



Coping with Culture Shock

Probably the best overall strategy for coping with the various manifestations of culture shock is to make a conscious effort to adjust to the new culture. Here are some suggestions on how to make yourself feel more at home in your new surroundings:

- **Get involved in some aspect of the new culture.** Whether you study art, music, or learn a new sport or martial art, being an interested student will make a world of difference.
- **Take the time to learn the language.** It always helps to understand as much as possible of what people are saying. They will appreciate your effort to communicate with them in their own language, even if it is just a few simple phrases, and it will make your daily life much easier, too. Carry a small notebook with you and jot down a couple of new phrases each day.
- **Travel.** Take the time to be a tourist and explore the country's sites and attractions.
- **Make friends and develop relationships.** Make an effort to meet others. This will help you overcome cultural differences and come to a better understanding of the country and its people. Interacting with local people will also show you how to be more sensitive to cultural norms and expectations.
- **Maintain contact with friends and family back home.** Writing home about your experiences and problems can help you sort through them. It is also a good idea to keep a journal of your feelings and thoughts.
- **Do something that reminds you of home.** This can really boost your spirits when you are feeling homesick. So, make sure you have packed your favourite music or hobbies.