The Cycle of Adjustment
Abbreviated cycle from “Culture Matters,” a Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Workbook

Initial Enthusiasm (The Honeymoon)

**Time Frame:** First week or two in host country

**Characteristics:**
- Exposure to country and culture is limited.
- Excitement and enthusiasm abound.
- Everything is exotic and quaint.
- Attitude toward host country is generally positive.
- Little is expected of you.

Initial Country & Culture Shock

**Time Frame:** First few weeks

**Characteristics:**
- Wider exposure to country and culture means more realistic and more mixed reactions.
- Enthusiasm is tempered with frustration.
- Feelings of vulnerability and dependence are common.
- Homesickness is frequent.
- Nothing is routine.
- Limited language ability undermines confidence.

Initial Adjustment

**Time Frame:** Toward the end of internship

**Characteristics:**
- Routines are reestablished.
- Some aspects of the country & culture are now seen as normal.
- Adjustment to the physical aspects of the host country is better.
- You are somewhat more self-reliant.
- You are more positive about your ability to function in country.