

CULTURE SHOCK

Caroline Anderson
JETAA Rocky Mountain
7 November 2020

OUTLINE

understanding culture shock

☐ Overview

☐ Causes

☐ Signs

☐ Stages

☐ Coping

☐ Resources

WHAT IS CULTURE SHOCK?

Feeling **confusion**, **anxiety**, **uncertainty**, or **disorientation**
when experiencing a **new** and **unfamiliar**:

- **culture**
- **set of attitudes**
- **way of life**
- **social environment**
- **work place**

CULTURE SHOCK IS

NORMAL &

DYNAMIC

WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO CULTURE SHOCK?

DIFFERENCES

- Language & accents
- Communication styles
- Food & drink
- Technology
- Physical spaces
- Work & school life



NAIVE REALISM & ETHNOCENTRISM

SIGNS OF CULTURE SHOCK

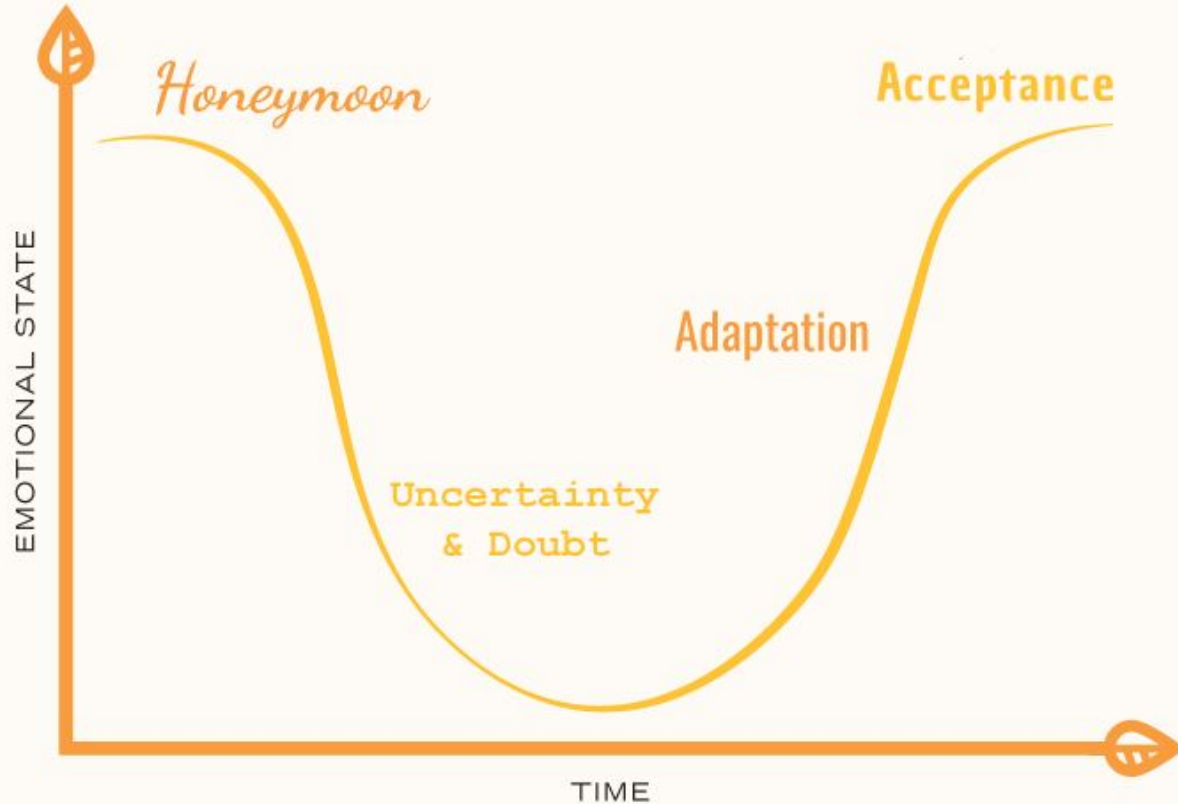
PHYSICAL

- Appetite or weight change
- Fatigue
- Sleeping more or less
- Becoming ill more frequently
- Upset stomach

PSYCHOLOGICAL

- Unhappiness
- Homesickness
- Loneliness
- Withdrawal
- Fearfulness
- Low self-esteem
- Irritability
- Feeling “out of it”
- Loss of motivation

STAGES of CULTURE SHOCK



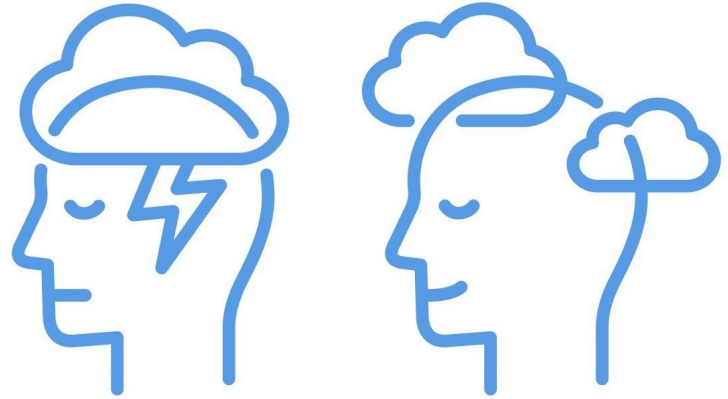
COPING: BEFORE YOU GO

- Recall a time you experienced transition shock
- Make goals
- Prepare mentally
 - New vs. old self
 - Growing pains
 - Accept change
 - Embrace doing, not do
- Research



COPING: IN JAPAN

- Be mindful:
 - Check-in with yourself
 - Acknowledge your feelings
 - Try to find the root cause
- Avoid:
 - Nostalgia pitfall
 - Bitterness
 - Conflating individual with cultural issue
 - Isolating yourself



COPING: IN JAPAN

- Forge connections with:
 - Japanese people
 - JETs & foreigners
 - Family & friends
- Remember your why:
 - Embrace the unknown
 - Personal growth
 - Get excited!

"No man is an island."

RESOURCES



Tofugu.com

RESOURCES

- **AJET Peer Support Group (PSG)**
 - 050-5534-5566 or Skype “AJETPSG” (volunteer help line)
- **CLAIR JET Mental Health Counselling Assistance Programme**
 - Partial subsidy for counseling costs not covered by health insurance
- **CLAIR JET Online Counselling Service & Free-Dial Telephone Counseling Service**
 - Web mail, skype, & phone counseling available once per month
- **Tokyo English Life Line (TELL)**
 - 03-5774-0992 (free, anonymous, confidential counseling)
 - 03-4550-1146 (professional counseling & psych. assessment)

QUESTIONS?

Caroline Anderson

events@jetaarockymountain.org

