

Re-Entry Exercises

We hope that you have returned from one of the most enriching experience of your life. We recognize that returning home maybe just as challenging as going abroad was. Often you have an idealized view of home and expect the same familiarity you left when you come back home. You will experience a range of feelings as you adjust to life back in the U.S. The following sheet has been developed to help you begin to “unpack” your experience as you transition into daily life.

REFLECTIONS

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| ⇒ What did you love most about your experience abroad? Why? | ⇒ Did your abroad experience fall short of, meet, or exceed your expectations? Explain. |
| ⇒ What did you learn about yourself while abroad? | ⇒ What skills, knowledge, and attitudes did you gain while abroad? |
| ⇒ What challenges did you overcome while abroad? | ⇒ How will you make use of these new changes now that you are back home? |
| ⇒ What surprised you? | ⇒ What are new goals you plan to set for yourself because you went abroad? |
| ⇒ How was your life different while abroad? | ⇒ What skill(s) do you do better because you studied abroad? |
| ⇒ How did your outlook on the world change while you were abroad? | ⇒ What can you get involved in on campus to satisfy your new goals? |
| ⇒ How did this experience change your values, perspectives, and goals? | |
| ⇒ Did you set goals before you left? Did you achieve them? Why or Why not? | |
| ⇒ How did you immerse yourself in the host culture? | |

SELF-EVALUATION

- ⇒ Five things that have bothered me most about being home are ...
- ⇒ Five things that I have enjoyed most about being home have been ...
- ⇒ Five international things (people, places, situations, activities, etc.) I miss the least since I have returned home are ...
- ⇒ Five things (people, places, situations, activities, etc.) I miss most from abroad since I have returned home are...
- ⇒ I know that I have changed as a result of my experience because...
- ⇒ My friends seem to understand _____ about me, but they don't understand...
- ⇒ My re-entry experience would be better if....
- ⇒ Now that I am home, I worry most about...
- ⇒ I wish I could explain to my family and friends that...
- ⇒ The one thing I know I have learned about myself is...

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Begin thinking about the intangible and intercultural skills you may have gained while abroad. Think of experiences during your time abroad where you used a skill or quality below, or how your time abroad helped you gain or improve a certain skill/quality and why. Write down tangible and specific examples.

SKILLS

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|---|--|
| ⇒ Time management skills | ⇒ Lead others in informal or formal groups |
| ⇒ Communication skills | ⇒ Conduct research despite language and cultural differences |
| ⇒ Creative problem-solving | ⇒ Adapt to new environments |
| ⇒ Achieve goals despite obstacles | ⇒ Understand an organization's culture |
| ⇒ Accept responsibility | ⇒ Learn through observing |
| ⇒ Learn quickly | ⇒ Active listening |
| ⇒ Take initiative and risks | ⇒ Perform in an environment with adverse conditions |
| ⇒ Function with a high level of ambiguity | |
| ⇒ Handle difficult situations | |
| ⇒ Handle stress | |

QUALITIES

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| ⇒ Self-reliant | ⇒ Open-mindedness |
| ⇒ Driven/persistent | ⇒ Assertiveness |
| ⇒ Appreciation of diversity | ⇒ Inquisitiveness |
| ⇒ Flexibility & Adaptability | ⇒ Self-confidence |
| ⇒ Tolerance | ⇒ Open to relocation |

Readings

Transitions Abroad

Coming Home: Relationships, Roots, and Unpacking by Citron, Jim and Vija Mendelson.

Culture from the Inside Out Travel and Meet Yourself by Cornes, Alan.

Back in the USA: Reflecting on Your Study Abroad Experience and Putting it to Work by Dawn Kepets
