

Culture Shock

Overview

- What is Culture Shock?
- Symptoms of Culture Shock
- The 4 Phases
- Reverse Culture Shock
- How to Ease Culture Shock

What is Culture Shock?

- The feeling of disorientation experienced by someone who is suddenly subjected to an unfamiliar culture, way of life, or set of attitudes
- Common when immigrating or visiting a new country, moving between social environments, or even transitioning to another type of life
- One of the most common causes = individuals in a foreign environment
- Not a myth, but a predictable phenomenon
- Those who receive the least support on a professional and personal basis usually experience CS most intensely



CULTURE SHOCK

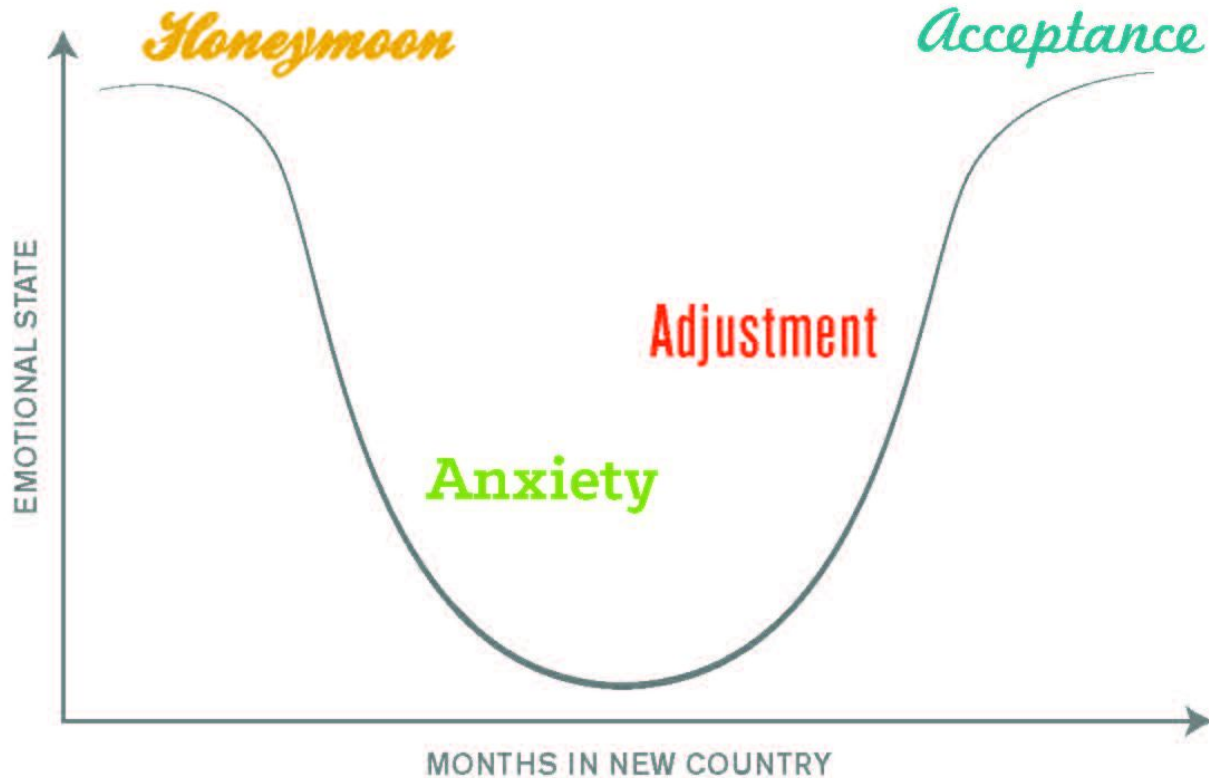
Symptoms of Culture Shock

- Excessive concern over cleanliness
- Feelings of helplessness and withdrawal
- Irritability
- Anger
- Mood Swings
- Homesickness
- Boredom
- Withdrawal
- Getting stuck on one thing
- Suicidal or fatalistic thinking
- Disrupted sleep patterns
- Weight gain
- Hostility towards host nationals

The 4 Phases

- **Honeymoon**
 - Differences between the old and new cultures are seen in a romantic light. Associate with nationals who speak their language and who are polite to the foreigners.
- **Anxiety**
 - Differences between the old and new culture become apparent and may cause anxiety. Excitement may eventually give way to unpleasant feelings of frustration and anger. Language barriers, differences in public hygiene, food quality may heighten the sense of disconnect
- **Adjustment**
 - Grows accustomed to the new culture and develops routines. Host country no longer feels all that new, and one becomes concerned with basic living again. Starts developing problem-solving skills for the culture and accept the differences with a positive attitude, and negative reactions are reduced.
- **Acceptance**
 - Indv. are able to participate fully and comfortably in the host culture. Does not mean total conversion: people often keep many traits from their earlier culture, such as accents and language. Often referred to as the bicultural stage.

STAGES of CULTURE SHOCK



Reverse Culture Shock

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- Upon returning to previous culture/homeland after growing accustomed to a new one can produce the same effects as CS
- Often more surprising and difficult to deal with than the original CS
- Idealization and Expectation
 - We tend to focus on the good from our past and cut out the bad, creating an idealized version of the past
 - Incorrectly assume that our previous world has not changed and expect things to remain exactly the same

How to Ease Culture Shock

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- Create a genuine desire to meet and talk with local people
- Do not expect things as you have them at home
- Don't take anything too seriously
- Listen and observe
- Be aware of cultural differences
- Do not make promises to new friends that you cannot follow through on
- Spend time reflecting on your daily experiences to deepen your understanding of what is happening