange year in. Rotex lead debriefing when completed addressing the following:

1. Were there times during your year you felt as if you were tangled into an impossible knot?
2. How did you resolve it?
3. Who was most helpful to you?
4. What did you learn from that experience?

--“How Have I changed” activity and discussion (see appendix)

-- Complete “Goals for my Rebound Year” and discuss with group. (see appendix)

10:30 to noon Meet with country coordinators

12 noon to 1:00 p.m. Lunch

1:15 p.m.. Large group—Where do I go from here? Presentation and discussion

--Larry and other Rotarians speak about various Rotary and non-Rotary options for continued service. (see reference guide in appendix)

2:00 p.m. Small groups

--Trust circle exercise and reflection—Break in 2 smaller groups. Form a tight circle around a faller. The faller properly positions hands, arms, and elbows close to the body, then begins the sequence of commands (give their name and say “X falling”. Group must be in a tight circle around him with arms properly positioned and say “X, fall away” before faller with eyes closed and body stiff, falls in any direction. This continues until faller decides to terminate. Spotters adjust their positions to insure faller remains safe throughout the experience. Rotex lead reflection afterwards touching on following:

1. What was it like to be falling?
2. What was it like to keep someone from falling?
3. Were there times during your year you felt you were falling?
4. Who helped keep that from happening?
5. What did you learn from that experience?

--Work individually on essay and letter to the editor

--Try out essay in pairs and get feedback

--Try out essay before small group and get feedback

3-5 p.m. free time

5:30-6:30 p.m. Supper

6:45-9 p.m. work on essays and letter to editor

9 p.m. free time until bed

Sunday

7:30-8:30 Breakfast

8:45-11:30 Essay presentations before entire group with feedback from audience

Complete “Rebound Weekend Evaluation” and turn in

-----presentation of Rotex T-shirts and group photo

Closing remarks—Rebounds, Rotex, Rotarians, Larry and Al

12- 1 p.m. Lunch

1 p.m. Clean cabins and depart

Prior to weekend all rebounds should be notified of time and schedule of rebound weekend and alerted to the importance as an essential component of the entire exchange experience. They should send in their top 10 favorite pictures from their exchange for compilation as a slide show before all general sessions.

There should be 2-3 Rotex selected for each small group with ideally 50% having served in that role before and 50% new to the position. Weeks before they should be e mailed the schedule and curriculum for review as they will serve as facilitators for all small group activities. Coordinator for weekend will provide on site training and supervision.

Materials needed:

1. Binders and insert materials for all Rotex and Rebounds
2. Pens for all
3. 2 hula hoops
4. Several swimming noodles
5. Power point slides of exchange pictures
6. White board and markers
7. Masking tape
8. Colored pencils and magic markers
9. Blank sheets of paper
10. Lined paper for binders to work on speech and letter to editor
11. Kleenex
12. Name tags

## APPENDIX—IN ORDER OF USE

Ground Rules for Rebound Group Outsiders

Discussion Guidelines

Rebound Shield Directions

Six Phases of Debriefing

Human Shield

Reflections on Rebounding

Reverse Culture Shock Game Show Questions and Pictures

Rotary Youth Exchange Rebound Interview

How Have I Changed From My Experience?

Letter to the Editor Template

Goals for my Rebound Year

Where do I go From Here?

Rebound Weekend Evaluation

Going Home

So You Think You're Home Again

Rebound Training

## **Ground Rules for Rebound Group Outsiders**

**1. Only 2 Rotarians outside group leaders at a time.**

**2. Must sit in the circle and participate.**

**3. Don't monopolize—this is the rebound's group, not yours.**

**4. What is said in the group stays in the group. While you can talk about your experience outside, you don't have the right to talk about someone else's.**



# DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

1. Have participants sit in a circle so everyone can see everyone else.
2. Have participants share their names and where they have spent the previous year.
3. Explain the purpose and guidelines for the discussion: there are no right or wrong answers, everyone's opinion is important to be shared, what is said here stays here and everyone should have a chance to share their feelings and experiences.
4. Do not attempt to give answers which will mistakenly put you in the position of expert. Rather, ask if other people can respond to specific questions raised for discussion or ask if other people have opinions about particular opinions presented.
5. Utilize open ended questions. These tend to open conversations and keep responsibility for the discussion with the participants. Examples of open ended discussion questions are:
  - A. Would someone like to share his or her experience from the past year?
  - B. How would someone else feel about that?
  - C. What changes have you noticed in yourself since coming home?
  - D. What has it been like since you've been back in your native country?
  - E. What has been the easiest or most difficult thing about being home?
  - F. How are you relating to your parents?
6. Be tolerant of silences and pauses in the conversation. You do not have to fill every spare moment with conversation and if you allow pauses and silences to occur, the group will take responsibility for the conversation.
7. If one or 2 people tend to dominate the conversation, firmly but politely restate the guidelines that we want everyone to have a chance to comment and specifically say "Would someone else like to share his or her experience?"
8. If people are not sharing at all, offer them the opportunity by asking specifically if they would like to share an experience or comment on the topic being discussed. At the same time respect their right to pass if after being invited they decline to comment.

9. If you have had an international experience or if you have had a son or daughter go overseas, feel free to add your comments and experiences as appropriate, primarily for modeling and self-disclosure. Try to avoid setting yourself up as an expert where people continually ask questions and you give the answers.

10. Try to view the discussion from the point of view of a participant. What they need most is an opportunity to discuss in some detail their own feelings and experiences and to find out that they are not as alone as they may think they are. The most important value is the opportunity for these people to get together with one another and share, not for them to get any specific answers.

### Directions for Conducting the Shield Get Acquainted Exercise

1. Distribute the blank shields with pen or pencil.
2. Give the following directions:
  - a. In order to get better acquainted, we want you to write words or draw pictures/symbols to represent your responses to the following statements (one response in each of the four squares in the shield):
    - i. Draw or write about something you are proud of.
    - ii. Draw or write about something about the USA (or Americans) that irritates you.
    - iii. Draw or write about something you have learned about yourself **since you came home.**
    - iv. Draw or write about what you want to accomplish at this retreat.
3. While participants are completing the shield, quietly put a small piece of masking tape in the back of their chairs, or on the table next to them. When everyone is finished, or most people, ask them to tape the shield on their chests and mill about the room discussing the items on the shield. This is like a cocktail party without the alcohol. Tell them to try to get around to most of the people in the group quickly.
4. After about five minutes call a "time out". Ask them to pick a person in the room they do not know very well, certainly not someone they do know well. Have them go to a table or corner of the room and take time to interview their partners. Tell them they will be asked to introduce their partner to the rest of the group. Give them about ten minutes. Remind them periodically to make sure both people talk.
5. When you are ready, reassemble them in one large group (unless there will be more than 15 or 16 people. In that case it might work better to have two separate groups).
6. Ask for a volunteer to introduce their partner. When they are done, ask the one introduced if they want to add to their introduction. You as facilitator model asking at least one question of the person being introduced. Ask if others in the group have any questions. Continue until everyone is introduced.

7. Alternate questions can be used on the shield, such as – Something that has been difficult about being home, something that has surprised you about being home, etc. Or make up your own. The idea is to create a safe environment to talk, where people gradually practice what they want to say – by writing it, by sharing with one person, then with everyone.
8. This can go on a very long time. You can set a time limit, or leave it open ended. It does create an agenda for things to talk about later, in private or in the group over the course of the retreat.

# Six Phases of Debriefing

By Thiagi ([www.thiagi.com/pfp/](http://www.thiagi.com/pfp/))

**People don't learn from experience; they learn from *reflecting on their experience*.**

I firmly believe this principle and keep preaching it to everyone. To me, all experiential learning activities (simulations games, roleplays, outdoor adventures, and other such things) merely provide an excuse for debriefing sessions. You **must** conduct a debriefing discussion to help your participants reflect on their experiences, relate them to the real world, discover useful insights, and share them with each other. Debriefing also helps you to wind down the learning activity, reduce negative reactions among the participants, and increase insights.

A major dilemma in debriefing is maintaining a balance between structure and free flow. I suggest that you prepare several questions before the debriefing session. During actual debriefing, encourage and exploit spontaneous comments from the participants. If the conversation degenerates into a stream-of-consciousness meandering, fall back on your prepared list of questions.

I use a six-phase model to structure debriefing questions. Here are some guidelines for each phase of this model.

## **Phase 1: How Do You Feel?**

This phase gives the participants an opportunity to get strong feelings and emotion off their chest. It makes it easier for them to be more objective during the later phases.

Begin this phase with a broad question that invites the participants to get in touch with their feelings about the activity and its outcomes. Encourage them to share these feelings, listening actively to one another in a nonjudgmental fashion.

## **Phase 2: What Happened?**

In this phase, collect data about what happened during the activity. Encourage the participants to compare and contrast their recollections and to draw general conclusions during the next phase.

Begin this phase with a broad question that asks the participants to recall important events from the training activity. Create and post a chronological list of events. Ask questions about specific events.

## **Phase 3: What Did You Learn?**

In this phase, encourage the participants to generate and test different hypotheses. Ask the participants to come up with principles based on the activity and discuss them.

Begin this phase by presenting a principle and asking the participants for data that supports or rejects it. Then invite the participants to offer other principles based on their experiences.

#### **Phase 4: How Does This Relate To The Real World?**

In this phase, discuss the relevance of the activity to the participants' real-world experiences.

Begin with a broad question about the relationship between the experiential learning activity and events in the workplace. Suggest that the activity is a metaphor and ask participants to offer real-world analogies.

#### **Phase 5: What If?**

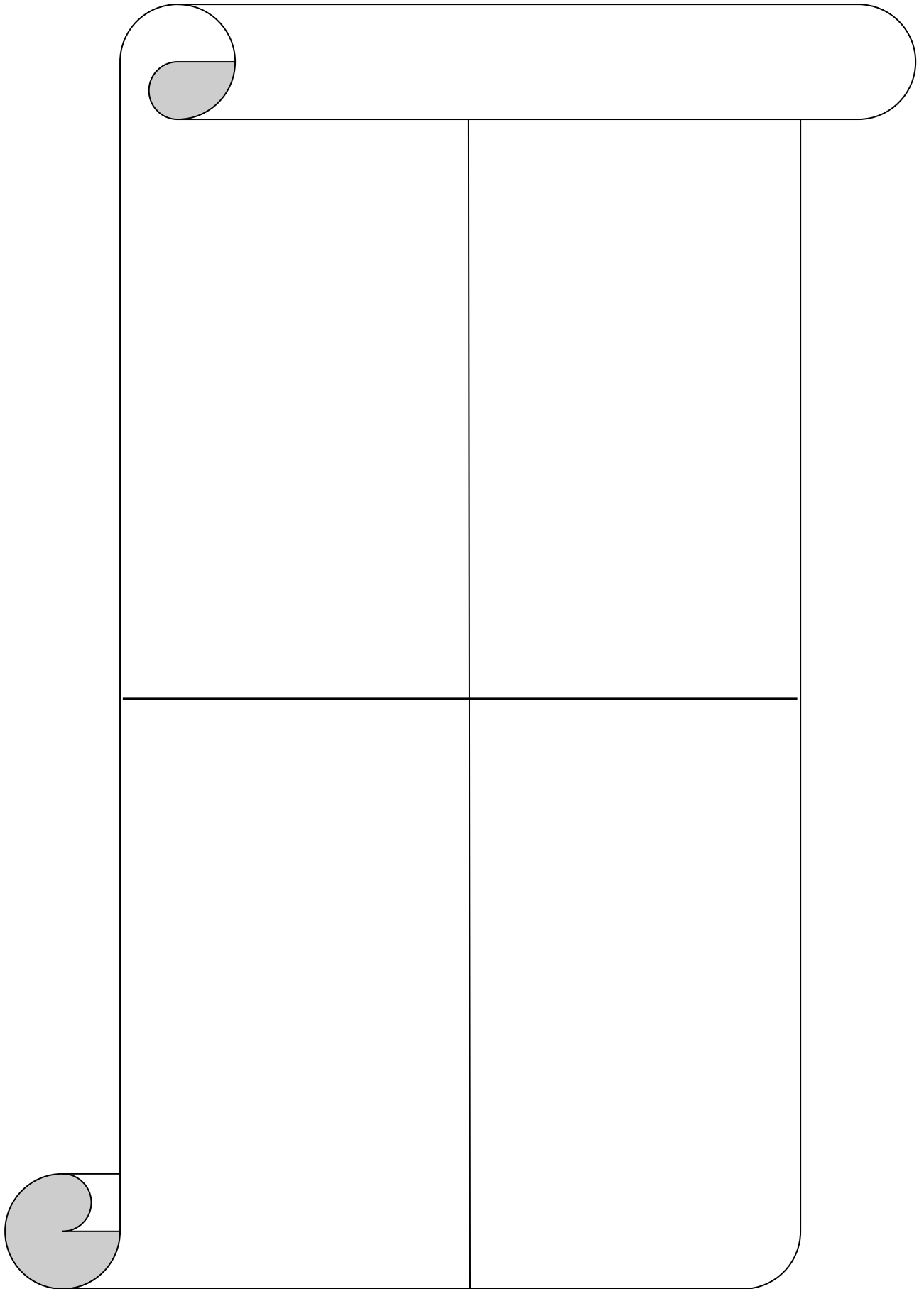
In this phase, encourage the participants to apply their insights to new contexts. Use alternative scenarios to speculate on how people's behaviors would change.

Begin this phase with a change scenario and ask the participants to speculate on how it would have affected the process and the outcomes of the activity. Then invite the participants to offer their own scenarios and discuss them.

#### **Phase 6: What Next?**

In this phase, ask the participants to undertake action planning. Ask them to apply their insights from the experiential activity to the real world.

Begin this phase by asking the participants to suggest strategies for use in future rounds of the activity. Then ask the participants how they will change their real-world behavior as a result of the insights gained from the activity.



## **Reflections On Rebounding**

1. Since I came home, the biggest surprises have been...
2. Some positive things I have experienced about being home...
3. Some negative things I have experienced about being home...
4. The hardest things about being home have been...



5. My relationship with my family has been...

6. My relationships with friends have been...

7. Some other things I have been dealing with since I came home are...

## Reverse culture shock game show for rebound weekend

1. An integrated system of learned behavior patterns characteristic of any given society.—What is culture?
2. The foundation of culture.—What is communication?
3. The lens through which culture is transmitted and created.—What is language?
4. In Mexico it was translated as the rebel novice nun. What is the sound of music?
5. In the Czech Republic it was translated as Santa is a pervert. What is Bad Santa?
6. In Venezuela it was translated as Vaselina. What is Grease?
7. What figures can be seen in the following drawing. What is an old lady and a young lady?
8. The universal tendency for any culture to see its own values and practices as natural and correct. What is ethnocentrism?
9. The acquired ability to see many values, beliefs and behaviors as cultural rather than universal. What is ethnorelativism?
10. Denial, defense and minimization. What are ethnocentric stages?
11. Acceptance, adaptation, integration. What are ethnorelative stages?
12. To profound sense of disorientation and discomfort that comes with extended travel or living in a foreign culture markedly different from one's own. What is culture shock?
13. Initial excitement, irritability and negativeness, gradual adaptation and biculturalism. What are the stages of culture shock?
14. Have Rotex arrange swimming noodles in a manner consistent with the picture graph. What is the culture shock cycle?
15. Have Rotex arrange noodles to represent normal distribution picture. What is the normal distribution of any cultural trait?
16. Have Rotex arrange noodles in a manner consistent with graph comparing 2 cultures. What is comparing 2 cultures on any given trait?
17. Have Rotex arrange noodles for comparing 2 cultures pre-exchange. What is comparing 2 cultures pre-exchange?

18. Have Rotex arrange noodles to represent comparing 2 cultures after adaptation. What is comparing 2 cultures after adaptation by an exchange student.

19. Have Rotex arrange noodle to represent student after returning to their home culture. What is the experience of an exchange student after they return to their home culture?

20. The often unexpected and difficult period of disorientation and readjustment experienced after returning to one's own culture after an extended period of living abroad. What is reverse culture shock or reentry shock?

21. Initial euphoria, irritability and negativism, gradual adaptation, true bi-culturalism. What is reverse culture shock?

22. Most people anticipate some degree of this but very few expect this. What is culture shock and reverse culture shock?

23. These are not just unpleasant side effects of international living but necessary ingredients to bring about quality exchanges. What are culture shock and reverse culture shock?

ROTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE REBOUND INTERVIEW

Student name:                      Gender:    Sponsor District:                      Host District:  
Host Country:                      Date and year completed:                      Age:

Congratulations!! You have successfully completed one of the most amazing experiences you will ever encounter in your lifetime. You are a credit to yourself, your family and Rotarians everywhere. It is important that we learn as much about your experience and how you successfully completed it as possible in order to ensure that every student is equally successful. Please complete as thoroughly and honestly the following questions in order to assist us in this endeavor. Thank you ahead of time for all of your help.

Score as follows: 5=strongly agree 4=agree 3=neither agree or disagree 2=disagree 1=strongly disagree

- | <b>Support from your club</b>  | <b>5</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>1</b> |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| a. I felt welcomed in my host club.                                      | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |
| b. I was included in club activities.                                    | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |
| c. I had regular contacts with Rotarians.                                | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |
| d. The expectations of my club were realistic and attainable.            | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |
| e. There was sufficient support by my District and YEO to help me adapt. | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |
| f. I had regular contact with my counselor                               | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |
| g. My counselor was understanding and helpful.                           | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |
| h. I received my monthly allowance regularly and on time.                | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |

- | <b>Support from your host family</b>                    | <b>5</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>1</b> |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| a. I felt accepted as part of the host family.          | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |
| b. The expectations of the host parents were realistic. | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |
| c. I had a good relationship with my host siblings.     | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |
| d. I felt overburdened by home duties.                  | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |

- | <b>Support at school</b>                       | <b>5</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>1</b> |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| a. I did my best to get good grades in school. | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |
| b. I participated in extra school activities.  | 5        | 4        | 3        | 2        | 1        |

- c. I accumulated unexcused absences. 5 4 3 2 1
- d. I felt welcomed in my school by my teachers. 5 4 3 2 1
- e. It was easy to make friends in school. 5 4 3 2 1

**Support from home**

**5 4 3 2 1**

- a. There was minimal contact between me and my parents and friends during the year. 5 4 3 2 1
- b. I spent little time on Facebook or other social media. 5 4 3 2 1
- c. I had a romantic involvement with someone back home. 5 4 3 2 1
- d. I greatly missed my family and friends. 5 4 3 2 1

1. What factors enabled you to successfully complete your placement? Check up to the top 5 in rank order (1 = most important, 5= least important)

- \_\_\_ mastering the language
- \_\_\_ successful at making friends in the host culture, besides other inbounds
- \_\_\_ took academics seriously
- \_\_\_ having realistic expectations about what the exchange would be like
- \_\_\_ good relationship with host parents
- \_\_\_ meaningful contact with club counselor
- \_\_\_ meaningful contact/support from host club
- \_\_\_ dealt successfully with homesickness
- \_\_\_ support from biological family or friends back home
- \_\_\_ successful coping with being away from home over the holidays
- \_\_\_ extracurricular involvement/involvement in community
- \_\_\_ good visit by parents
- \_\_\_ positive contact with other RYE students
- \_\_\_ school engagement/participation

\_\_\_ other

2. Was (Were) there a time(s) when you seriously considered returning early? (if no skip to item 8)

\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no

3. If so when during the exchange year did that (they) occur?

\_\_\_ immediately \_\_\_ within the first 2 months \_\_\_ during the holidays \_\_\_ after a stressful event (Specify any time\_\_\_\_\_)

4. With whom did the precipitating event(s) originate? Check all that apply

\_\_\_ host family \_\_\_ Rotary club \_\_\_ counselor \_\_\_ people back home \_\_\_ school \_\_\_ others

5. Who helped you to deal with the problem? Check all that apply

\_\_\_ host family \_\_\_ Rotary club \_\_\_ counselor \_\_\_ other inbounds \_\_\_ family and friends back home \_\_\_ others

6. How effective were they in helping you?

\_\_\_ not at all \_\_\_ somewhat \_\_\_ greatly

7. What would have been the most effective intervention? Check all that apply

\_\_\_ get a new host family \_\_\_ talk with my counselor \_\_\_ talk with other inbounds \_\_\_ talk with family and friends back home \_\_\_ other

8. Would you participate in RYE again if it were possible?

\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ no

9. As a result of your exchange year what changes have you noticed in yourself? Check all that apply.

\_\_\_ I have increased my perseverance and self-discipline.

\_\_\_ I am more confident, assertive and positive when meeting new people and encountering new situations.

\_\_\_ I have a greater capacity to accept differences in others.

\_\_\_ I have a clearer notion of what I will do with my life.

\_\_\_ I am more flexible and able to adjust to changes in others.

\_\_\_ I am more deeply committed to an idea, cause, or goal.

\_\_\_ I am more able to express deep emotions freely.

\_\_\_ I have a greater ability to empathize with others, that is, to put myself in their place when making judgments.

\_\_\_ I have a greater willingness to take on roles and tasks to which I am unaccustomed.

- I can accept failures and shortcomings in myself more easily.
- I understand more fully my own strengths and weaknesses.
- I feel greater respect and appreciation for my natural family.
- I have a greater capacity to profit from my mistakes.
- I am more determined to fully develop my skills and talents.
- I am more capable of solving life's day-to-day problems.
- I think more critically; I am more discriminating and skeptical.
- I am more confident about the decisions I make.
- I have a deeper understanding of the problems and issues that confront all human beings on this planet.

10. What should we do in training outbound students that might better prepare them for issues that could lead to an early return or produce a more successful exchange?

nothing, fine as is     interaction with other inbounds     teach creative problem solving and resilience     have realistic expectations     communicate with those who can help     other (explain)

# How Have I Changed From My Experience?

## An Awareness Exercise for Returned Exchange Students

Directions:

Listed below are statements describing many of the changes that have been experienced by returning exchange students during the past three decades. Some of these may be changes that you, too, have felt. If you haven't thought very carefully about how you have changed, this list may be especially helpful in making you more fully aware of what has happened to you. Read through the list and place a check mark by each change that you believe has occurred in you.

1.  I have increased my perseverance and self-discipline.
2.  I am more willing to strive and sacrifice in order to do well in my studies at school or in independent learning projects.
3.  I am more confident and positive when meeting new people.
4.  I am more confident and assertive when facing new situations.
5.  I have a greater capacity to accept differences in others.
6.  I am more able to share my thoughts and feelings with others, and to be open when others wish to share theirs with me.
7.  I have more curiosity about and respect for new ideas.
8.  I have a clearer notion of what I will do with my life.
9.  I am more flexible and able to adjust to changes in others.
10.  I am more tolerant of ambiguous situations, that is, of situations that are confusing and open to differing interpretations.
11.  I have more ability to see myself objectively, that is, to see my own day-to-day problems in a broader, more realistic context.
12.  I am more deeply committed to an idea, cause, or goal.
13.  I have a greater sense of responsibility for other people.
14.  I have improved my ability to speak a foreign language.
15.  I am more able to express deep emotions freely.
16.  I am more knowledgeable about another culture and lifestyle.
17.  I am more able to ask for and receive help from others.
18.  I have a greater ability to empathize with others, that is, to put myself in their place when making judgments.
19.  I have greater willingness to take on roles and tasks to which I am unaccustomed.
20.  I can accept failures and shortcomings in myself more easily.
21.  I have increased my capacity to experiment and take risks.
22.  I understand more fully my own strengths and weaknesses.



- 23. \_\_\_ I am more able to accept as valid other values and lifestyles.
- 24. \_\_\_ I have a deeper understanding of (if not necessarily commitment to) the values and lifestyle of my native community.
- 25. \_\_\_ I am more aware of the opportunities in life that are open to me.
- 26. \_\_\_ I feel greater respect and appreciation for my natural family.
- 27. \_\_\_ I am more independent in my relations with family and friends.
- 28. \_\_\_ I feel that I need fewer friends, but have deeper (more intimate and more close two or three trusting friendships).
- 29. \_\_\_ I am more aware of the way I use and structure time.
- 30. \_\_\_ I have a greater capacity to profit from my mistakes.
- 31. \_\_\_ I am more interested in and capable of making long-range plans.
- 32. \_\_\_ I am more determined to fully develop my skills and talents.
- 33. \_\_\_ I feel a greater need to have diverse experiences and friends.
- 34. \_\_\_ I am more balanced in my judgments; that is, less likely to judge things as "good" or "bad," "right" or "wrong".
- 38. \_\_\_ I am more likely to do things spontaneously, that is, to do things without undue concern about possible consequences.
- 36. \_\_\_ I am more capable of solving life's day-to-day problems.
- 37. \_\_\_ I think more critically; I am more discriminating and skeptical.
- 38. \_\_\_ I have improved observation skills.
- 39. \_\_\_ I need more time to be alone.
- 40. \_\_\_ I am more confident about the decisions I make.
- 41. \_\_\_ I feel more surely that common bonds unite all human beings.
- 42. \_\_\_ I have a deeper understanding of the problems and issues that confront all human beings on this planet.
- 43. \_\_\_ I have greater awareness of political, economic, and social events occurring around the world.
- 44. \_\_\_ I am more comfortable being alone, enjoying my own company.

Other changes I am aware of:

---

---

---

---

---

---

Go back now and place an extra check mark by the three or four changes that seem the strongest - or most significant. For each of these most important changes, write a few sentences or more elaborating on topics such as:

1. How did this change come about?
2. How has this affected my life today?
3. How might this affect my life in the future?

The results may give you a fairly clear statement about some of the most important things that happened to you. Adjusting to coming home takes time. You might want to do this exercise more than once in the first year after you return. Some people find their answers change with time. Others find that repeating the exercise confirms changes they are already aware of. Either way, this can become a document you can draw on many times in the future.

(This exercise is adapted and modified from one developed by Neal Grove of the American Field Service)

## Letter to the Editor Template

### Youth Exchange Student (US)

Below is a sample letter that interested students can use as a guideline. They can personalize it, add their own reflections, and send it to the editor of their local newspaper. The editorial page is generally one of the most well-read sections of the newspaper, and their letter is likely to reach many people.

Dear Editor,

In times of conflict world peace and understanding are more important than ever. During the past year, it is clear that broadening our international understanding is critical. Efforts to encourage the study of foreign cultures provide opportunities for all students to broaden their knowledge of the world.

"International education not only promotes mutual understanding and cooperation among nations, it can also strengthen national security, foreign policy, and economic competitiveness. Indeed, our quality of education and life will be enhanced by learning foreign languages and by facilitating international exchanges for students and teachers." Former U.S. Secretary of Education, Rod Paige.

As a Rotary International Youth Exchange student, I have immersed myself in a new culture to further the ongoing mission to strengthen world understanding. The program sends 15- to 19-year-olds abroad to study and live with a host family as a way to foster intercultural exchange. The Youth Exchange program has given me the chance to enrich myself both academically and culturally and the chance to promote international goodwill throughout the global community.

Thanks to the Rotary Club of [City, State], I am studying/studied in [City, Country] for [amount of time].

[Add several sentences of personal reflections]

As the world fights against hatred and intolerance, I am reminded of what so many of us learn as students abroad - cultural differences make us unique, but our differences are not what ultimately

matter. We can all work together to foster cross-cultural respect, peace and understanding worldwide.

I'm thankful to Rotary International for giving me the experience of a lifetime.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

Youth Exchange Student

Rotary International

## Goals for my rebound year

1. In my rebound year I would like to accomplish the following:

2. I expect that the major impediments to my achieving these goals will be:

3. Resources available to help me overcome these roadblocks include:

4. I'll know that I have been successful in meeting these goals if:

## WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

Each year, thousands of young men and women participate in Rotary's educational and New Generations programs which enable them to develop new skills, serve their communities and foster international understanding. But the experience doesn't have to end when the program is over. As alumni, they are part of an extended network of people who share a common bond. They'll always belong to the family of Rotary.

Rotary programs have a way of forging bonds between alumni and Rotarians that can last a lifetime. Tips to help you stay connected include the following:

1. Find a Rotary club in your area.
2. Get involved with the Rotaract or Rotary club.
3. Join an alumni group or create your own.
4. Volunteer with the local Rotary club on the district service projects.
5. Volunteer to serve on the selection committee for the program in which you participated.
6. Connect through social media such as the Rotary Foundation Alumni Facebook, Rotaract Twitter, Interact Facebook, Interact YouTube or Family of Rotary Flickr.
7. Speak about your experience at a Rotary club meeting.
8. Help clubs recruit future participants.
9. Become part of an orientation session for current year outbound participants as a Rotex.
10. Encourage Rotarian host families or Rotary clubs to stay in touch with their former students through birthday or holiday cards.

## Rotaract

Rotaract is a Rotary sponsored service club for young men and women ages 18 to 30. Rotaract clubs are either community or university-based and are sponsored by a local Rotary club. This makes them true partners in service and key members of the family of Rotary. There are more than 8400 clubs in about 170 countries. All Rotaract efforts begin at the local, grassroots level with members addressing their community's physical and social needs while promoting international understanding and peace through a framework of friendship and service. Rotaractors may work together with interact clubs or mentor interactors, participate in Rotary youth leadership awards, become Rotary foundation ambassadorial scholars or group study exchange team members and seek membership in their local Rotary club after their Rotaract membership ends.

## Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA)

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards is Rotary's leadership training program for young people. While the participants can be ages 14 to 30, most clubs and districts choose to focus on a narrower age range such as 14 to 18 or 19 to 30. RYLA emphasizes leadership, citizenship and personal growth and aims to demonstrate Rotary's respect and concern for youth, provide an effective training experience for selected youth and potential leaders, encourage leadership of youth and recognize publicly young people who are rendering service to their communities.

## Ambassadorial scholarships

This program will end in 2013. However, after that the Rotary foundation will offer scholarship opportunities through district and global grants which will allow for greater flexibility in sponsoring the next generation of leaders. The ambassadorial scholarships program promotes international understanding and friendly relations among people of different parts of the world. The scholarship sponsors undergraduate and graduate students as well as qualified professionals pursuing vocational studies. While abroad, scholars serve as goodwill ambassadors to the country where they study and give presentations about their own culture to Rotary clubs and other groups. Back home, scholars share with Rotarians and others the experiences that deepen their understanding of another culture.

## Rotary Centers for International Studies in Peace and Conflict Resolution

Rotary Peace Fellows are leaders promoting national and international cooperation, peace and a successful resolution of conflict throughout their lives, in their careers and through service activities. Fellows can earn either a Masters degree in international relations, public administration, sustainable development, peace studies, conflict resolution or a related field, or a professional development certificate in peace and conflict resolution. Rotary peace centers are located in Bangkok, Thailand, Duke University in the United States, Tokyo, Japan, West Yorkshire, England, Brisbane, Australia and Uppsala, Sweden.

## Reconnections Newsletter

Re-connections is a bimonthly E-newsletter for and about alumni of the Rotary foundation's programs, providing timely updates on alumni activities and accomplishments as well as Rotary news. In reconnections you can read stories about Rotary foundation ambassadorial scholars, Rotary peace Fellows and other alumni working to make a difference in the world.

## Interact

Interact is Rotary international's service club for young people ages 12 to 18. Interact clubs are sponsored by individual Rotary clubs which provide support and guidance but they are self-governing and self-supporting. Club membership varies greatly. Clubs can be single gender or mixed, large or small. They can draw from the student body of a single school or from 2 or more schools in the same community. Each year interact clubs complete at least two community service projects, one of which furthers international understanding and goodwill. Through these efforts, interactors develop a network



of friendships with local and overseas clubs and learn the importance of developing leadership skills and personal integrity, demonstrating helpfulness and respect for others, understanding the value of individual responsibility and hard work and advancing international understanding and goodwill. With more than 10,700 clubs in 109 countries, interact has become a worldwide phenomena with almost 200,000 young people involved.

#### Other opportunities

The possibilities are endless and limited only by one's creativity and drive. They may include such things as the Peace Corps, study abroad programs through universities, missionary trips by various churches, etc.

## REBOUND WEEKEND EVALUATION

1. What did you think and feel about the weekend?
2. Should this be available for all future rebounds?
3. What did you like best?
4. What did you like least?
5. What can we do to make it better?

# Going Home

## Some Thoughts for Exchange Students Returning "Home"

( Note: This article might be most useful to students about one month before they return home)

By Dennis White, Ph.D.

### Initial Culture Shock

Remember what it was like those first few weeks and months coming to your host country? It was new, exciting, often confusing, and always changing. And while your whole year may have been exciting, it wasn't always pleasant. You probably became irritated with, and even hostile to, your host culture when the deeper differences between your culture and their culture became apparent. As you began to develop real language skills, and you better understood fundamentally different cultural values, you began the slow process of adapting. Eventually, maybe only well in to your stay, you began to realize how you could really fit in - adapting fairly well to your adopted culture, while maintaining your own native cultural identity. And now, just when it is getting good, the year is almost over and you will have to go "home".

Most people who live abroad for an extended time go through similar successive stages of culture shock. These stages are generally recognized as being:

1. Initial Excitement or Euphoria
2. Irritability and Hostility
3. Slow and Gradual Adaptation
4. Eventual Adjustment and Biculturalism

If your experience was anything like this, you learned that culture shock is not just adjusting to jet lag and different food. It is an on-going process of developing increased cultural competence, by being "shocked" by differences, adjusting to them, learning new skills and eventually adapting. And when you prepared for going abroad, you had some expectation that you would experience culture shock. It is not possible (or even desirable) to avoid culture shock, but at least anticipating it made it somewhat easier -and kept you from thinking it was all your fault, or all the new culture's fault.

### Reverse Culture Shock

As you return home, you are likely to experience some very similar, but possibly surprising reactions that are part of what is known as reverse culture shock, or re-entry shock. In the first few weeks back, many people feel the effects of jet lag, general exhaustion from lots of changes, fatigue from an overdose of "welcome home" parties and trying to do and see everything and everyone at once. This flurry of activity

can cause a significant degree of disorientation, making it difficult to tell exactly what thoughts and feelings you are having.

Mixed in with all of this are two distinct and often conflicting reactions. One is the same excitement stage as in initial culture shock. It may be very exciting to be back, to see family and friends, to tell about your adventures and to do things you have missed for a year. If this reaction occurs, it fairly quickly wears off, and is replaced by the second stage of culture shock - irritability and hostility. This stage often comes much more quickly than in initial culture shock, and can be much more severe and disturbing. It also may be the first reaction you have to coming home, with no excitement stage at all.

There are several reasons that you may not feel excitement at all, or for very long. Remember, when you went abroad initially:

1. You wanted to go.
2. You expected and looked forward to learning about different things.
3. You were warned to expect culture shock.
4. Though you may have been sad to leave family and friends, you knew it would not be forever – you knew you were coming back.

Now that you are returning at the end of your exchange year:

1. You may not want to come home.
2. You may expect things to be just like they were when you left (or at least that things will be very familiar)
3. You may not have been sufficiently warned about reverse culture shock (or you didn't think it would happen to you).
4. You may be very sad to leave friends and "family" in your host culture because you know there is a possibility that you may never see them again.

If reverse culture shock is so unpleasant, why not try to avoid it? Because it is impossible if your exchange year has been successful. In fact, the extent to which you immersed yourself in your host culture, and truly adapted, is probably the best indicator of how much reverse culture shock you will experience. People who don't have much trouble re-adapting to their native culture probably didn't get very involved in their host culture. They didn't change much, so they don't have to readjust much.

## **The Extent of Change**

If your exchange year has been a success, you have changed in ways that you probably cannot describe, or completely understand yet. You have become a skilled world traveler. You are a skilled bicultural person. You can actually get along quite well, not just be a tourist, in another culture. You have learned to think of things differently by looking at the world from someone else's point of view long enough to really understand it. In a sense, you have become a citizen of the world, so it may be more than a little confusing to think of where "home" is. Some of these things will probably happen to you. You will find yourself thinking or dreaming in your new language. You will try to explain something to someone back home and not be able to give a precise translation of what you are talking about. You will talk to your parents about one of your host parents, calling the host parent "mom" or "dad". You will think your hometown is very small, or that your friends think in "small" ways.

So don't be too surprised if your family and friends seem a bit uncomfortable with you. They probably will be, because you won't be the same person who left them a year ago. Don't underestimate how much you have changed and how strange you may seem to those who knew you before. You may be very proud of your independence, self-confidence and internationalism. But they may see you as self-absorbed, critical of everything and not interested in fitting in.

Remember that those around you may have changed as well, if not in the same ways you have. If you are expecting things to be the same, you will have more of a shock than if you are looking for changes. Your friends have had a year of growing and maturing, and your family situation may have changed (deaths, divorces, moves, job changes). You missed some important events in their lives, just as they missed some important ones in yours. Even those things that haven't really changed may seem quite different, because you see them differently. Though you may love your native country more than ever, you are also much more likely to be critical of it, and question common cultural practices that you took for granted before you left.

## **Ways To Deal With Reverse Culture Shock**

The single best thing you can do is to anticipate and accept that you will experience some degree of reverse culture shock. The worst thing you can do is to deny it, or try to avoid it. People often try to deny it because they think there might be something wrong with them if they admit it. It is, in fact, very normal, and you will have more problems than necessary if you try to deny it. More than anticipating and accepting reverse culture shock, you can actually view it as a positive, if sometimes painful, growth experience. It is, and can be, the completion of the circle of change in an intercultural experience. I like to think of it as the third year of your exchange. The first was the year preparing to go abroad. The second was the actual exchange. The third is the year when you can more completely appreciate the changes you have made, the readjustment to your native culture, and the fact that you will be bicultural for the rest of your life. In subsequent years you will have times when you re-experience reverse culture shock, and when you feel like you just got home again; but it will never be as shocking an experience as that first year back.

You can also help yourself by talking about your feelings as often as you can. You may wear out lots of initially sympathetic ears doing this. You may notice that you will have an almost incessant need to talk about your experiences. Your friends, especially, may get impatient with you, so you may need to learn to be selective with whom you share your experiences. There is often a conflicting urge to keep it all to yourself, because you think people won't understand or don't care, or because you think that talking about it in the past tense confirms that it is over - and you don't want to accept that. (Many students don't completely unpack for months, for the same reason - they don't want to admit that it is over.) Of course, that's the issue - it's over and it isn't. The experience is over, but not the memories and the impact on your life.

Sometimes it's best to find other recently returned students, or even people who have been back for years. You can tell how this feeling lingers when exchange students, Peace Corps Volunteers or missionaries start talking about their experiences, even if many years ago. They get excited, they can't stop talking, and they get a glassy, far-off look on their faces. And don't underestimate your parents as listeners. Sometimes they are the only ones who will politely listen as you tell a story for the hundredth time. But however you do it, talk. It is in this way that you can help others understand you, and more importantly, learn to clarify your thoughts and feelings and better understand yourself.

You can also make things easier for yourself by trying not to make too many big decisions, unless you absolutely have to. Don't be impatient with yourself if you have trouble making decisions. Your goals in life may have changed. Because you have a new perspective, some of the plans you made a year or more ago may not seem as relevant now. Remind yourself, your family and friends that you are going through a period of adjustment; and it may take time for you to sort things out.

Finally, don't be too concerned if the course of your reverse culture shock doesn't seem to follow the pattern described here. Each of your experiences abroad has been unique, and so will be your re-entry. While your year abroad was probably of great value to you, you may not have had the same emotional attachment to people that other students describe. So you may not have as much trouble letting go of those attachments and getting on in life with new and renewed friends. Going on to college or university is also quite different than returning to high school, and some of the issues are different for these two situations.

## **Feeling "At Home"**

Reverse culture shock subsides, though it never disappears. Eventually you will come to terms with yourself and your "new" native culture, incorporating the fact that you are now a member of another culture as well. You can learn to be at peace with true biculturalism. This is the ability to move from cultural practice to cultural practice, with skill, as the situation calls for it. And while you may somewhat sadly come to accept that you can never truly come "home" again, you can learn to feel "at home" in the world at large.

Dr. Dennis White is a clinical psychologist, returned Peace Corps Volunteer and Rotarian in District 6220, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, USA. He has worked in many exchange programs dealing with preparation for exchanges, as well as returning home. He is a program consultant to several district and multi-district youth exchange programs. He may be reached at:

Clinical & Consulting Psychology

207 S. 4th Avenue, Sturgeon Bay, WI., 54235 USA

Tel: 920-746-1346 Fax: 920-746-1347

E-mail: [DKWHITE@itol.com](mailto:DKWHITE@itol.com)

# **So You Think You're Home Again:**

## **Some Thoughts for Exchange Students Returning "Home"**

By Dennis White, Ph.D.

### **Initial Culture Shock**

Remember what it was like those first few weeks and months going abroad? It was new, exciting, often confusing, and always changing. And while your whole year may have been exciting, it wasn't always pleasant. You probably became irritated with, and even hostile to, your host culture when the deeper differences between your culture and their culture became apparent. As you began to develop real language skills, and you better understood fundamentally different cultural values, you began the slow process of adapting. Eventually, maybe only at the end of your stay, you began to realize how you could really fit in - adapting fairly well to your adopted culture, while maintaining your own native cultural identity. You became bicultural. And then, just when it was getting good, the year was over and you had to go "home".

Most people who live abroad for an extended time go through similar successive stages of culture shock. These stages are generally recognized as being:

1. Initial Excitement or Euphoria
2. Irritability and Hostility
3. Slow and Gradual Adaptation
4. Eventual Adjustment to Biculturalism

If your experience was anything like this, you learned that culture shock is not just adjusting to jet lag and different food. It is an on-going process of developing increased cultural competence, by being "shocked" by differences, adjusting to them, learning new skills and eventually adapting. And when you prepared for going abroad, you had some expectation that you would experience culture shock. It is not possible (or even desirable) to avoid culture shock, but at least anticipating it made it somewhat easier -and kept you from thinking it was all your fault, or all the new culture's fault.



## Reverse Culture Shock

As you return home, you are likely to experience some very similar, but possibly surprising reactions that are part of what is known as reverse culture shock, or re-entry shock. In the first few weeks back, many people feel the effects of jet lag, general exhaustion from lots of changes, fatigue from an overdose of "welcome home" parties and trying to do and see everything and everyone at once. This flurry of activity can cause a significant degree of disorientation, making it difficult to tell exactly what thoughts and feelings you are having.

Mixed in with all of this are two distinct and often conflicting reactions. One is the same excitement stage as in initial culture shock. It may be very exciting to be back, to see family and friends, to tell about your adventures and to do things you have missed for a year. If this reaction occurs, it fairly quickly wears off, and is replaced by the second stage of culture shock - irritability and hostility. This stage often comes much more quickly than in initial culture shock, and can be much more severe and disturbing. It also may be the first reaction you have to coming home, with no excitement stage at all.

There are several reasons that you may not feel excitement at all, or for very long. Remember, when you went abroad initially:

1. You wanted to go.
2. You expected and looked forward to learning about different things.
3. You were warned to expect culture shock.
4. Though you may have been sad to leave family and friends, you knew it would not be forever – you knew you were coming back.

Now that you are returning at the end of your exchange year:

1. You may not want to come home.
2. You may expect things to be just like they were when you left (or at least that things will be very familiar)
3. You may not have been sufficiently warned about reverse culture shock (or you didn't think it would happen to you).

4. You may be very sad to leave friends and "family" in your host culture because you know there is a possibility that you may never see them again.

If reverse culture shock is so unpleasant, why not try to avoid it? Because it is impossible if your exchange year was successful. In fact, the extent to which you immersed yourself in your host culture, and truly adapted, is probably the best indicator of how much reverse culture shock you will experience. People who don't have much trouble re-adapting to their native culture probably didn't get very involved in their host culture. They didn't change much, so they don't have to readjust much.

If your exchange year was a success, you have changed in ways that you probably cannot describe, or completely understand yet. You have become a skilled world traveler. You are a skilled bicultural person. You can actually get along quite well, not just be a tourist, in another culture. You have learned to think of things differently by looking at the world from someone else's point of view long enough to really understand it. In a sense, you have become a citizen of the world, so it may be more than a little confusing to think of where "home" is. Some of these things will probably happen to you. You will find yourself thinking or dreaming in your new language. You will try to explain something to someone back home and not be able to give a precise translation of what you are talking about. You will talk to your parents about one of your host parents, calling the host parent "mom" or "dad". You will think your hometown is very small, or that your friends think in "small" ways.

So don't be too surprised if your family and friends seem a bit uncomfortable with you. They probably are, because you aren't the same person who left them a year ago. Don't underestimate how much you have changed and how strange you may seem to those who knew you before. You may be very proud of your independence, self-confidence and internationalism. But they may see you as self-absorbed, critical of everything and not interested in fitting in.

Remember that those around you may have changed as well, if not in the same ways you have. If you are expecting things to be the same, you will have more of a shock than if you are looking for changes. Your friends have had a year of growing and maturing, and your family situation may have changed (deaths, divorces, moves, job changes). You missed some important events in their lives, just as they missed some important ones in

yours. Even those things that haven't really changed may seem quite different, because you see them differently. Though you may love your native country more than ever, you are also much more likely to be critical of it, and question common cultural practices that you took for granted before you left.

### **Ways To Deal With Reverse Culture Shock**

The single best thing you can do is to anticipate and accept that you will experience some degree of reverse culture shock. The worst thing you can do is to deny it, or try to avoid it. People often try to deny it because they think there might be something wrong with them if they admit it. It is, in fact, very normal, and you will have more problems than necessary if you try to deny it. More than anticipating and accepting reverse culture shock, you can actually view it as a positive, if sometimes painful, growth experience. It is, and can be, the completion of the circle of change in an intercultural experience. I like to think of it as the third year of your exchange. The first was the year preparing to go abroad. The second was the actual exchange. The third is the year when you can more completely appreciate the changes you have made, the readjustment to your native culture, and the fact that you will be bicultural for the rest of your life. In subsequent years you will have times when you re-experience reverse culture shock, and when you feel like you just got home again; but it will never be as shocking an experience as that first year back.

You can also help yourself by talking about your feelings as often as you can. You may wear out lots of initially sympathetic ears doing this. You may notice that you seem to have an almost incessant need to talk about your experiences. Your friends, especially, may get impatient with you, so you may need to learn to be selective with whom you share your experiences. There is often a conflicting urge to keep it all to yourself, because you think people won't understand or don't care, or because you think that talking about it in the past tense confirms that it is over - and you don't want to accept that. (Many students don't completely unpack for months, for the same reason - they don't want to admit that it is over.) Of course, that's the issue - it's over and it isn't. The experience is over, but not the memories and the impact on your life.

Sometimes it's best to find other recently returned students, or even people who have been back for years. You can tell how this feeling lingers when exchange students, Peace Corps Volunteers or missionaries start talking about their experiences, even if many years ago. They get excited, they can't stop talking, and they get a glassy, far-off look on

their faces. And don't underestimate your parents as listeners. Sometimes they are the only ones who will politely listen as you tell a story for the hundredth time. But however you do it, talk. It is in this way that you can help others understand you, and more importantly, learn to clarify your thoughts and feelings and better understand yourself.

You can also make things easier for yourself by trying not to make too many big decisions, unless you absolutely have to. Don't be impatient with yourself if you have trouble making decisions. Your goals in life may have changed. Because you have a new perspective, some of the plans you made a year or more ago may not seem as relevant now. Remind yourself, your family and friends that you are going through a period of adjustment; and it may take time for you to sort things out.

Finally, don't be too concerned if the course of your reverse culture shock doesn't seem to follow the pattern described here. Each of your experiences abroad was unique, and so will be your re-entry. While your year abroad was probably of great value to you, you may not have had the same emotional attachment to people that other students describe. So you may not have as much trouble letting go of those attachments and getting on in life with new and renewed friends. Going on to college or university is also quite different than returning to high school, and some of the issues are different for these two situations.

### **Feeling "At Home"**

Reverse culture shock subsides, though it never disappears. Eventually you will come to terms with yourself and your "new" native culture, incorporating the fact that you are now a member of another culture as well. You can learn to be at peace with true biculturalism. This is the ability to move from cultural practice to cultural practice, with skill, as the situation calls for it. And while you may somewhat sadly come to accept that you can never truly come "home" again, you can learn to feel "at home" in the world at large.

Dr. Dennis White is a clinical psychologist, returned Peace Corps Volunteer and Rotarian in District 6220, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, USA. He has worked in many exchange programs dealing with preparation for exchanges, as well as returning home. He is a program consultant to many district and multi-district youth exchange programs. He has written many other articles on the exchange experience. He is frequently contacted to discuss re-entry problems by students, parents and Rotarians.

He may be reached at:

Clinical & Consulting Psychology

207 S. 4th Avenue, Sturgeon Bay, WI. 54235 USA

Tel: 920-746-1346 Fax: 920-746-1347

E-mail: [DKWHITE@itol.com](mailto:DKWHITE@itol.com)

## Rebound Training

### An Outline of Key Points in Training Rebound Students

by Dennis White, Ph.D.

**Basic Assumption:** To understand the process of reverse culture shock and related re-entry issues, one must first more fully understand the process of culture shock itself. Reverse culture shock is almost exactly the same as culture shock, and is to be expected. Reverse culture shock often becomes more of a problem because people do not expect it, they do not understand it, and they try to avoid it. The best preparation for reverse culture shock is to explain it, so that people anticipate it and see it as a positive sign that their intercultural experience was successful.

#### Learning Points

1. People who have extended intercultural living experiences go through a continual process of culture shock.
2. This cultural shock is not a one time event, but rather a process of increasingly subtle immersion into a culture.
3. The most typical progression involves repeated cycling through four stages:
  - a. Euphoria and enthusiasm
  - b. Disillusionment and negativism (Sometimes masked by denial of problems)
  - c. Gradual adaptation.
  - d. Bicultural competence.
4. Culture Shock is a necessary component of successfully developing intercultural sensitivity and bicultural competence. It cannot and should not be avoided.
5. Both Culture Shock and Reverse Culture Shock can be viewed as parts of a larger process of moving from Ethnocentrism to Ethnorelativism.
6. We can and do prepare for culture shock- Most people expect some degree of culture shock in preparing for an extended intercultural stay and are therefore not too surprised when it happens.
7. Reverse Culture Shock, upon Re-Entry into one's own native culture, after an extended intercultural experience, follows almost exactly the same process.

8. Reverse Culture Shock is often a more difficult experience because:

- a. People do not expect it (the people experiencing it as well as the people around them).
- b. People do not realize how much they have changed.
- c. People think there is something wrong with them for experiencing culture shock in their own native culture.
- d. Even if people anticipate reverse culture shock, they tend to underestimate its impact.
- e. Reverse culture shock can actually take longer to deal with than culture shock.

9. Some of the negative aspects of reverse culture shock will vary according to whether exchange students are returning to high school, going on to higher education or entering the world of work. Some aspects of reverse culture shock are more characteristic of some of these situations than others.

10. Educational preparation is the key to minimizing the negative aspects of reverse culture shock. It is as important to educate parents as it is exchange students.

YEOs need to understand this process as well.

Other articles by Dr. White related to Culture Shock and Reverse Culture Shock

- "One World ... Or Many?" (an extended article on the Youth Exchange Experience)
- "So You Think You're Home Now". (A brief article for returning exchange students)
- "So You Think They're Home Now". (A brief article for parents of returning exchange students)
- "Coming Home". (Another article for students on Reverse Culture Shock)

Dr. Dennis White may be contacted at:

Clinical & Consulting Psychology

207 S. 4th Avenue, Sturgeon Bay, WI. 54235

Tel: 920-746-1346 Fax: 920-746-1347

[DKWHITE@itol.com](mailto:DKWHITE@itol.com)

Additional resources on Youth Exchange may be found at [www.yeoresources.org](http://www.yeoresources.org)