

Tips for Returning Home

This information has been adapted from the Office of International Studies at the University of Notre Dame. See <http://www.nd.edu/~intlstud/services/returnees/tips.htm>

Helpful Tips for Reentry - Reentry, or reverse culture shock, is a very common reaction to returning home from studying abroad. It can range from feeling that no one understands how you've changed, to feeling panicked that you will lose part of your identity if you don't have an outlet to pursue new interests that were sparked abroad. As you go through this transition period, you may find the following tips helpful:

- Your reactions surrounding reentry may include one or more of the following symptoms: restlessness, boredom, depression, uncertainty, confusion, isolation, wanting to be alone, missing the people, places, attitudes or lifestyle of your host country, changes in goals and priorities, negativity or intolerance towards the U.S., including American behavior, attitudes, customs and common social practice.
- This process is much like the culture shock you may have experienced when you first went abroad. Similar to having to adjust when you go to another country, you must make some adjustments coming home, too. The coping skills and strategies that were successful in helping you adjust to your host culture will be just as helpful coming home: get involved, identify a support group of other study abroad students, suspend judgment until you understand a situation, keep a journal, and always keep a sense of humor.
- You may recognize that many of your values and beliefs have changed. Learn to incorporate new and meaningful values and beliefs in your life.
- Understand that your friendships and relationships might change as a function of your new experiences. Explore new places and people with whom you can share your international experiences.
- Accept the reality that reentry is a time of transition! Learn ways to take care of yourself and ease into your surroundings.

Read about Reentry & Reverse Culture Shock The more you know, the better prepared you will be to deal with it!

- [SIT Reentry Handbook](http://www.worldlearning.org/OurWorld_documents/SITStudyAbroadReentryToolkit.pdf) (World Learning - http://www.worldlearning.org/OurWorld_documents/SITStudyAbroadReentryToolkit.pdf)
- [The Welcome Back Handbook](http://www.fsdinternational.org/alumni/reentry) (Foundation for Sustainable Development - <http://www.fsdinternational.org/alumni/reentry>)
- [Coming Home: Life After Study Abroad](http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/ump/sap/reentry/cominghome.htm) (Middlebury College - <http://www.middlebury.edu/academics/ump/sap/reentry/cominghome.htm>)
- [Reentry or Coming "Home" Again](http://studyabroad.colorado.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=Abroad.ViewLink&Parent_ID=0) (University of Colorado at Boulder - http://studyabroad.colorado.edu/index.cfm?FuseAction=Abroad.ViewLink&Parent_ID=0)

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If you would like your family to better understand what you are going through when you return home, you might also share the following resource from World Learning with them:
http://www.sit.edu/SSA_Other_documents/parent_reentry_handbook.pdf

Counseling Center - If you find that you are in need of a little extra help processing your summer experience, counselors are readily available to help you at the University Counseling Center. The center staff can be reached at 574-631-7336 or <http://ucc.nd.edu/>

If you would prefer to talk to a counselor outside of the counseling center, you can have a confidential and free consultation with a professional counselor through *Let's Talk*. No appointments or paperwork is required. Consultations occur every Thursday between 2 and 4pm at the Offices of Multicultural Student Programs and Services (MSPS) and International Student Services and Activities (ISSA) on the 2nd Floor of the LaFortune Student Center.