

Taking Care of Yourself

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I. 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.

II. INITIAL COUNTRY & CULTURE SHOCK

- **Time frame:**

First few weeks; first half of training.

- **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.
- Close bonds are formed with other trainees.

III. INITIAL ADJUSTMENT

- **Time frame:**
- Second half of training.
- **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.
- Trainees are somewhat more self-reliant.
- Trainees are more positive about their ability to function in country.
- Adjustment is to the culture of pre-service training as much as it is to host country culture.

IV. FURTHER CULTURE SHOCK*

- **Time frame:**
- First few months after training; settling-in period.

- **Characteristics:**
- You experience post-training withdrawal symptoms.
- You're adjusting to being on your own in country.
- It's your first experience taking care of yourself in country.
- You're having your first encounters with the work-related aspects of culture, with initial surprises and frustrations.
- You miss daily contact with Americans and HCNs who understand you and your version of the local language.
- You're surprised at still having culture shock to go through.

V. FURTHER ADJUSTMENT*

- **Time frame:**
- Post settling-in.
- **Characteristics:**
- You're getting used to being on your own.
- You're better able to take care of yourself.
- You're making friends in the community.
- You speak the language better.
- You're more effective at work because you understand the culture better.

Primary Trauma

Secondary trauma

“The expectation that we can be immersed in suffering and loss daily and not be touched by it is as unrealistic as expecting to be able to walk through water without getting wet.”

-Rachel Remen

Psychological Trauma

- **An emotional state of extreme discomfort and stress**
- **Result of the experience of an extraordinary event or events that are so powerful, harmful, threatening or severe**
- **The individual's sense of vulnerability and safety are shattered**
- **Requires the use of extraordinary coping responses and behaviors**

Common Trauma Responses

- During Trauma

- Hyper-arousal

- Anxiety

- Dissociation

- Post Trauma

- Hyper-arousal

- Intrusive re-experiencing

- Avoidance or numbing

The Return

What is stress?

The Physical Signs

- Tiredness, fatigue, lethargy
- Heart palpitations, shallow breathing
- Muscle tension and aches
- Shakiness, tremors
- Heartburn, indigestion,
- Dry mouth and throat
- Nail-biting
- Lowered libido
- Overeating, loss of appetite
- Sleep problems

What is stress?

The psychological signs

- Irritability, impatience, anger, hostility
- Worry, anxiety, panic
- Moodiness, sadness, upset
- Intrusive, racing thoughts
- Memory lapses, poor concentration
- Absences from work
- Overwhelmed
- Loss of sense of humor

Emotional Distress MODEL

- The ABCs:
- A) **A**ctivating Event
- B) **B**eliefs, thoughts, perceptions about A
- C) emotional **C**onsequence that results from holding **b**eliefs about **a**ctivating event
- Having to wait
- My thoughts about waiting
- Potential stress

Change your a,b,c

- **A**ctivating Event :
 - Change your environment:
 - Traffic
 - Deadlines
- **B**elief:
 - Change the way you view your world
- **C**onsequences:
 - Other secrets to become calm

Physical Tension – The BODY

- Body Scan
- Yawn
- Progressive Relaxation
- Breathing
 - Your breath is fine – it's your breathing that is bad
- Power of suggestion
- Massage
- Bath or shower, etc
- Yoga
- Sex

Emotional Tension - The MIND

- Racing thoughts
- Difficult to control your thoughts
- Worried, irritable, or upset
- Preoccupied
- Difficult to fall asleep
- Distraction
 - TV
 - Book
 - Movie
 - Talking
 - Exercise
 - Hobby
 - Music
 - Nature

Stop Your Thoughts

- Notice your thoughts
- Find a stop-sign
- Yell STOP
- Do it again
- Find a replacement thought
- Snap out of it (elastic band)
- Music
- Aroma

How to meditate

- Find a quiet place where you won't be disturbed
- Find a comfortable sitting position
- Breathing
 - Counting
 - Letting it go
 - Mantra (free the man)
- Mini meditation

Eat, Exercise, Sleep

- Complex carbs, protein,
- Substitute relaxation for food
- Graze

Eat, Exercise, Sleep

- Think activity
- Walk, walk, walk
- Stairs, stairs, stairs
- Join a team
- Get a workout buddy
- Hobby:
 - Gardening, skiing, racketball,

Eat, Exercise, Sleep

- Go to bed earlier:
 - 20 minutes
- Less TV
- Sound-proof
- Stimulants
- Routine, Bed = Sleep

Body, Mind, Soul, Spirit

- The purpose of faith
 - Meaning and purpose
 - Of ultimate concern
 - Hope and acceptance
 - Unites you with others
 - Calming

SOUL

- Who am I really?
- Why am I doing this?
- Why am I really here?