

The Ten Most Common Re-entry Problems

1. Boredom. The stimulations of the host country are gone.
2. No listeners. Those who stayed at home are busy with completely different things
3. No one understands – no matter how well they want to understand. Because they lack the same or similar experiences.
4. "Wrong homesickness". Feelings of loss and loneliness.
5. Relationships at home have changed. Both the returnees and those who stayed at home have changed.
6. Those who stayed at home do not appreciate the changes in the returnees.
7. Those who stayed at home do not understand or misunderstand. They interpret statements and behaviors of the returnees as know-it-all or bragging rights.
8. Feelings of alienation. High expectations and ultimately disappointments are juxtaposed with each other.
9. The inability to apply the new knowledge and skills. The possibilities are missing or not seen.
10. Secession and loss of experience abroad. The pressure to adapt allows everything experienced to fade into the background.

Ten general tips that make re-adaptation easier:

1. Prepare for the readaptation process. The better the return is anticipated, the easier the transition becomes.
2. Take your time. Readjustment needs to be thought through.
3. Be prepared for the familiar to be different. Both the returnees and those who stayed at home have changed.
4. You will have a lot of catching up to do. During the absence, a lot has also happened at home.
5. Hold back with rash judgments. Returning requires just as much openness and tolerance as entering the host country.
6. React thoughtfully and calmly. Quick answers and impulsive reactions offend others.
7. Develop sensitivity. Interested and attentive listening is a key to (re-)building relationships.

8. Beware of comparison. Fierce criticism of the home culture and exuberant praise for the host country seem threatening.
9. Stay flexible. Seek a balance between previous patterns of behavior and new joys and interests.
10. Find supporting structures and contacts. There are numerous people who have gone through the same experiences and have the same interests (Stadler, 1994, p. 181).

Bibliography

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