

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.