Tel: 570-277-6621
Fax: 570: 277-0607

E-mail: paz@peace-inc.org
Internet: www.peace-inc.org

ProAmerican Educational And Cultural Exchange

40 WATER STREET * NEW PHILADELPHIA * PA * 17959

Dear Parents, Area Reps and Students,

In the past years, we've experienced an increase in requests from natural parents, host parents and students for return flight changes. Some want to go home early, some want to extend their stay. Some want to coordinate departures with those of visiting parents; others want to visit relatives en route home. Some want to bring friends or host family members with them and everyone wants a convenient schedule with the least amount of time spent in layovers. They want us to make all the changes (not our job), and do it for free (out of our control). Within our guidelines the above are all possible, but first a short lesson.

When we buy tickets, we get reduced fares to keep the program cost down for the students' parents. This is what we budget for and what is built into fee schedule. With all airlines, the lower the fare, the greater are the restrictions. Full "y" fares can be changed any and all ways at will and can even be cashed in, but, the cost for these fares is 4 times that of discount fares. All discount fares prohibit changing the departure return city and most have a $100-$250 penalty to change the return date or time. Each airline may impose fees; it depends on the fare basis or rules of that ticket. While you may have heard that some airlines agents may choose to waive the charge, this cannot be expected or assured and is less likely in today's tight profit market.

Therefore, for extensions necessary for U.S. school graduation only, phone PEACE and we will make the necessary changes to the date requested and absorb any extra costs.

For any other reason: A letter by e-mail (preferred), fax or regular mail must be sent to our office from <u>both</u> sets of parents (natural and host parents), stating the request, the reason and the agreed upon departure date. If for a side trip, the person being visited must also write and the letters must state the person's name, age, address, phone, e-mail and relationship to the student. All correspondence must be in English. Under no circumstances will any changes be made by phone, nor will we agree to requests made by students only. When required correspondence is received, we will call the airline and make the request change. Any and all incurred fees are the responsibility of the student, NOT PEACE. We will need a credit card number to bill change fees.

It is the law that we know the departure date for both security and insurance purposes. Should extension take place without our knowledge, the student is not covered by insurance and is in real violation of visa status. In the case of an accident or illness, the bills would be the student's responsibility. This is not an option. State Department regulations require insurance at all times. Attached is the full travel policy.

USA AND FOREIGN STUDENTS' CREDIT AND OTHER ACADEMIC ISSUES

If they will not graduate before becoming an exchange student, both North & South Americans need to consult with their home school officials to determine what credits they need. Students should arrange so that before going and after returning they can take as many required courses as possible.
When applying for enrollment, a letter from the home school is needed to explain what is being asked of the host school. Neither participation in end-of-year ceremonies nor graduation from the host school is assured by PEACE.

Studying abroad between high school and college is ideal, as no adjustment is needed in the high school itinerary. University admissions folks know that the challenges of successfully adapting to a foreign language and culture make the former exchange student far more mature, and possessing superior study habits to other college freshmen.

Studying abroad during high school, (typically the junior year) requires planning a strategy with the school counselor or principal to maximize potential credits before going. Take required courses in the sophomore and senior years, especially those harder to duplicate abroad. The level of education in private schools that our students will attend is excellent. Most of their students excel in our schools. But some classes aren't the same, so principals are asked to creatively imagine how credits can be earned.

Foreign language should be the easiest to credit, as the returning student is most likely able to demonstrate skills superior to many teachers.

Physical Education credits should be transferred without question.

Social Studies credits should be nearly automatic, as students are required to take a history class of the host country. Having lived there for a year (let alone passing the class) it is hard to imagine the student not learning far more geography, culture, and history, than if they had stayed home and passed a world cultures class.

English is required of ouout-bound students mostly to be an aide in the class to the host students, For the same reason, we require incoming students to take Spanish. Educators knows that the retention of what you teach is far greater than if you just hear or read something. So, while the level of English taught abroad will be simpler than American Junior English, the American student will probably become better at fundamentals of spelling, grammar, punctuation, and speaking through drilling the foreign student than staying home even though they will get less advanced literature.

Math and Sciences reach higher levels,but are taught differently. They usually take three sciences in the same year but cover less individually than if taught as an intensive year in one science subject.

VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS are similar throughout Latin America.

Students must get an **official** **<u>transcript</u>** (*not* a report card) of their grades at the end of the school year.

The school *must* stamp or emboss it with an **official seal**.

Students must type **translation** into their native language, if required by their consulate, then have all **notarized**.

For **Certification** of transcripts send a cover letter stating the number of certifications needed and the country in which certification is to be used. Send this along with $15 per certification and a self-addressed stamped envelope to:
PA Dept of State, 210 North Ofc. Bldg, Hbg., PA 17120
<u>OR</u> contact the appropriate Dept of State of the student's host residence for instructions, if not in Pennsylvania

Below are some consular addresses and phone numbers to learn a country's current revalidation requirements.

ARGENTINA: 212-664-1013 12 West 56th St. New York NY, 10019	BRAZIL: 917-777-7777 1185 Ave of the Americas New York, NY 10036	CHINA: 212-967-2336 520 12th Ave. New York, NY 10036
COLOMBIA: 212-049-9898 10 East 46th Street New York, NY 10017	ECUADOR:212-808-0170 800 2nd. Avenue New York, NY 10017	MEXICO: 215-922-4262 21 S 5th St, Bourse Bldg #575 Philadelphia, PA 19106
PANAMA: 202-483-1407 2862 McGill Terrace, NW Washington, DC 20008	PERU: 646-735-3828 241 E. 49th St. New York, NY 10017	VENEZUELA:212-826-1660 78 E..51st St, New York, NY 10022

Visa Extension for College or Touring

Some students want to extend their stay for travel or college.

A *J-1* visa *can be extend from one semester to two, but it cannot be extended* beyond twelve months for any reason.

Students may stay for up to an eleven month visa **AND- an additional 30 days for leisure <u>without any paperwork</u> —** a " FREE grace period" from U.S. Immigration.

Students who plan to attend college in the U.S. must first be accepted by a college.
School **guidance counselors** are trained to help with this.

Accepting colleges complete an I-20 form visa application to sponsor a foreign student at their University.

Students must go home and reapply with that I-20 form to the American Consulate Officer in their country, who will issue an *F-1* Student Visa.

This is different than the J-1.
J-1 Visas cannot be converted in the US to F-1.
Parents wishing for PEACE to provide insurance or supervision during a college stay in the U.S. should contact our office directly.

Picture designed by the American psychologist E.G. Boring.

The Experiential Learning Cycle

The five stages of *The Experiential Learning Cycle* are:

Experiencing

The data-generating part of the experience develops a common base for the discussion that follows.
Goals include:

- To explore. . .
- To examine. . .
- To study. . .
- To identify. . . .

Publishing

The question here is "What happened to me?" Participants share personal data about what they saw and/or how they felt during the experience.

- Feelings
- Reactions
- Observations

Processing

The question here is "What happened in general?" Participants systematically examine their commonly shared experience.

- Common themes
- Patterns
- Interactions
- Group dynamics
- Behavioral trends

Generalizing

The question now is "So what?" From the patterns identified, participants abstract:

- Inferences
- Generalizations
- Learnings
- Principles
- What tends to happen. . . .

These are stated in terms of the "real world" rather than the learning situation.

Applying

The final question is "Now what?" Generalizations and learnings are applied to real-life situations, and change is planned. This stage can include:

- Consulting groups
- Goal setting
- Practice sessions
- Contracting for change

The application of learning is a new experience. The cycle begins again.

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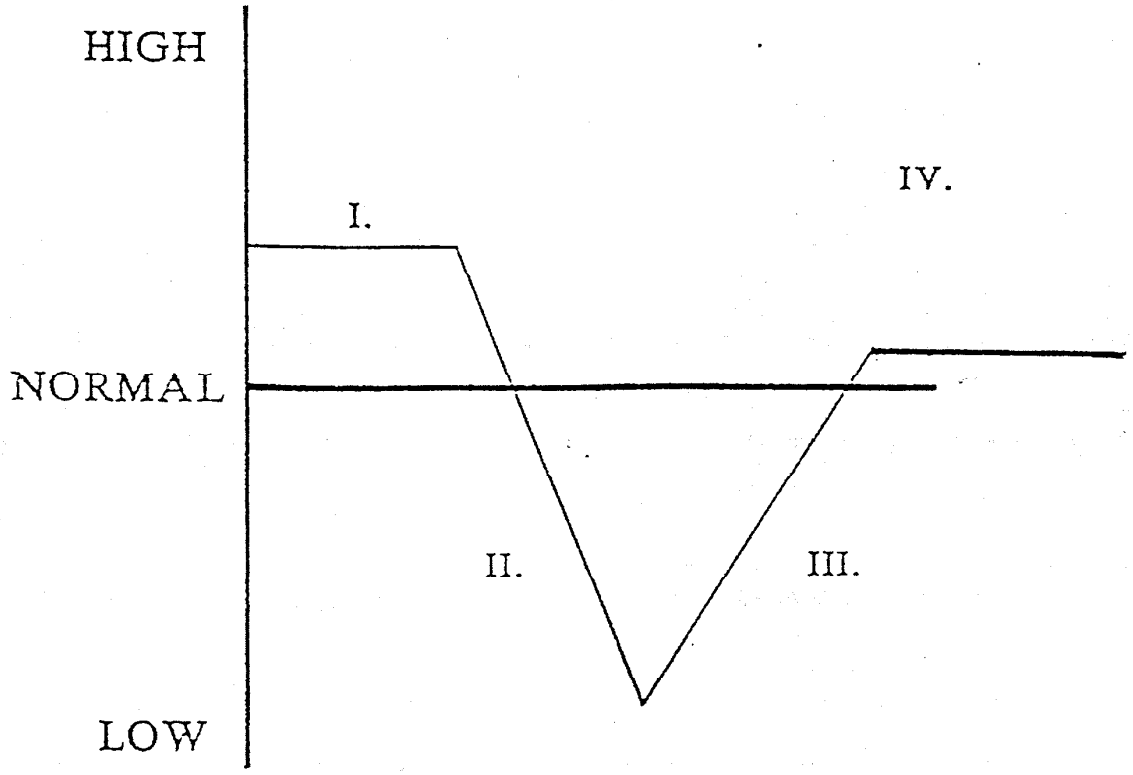
THE STAGES OF ADJUSTMENT



I. Enthusiasm/Excitement

II. Withdrawal/Loneliness

III. Re-emergence/Adjustment

IV. Achievement/Enthusiasm

PRE-DEPARTURE & POST-ARRIVAL
RULES REVIEW FOR STUDENTS & PARENTS

Both READ, DISCUSS, & INITIAL each box. Return one copy to your Representative. Keep one.

Exchange Student _____ **Date** _____

To improve results we must learn from others' past mistakes. People remember the bad longer than the good. "Mistakes" by you make it more difficult for your siblings, cousins and friends who wish to follow after you. *For this reason the following guidelines and others that you have signed will be enforced. Some violations may even result in early dismissal from the program on the first offense.* Excuses offered by students or parents that they did not know the rule or claiming that their representative said something different will not be considered**.**

1. Speaking Your language in public: Speaking a language that can't be understood by those nearby, who can hear your voice is rude, especially in school buses, hallways, classrooms, cafeterias, athletic events, field trips, visiting homes, etc. We think you are speaking badly about us and have a secret, even if you don't. If you want to have a secret, do it privately. Students who won't abide by this rule will be asked to end all contact with home-speaking friends. You should only speak your language on the phone with your family or counselor.

X_____ X_____

2. Personal Contact With Other Exchange Students: should be limited to incidental association via school activities, PEACE orientation meetings and field trips, or shared host family activity. Frequent IM, TM, Facebook, Skype, e-mail, texting, telephone, chat, or overnight visits between you and other exchange students is **forbidden**. Cell phones are forbidden except to borrow the host's for security until you think in English, should only be prepaid, and are always forbidden in schools. Laptops are banned in your bedroom. They must be used in a public area in plain view. *Travel to visit friends or relatives living in the United States is not allowed during your stay with your new family.* You're coming here to build American friendships not to maintain old friendships.

X_____ X_____

3. Visits to or from Parents, Relatives or Other Family Friends: in mid-year are forbidden unless an invitation has come from the host family for a special occasion. It is a financial burden to host an exchange student. Do not put the family in an embarrassing position because it is difficult to say no when pressed. Such visits, if approved, must include both families together and not separate a student from his hosts. Parents may not take their child away from the host family for Christmas, weddings, anniversaries, birthdays or any other events. This prohibition applies to other relatives of the student who may live in the host country. We prefer parental visits to be the last month of the year, since mid-year visits can cause homesickness. Also, do not make plans for ''cousins'' or boy/girl friends to just happen to be nearby ''vacationing''. A visit from either is forbidden at all times because this disrupts the bond between you and your American friends and family.

X_____ X_____

4. Parental Escorts: Being an exchange student means becoming self-sufficient. This begins when you get on the plane. Parents are asked not to escort their child to the U.S. It is sometimes embarrassing to the host who feels like they are under a magnifying glass, if you personally deliver your child to their home. Airlines offer you personal escort service for a nominal charge to assist children traveling alone to change planes en route.

X_____ X_____

5. Lending or Borrowing Money is absolutely forbidden. If you don't have money, don't ask for a loan. Don't give one either. You must budget your money. If we find out you put large purchases on your host's credit card we will send you home. Keep an extra $50 in your wallet for emergencies plus 50 cents for a pay phone or purchase an inexpensive cell with 300 prepaid minutes like Net-10. Do not buy a monthly plan to use socially. Make all long distance phone calls with phone cards. Don't leave your hosts with charges to recover from you. ***Bank Accounts*** must only have your name on, not your hosts. Do not let anyone else use your ATM card.

X_____ X_____

6. Spending Money carelessly is offensive to middle class people. Many of you are richer than your hosts. If you buy $100 Rayban sunglasses, when they can only afford a $10 pair, you'll be seen as wasteful. America is full of bargains. Brand-name products aren't always the best buy. Follow the lead of your hosts, *at least when shopping with them.* They'll be happy to show you how to get more value for your parents' hard-earned money.

X_____ X_____

7. Punctuality is expected in North America; it begins with planning to get here. Nothing is more frustrating than to plead with hundreds of people to get you a host family and school, rush your travel documents, and then find out that you're not ready to go. Don't be late for school because you've gone on a last-minute vacation, or you haven't yet gone to the bank to get money.

X_____ X_____

8. Appearance: Extreme styles forbidden: No tattoos or body piercing. Males: no ponytails, long hair, beards, moustaches, or earrings. Girls: no provocative (too short or tight) clothing, especially in church or school.

X_____ X_____

9.Smoking & Drinking may not be seen as a problem in your society but it is in the U.S. If you smoke, quit now, because you will be found out later. It impairs athletic performance. It is banned in most public building for the offensive smell and fire hazard. It is illegal under age 18. So is alcohol. Americans take laws seriously. We put drunk drivers in jail for endangering other highway users. Some teenagers defy these laws; but adults and respectable teens will judge you badly if you are seen practicing these vices, and we may send you home. USA students abroad also may not smoke or drink alcoholic beverages except at parentally chaperoned events.

X_____X_____

10.Sexual promiscuity, pornography, illegal drug use, fighting, or shoplifting may be seen as "fun" by some teenagers; but you must avoid anyone who either invites or dares you to do these things. Students accused of violations may be subject to search of their person, property, room, or school locker, to medical testing, or to psychiatric evaluation, as deemed appropriate by the authorities. Most eventually get caught. Jail, fines, dismissal from the program and disgrace of family and country may be the consequences.

X_____X_____

11. Gossiping About your Host Family will leave harmful scars in the community long after you are gone. Do not speak to school counselors, teachers, classmates, or neighbors about problems within the host home. Call your PEACE representative or counselor.

X_____ X_____

12. Driving is a risk and insurance expense that we don't allow. If a parent buys you a car other students will soon learn of it and become jealous. We know you love driving, but all must abide by the same restrictions.

X_____ X_____

13. Travel We must say no to you traveling to far away cities without a PEACE-approved adult (over age 30) chaperone such as your host parents, their relatives, neighbors, teachers, church groups or your PEACE rep - even if you are 18! Even if your natural parents would approve it and buy you a plane ticket, we will deny you permission to travel away alone or with only young companions or with young drivers, except in your host town. **This includes requests to visit relatives or family friends by public transportation like buses & trains.**

X_____ X_____

14. Letters & Phone Calls From Home are distracting. Too many prevent you from being assimilated into the host culture. Keep written contact to an *exchange* of news. Parents should limit phone, Skype, e-mail or chat to twice@/month. If more often they are still ''parenting''. Friends should be limited to the same. All contact should be limited to 1 day a week, 2 hrs total. Ask friends and family to not call after 10pm where you are living.

X_____ X_____

15. Dating: Going steady or even single dating is prohibited. Students must only double date or be in groups.

X _____ X_____

16. Mid-Year Visits or Early Returns Home are forbidden. You may not go home earlier than June. It is an insult to your host school and family to not complete the school term. Cold weather necessitates host families postponing trips for your benefit until late spring and early summer. Please don't disappoint them. You have celebrated birthdays and anniversaries with your family at home before and will do so again; so don't use these as excuses to go home early. Families who are planning weddings should schedule them in summer if it is important for you to be there. A medical emergency or death of an immediate family member (mom, dad, bro, sis) is the only excuse to visit home. - NO EXCEPTIONS

X_____ X_____

17. If you have College entrance exams to take before June 15 then make the exam before you come here. Most of your universities hold these exams during summer, so don't use it as an excuse to leave early. That will create anxiety for your hosts. We won't allow early departure without a schedule of exams and a letter from your university requiring your presence.

X_____ X_____

18. Academic Effort is expected at all times. No one will criticize you if they see you are truly trying, even if you fail. But, if we get complaints from the school that you are not trying and don't seem to care because you have already graduated and don't need the credit, you will be put on academic probation and suspended from all extracurricular activities. A letter will go to your parents. Cheating on tests will get you thrown out of school and sent home early. *See sample school policy.*

X_____X_____

19. Academic Requirements are to take classes in our language and history (or government) and to take advanced classes in your language to help our students.

X_____X_____

20. Academic transcript certification is not PEACE's job. If you need legalized records for your home department of education ask your host school for a transcript and tell them that it must be notarized. Instructions are in the back of your orientation manual and in the spring newsletter. This task is your responsibility.

X_____X_____

21. The Bus Trip is a privilege, not a right. By March 31, students failing any class, or near failing in most subjects, or on probation for bad conduct won't go.

X_____ X _____

22. Problem Resolution: Students and their hosts will differ some in standards of living, housing, family composition, education, personal manners, & customs. Our investigations of host families' lifestyles cannot be perfect, as one can't know people well until living with them. As the cross-cultural exchange, by its nature, can be stressful, the exchange student must be prepared to expect some periodic anxiety. While some problems will require relocation, we cannot guarantee that the best resolution will always be equal to a student's desire. The majority should be fixable with counseling if you allow the program a reasonable time to investigate and resolve the issue. **BUT,** PEACE cannot be held responsible for failing to address issues that are not brought to the organization's attention in a timely manner; **Students must *promptly* call PEACE to alert of any discomfort felt, irregularity perceived, or if feeling threatened**.

X _____ X_____

23. Authority of PEACE: A few students and parents have challenged PEACE's authority over their child when they disagreed over the consequences for breaking laws, rules of PEACE, the host family, or school. The U.S. Embassy will verify that the designated sponsoring agency has sole authority (not the host family, school, or even natural parents) to decide if, where, how, and when a student acts and remains in this country with a J-1 Visa. When the organization decides the termination date, the student must return by that date. Changing to a different visa status requires first, returning to your home country and then, reapplying. The J-1 Visa cannot be renewed or extended for any reason. This is the law.

X _____ X_____

24. Eating disorder: If a student is diagnosed by a U.S. physician for an eating disorder or depression during her program, the student will be returned home immediately unless compelling reasons are agreed upon by all for their retention and counseling.

X _____ X_____

25. Age of Majority:If you turn 18 while in the program you do not become an emancipated adult free to do as you wish or to come an go as you like. You are restricted like a minor while in the program by your signature on this contract.

X _____ X_____

26. You are an Ambassador of Your Country. Any words, actions, or attitudes of indifference that injures American families, schoolmates, or teachers will be taken as a bad sign and leave bad feelings for years to come. Some felt that they were used for a cheap education in English and quickly forgotten when the year was over. Most host families go out of their way more than students appreciate at the time. They enter into this seeking to make an emotional bond for life with a new family member. They are not renting a room to a boarder. We hope no one will treat them that way. If you are not fully committed to the good-will mission of international student exchange and are not willing to abide by the above rules, please tell us now and we will gladly cancel your program.

X _____ X_____

Immediately upon your arrival all students must do the following:

27. U.S. Immigration requires you to telephone **PEACE World Headquarters** at **1-800-377-2232** (a free call in the U.S.) to report your arrival. If you miss a plane connection en route use the same number to report your delay To reach the **Directors, Mr. or Mrs. Page,** dial **1-570-277-6623.** *Alert: The above numbers are on your student I.D. card.* (Dial the "1-" only in the USA)

X _____ X_____

28. Ask your host family to assist you to photocopy your passport picture and visa, your I-94 card (attached to your passport in U.S. customs when entering the country) and DS-2019 or I-20. Send the above items *and* if you have a paper ticket (not electronic) send the original return air ticket (not a copy) to **PEACE, Inc, 40 Water St., New Philadelphia, PA 17959. Make a copy for yourself before mailing anything. Keep copies of all documents in a separate place as originals.**

X _____ X_____

29. The United States Government requires us to control your air travel. Student exchange regulations forbid coming with only a one-way ticket or an excursion ticket that will expire before the program completion date. PEACE must be able to show the U.S. State Department proof of your return ticket in our files, on demand at any time. A Student visa is a privilege, not a right. **U.S. Immigration may cancel your visa** and return you to your home immediately for failure to obey their rules.

X _____ X_____

30. In past years some students left host families with their debts at the end of the year, especially if they changed host families or were sent home early. Host parents expect us to solve this problem for them, so we are asking you to help by giving them an envelope with $100 cash and a letter inside from your parents to your host parents. THE LETTER SHOULD SAY,

''Please hold this money as security while my child is in your home to offset any bills owed to you such as for long-distance telephone calls, doctors, or to pay the airline to ship extra luggage or packages to our home. Please return the balance, when all debts are paid - if possible, before my child's departure from your house. Thank you."

X _____ X_____

I / We have read the above pages and agree to them entirely**.** If we find a discrepancy between a rule published in one place and revised in another we will bring it to the director's attention and accept the revised explanation.

_____ X _____ _____

I, PEACE Representative, have reviewed each point at an orientation with the above on this date

The composition below was submitted at the end of the year by a student who had only one host family, who lived in a small town and went to a small school where everyone knew her, and who had a rep who spoke her language and taught in her school. She never complained and reported everthing fine when questioned throughout the year. It just goes to show that no news doesn't always mean good news. We can never take a student for granted.

EXCHANGE STUDENTS -
the pain within

Exchange student
sounds interesting
but nobody really knows
what happens within us.

It's not only learning a language that you
really don't know.
It's also learning situations
that you have to confront alone
without anybody's help,
because here you don't know
who is your friend or enemy.

If only you knew the language,
everything would be easier.
You wouldn't have so many problems
and you would be sure
that what you say is correct.

The first day in the school
where you don't know anything
you are confused;
and the worst of all is
that you don't have help from anyone.

The people make fun of you
because of the way you talk,
not only because of your accent
but also for the errors that you make.

And you can be sure that
nobody will help you
the way you want them to.
They can't understand you
because they don't know
how it is to be an exchange student.

In the school
everything is different
and the moment arrives
that you are very scared.
Drugs, sex, alcohol
and all types of vices
can be found all around you;
and it isn't nice to see
how children or teenagers your age
are killing themselves without reason.

Your house is not your home.
It is the place where you live.
But then after three months,
when the novelty passes
you realize that you are alone.

The food, your room, and the customs
aren't the same.
You can understand this.
You are in a different country.

Many families try to force you
to make things tht you don't want,
but you have to be strong and
trust in God.

We find ourselves in the emptiness
where you fall without stopping
without knowing where you are going
and you realize that the only thing you
have is the help God gives you.

The last thing I can tell you is
Trust in yourself
and ask God for help.
Remember that you are always his son.
God gives you everything that you need
including his company and help.

Trust in God
and in yourself;
and with His help
you will leave triumphant from
the abyss in which you find yourself.

By, Daniela Brea Exch std, from Venzuela.

APPEARANCES *by Mariana Coppel 2002 Exchange Student From Mexico*

Get your hair a permanent

Get your skin all tan

Get your nails all fancy

Get your butt shaped at the gym

Why do you hide your natural beauty?

What else will you do,

To follow a "beauty" stereotype?

Get your outfit at American Eagle,

Express, The Gap, or Aeropostale,

Get your panties at Victoria Secret,

Your jeans have to be Versache.

Why has our personal importance

became a "name" -- an outfit?

A fashion style?

You have to walk in certain ways

You have to talk with certain words.

You have to be a "pretty girl"

You have to be so popular!!!

But anytime you fall apart

Out of the mood

Out of the standard or the stereotype

Don't let your heart feel so down

Because all that is just appearance

Even insecurity

The outside look is just a reflection

The real beauty is deep inside

When you feel happy

When you can smile

It doesn't matter if your skin is dark

Light or yellow

It's much prettier if it's your own

If you are "YOU"- if you are natural

It doesn't matter how your hair looks

Or the way you dress

Or the things you have

Or if you are short or tall or fat or small

We are beautiful because we can breathe

Because our hands can create

Because our heart can love

Because our eyes can see

Don't let your soul feel so sore

When people judge the way you look

The way you act, the way you are

We are light travelers - powder of stars

Looking for peace

And knowledge around

We are God's instruments

Fraught of dreams

Sharing our beauty

That is not just what people can see.

don't let your shoulders carry the pressure.

It's not worth it;

After a time the body disappears

And in our eternal trip we don't need appearance

'Cause after all, we'll be just spirits in the end.

RESOURCE SIXTEEN
RED FLAGS: A TECHNIQUE FOR IMPROVING CULTURAL AWARENESS

THE FOLLOWING ESSAY DESCRIBES A SURPRISINGLY SIMPLE TECHNIQUE FOR IMPROVING ONE"S AWARENESS OF THE MANY SUBTLE DIFFERENCES FOUND IN ANY CULTURE. THE AUTHOR IS ELIJAH ~OVEJOY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA BARBARA.

RICHARD S. PAGE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
P.E.A.C.E.,INC.

Judgments such as "they are rude," or "they are hostile," or "they are hypocrites" can create powerful barriers to good communication. Such subjective reactions often result from an inappropriate application of the *meaning* rules (culturally determined rules for the attribution of meaning) of one's home culture when making judgments about the behavior of people from a different culture. But by learning to use these subjective reactions as warning signals, or "red flags," one can reduce the amount of miscommunication and misunderstanding between one-self and people from other cultures.

Here is an example. A Japanese professor visiting the United States felt that his American hosts were rude because they acted surprised when he gave them his business card, and especially because they rarely reciprocated by giving him theirs. If someone in Japan had acted the way the Americans did, that indeed would have been rude. But from the American point of view, the failure to exchange business cards was not at all rude. And the Japanese professor was unwittingly withdrawing from contact with his American colleagues in the host university because of his misinterpretation of their behavior.

Extensive interviews and observations of people living away from their homelands have led me to the realization that a fair number of intercultural misunderstandings can be corrected if the sojourners can learn to use their own subjective, emotional reactions as warning signals that there may be cultural differences at work in their relationships with host nationals. These red flags are most often negative reactions, but they also may be unwarranted positive reac-tions. A third variety, which I call "reciprocal red flags," will also be discussed in the following paragraphs.

NEGATIVE RED FLAGS

The redflags that occur most often are those that involve an instinctive negative evalua-tion of the behavior of the members of the unfamiliar culture. Four of the most common negative red flags are discussed below, and many others are listed at the end of this section.

Negative Red Flag 1: "They Are Rude!"

A visitor to the United States is talking with some Americans and one of the Americans takes a pack of cigarettes out of his pocket and lights one without any thought. This event, which can be totally insignificant in the U.S., is felt like a slap in the face by many foreign visitors with whom I have spoken. According to the implicit rules of their homelands, it is unthinkable for a person to light a cigarette without first offering cigarettes to the others in the group. "Smoking without Offering" can only be interpreted as an act of deliberate rudeness or hostility.

Certain questions may be interpreted as rude: a Moroccan living in France may be shocked when French associates inquire about his wife. Such questions are a banal form of chit-chat in France but may indicate to the Moroccan an improper interest in a private matter.

An Ethiopian girl visiting in the U.S. went to a swimming pool one clay with friends. She was shocked and upset when someone asked her, "How do you stay so thin?" In the U.S,, this is not really a request for information, but a compliment on the fashionable state of a person's body. But plumpness is desirable for Ethiopian women, so the question had an altogether unintended impact. She perceived the questioner as being rude because the question would have been rude in her homeland.

If the visitor has the ability to realize that two different meaning rules are involved, it can help to reduce the level of adrenalin. I doubt if one can avoid the initial, almost instantaneous reaction, "how rude!" But that

reaction, rather than being a final judgment, can serve to initiate a careful process of reflection. It can be the starting point for an intercultural investigation. One should talk to culturally different people to find out whether the perceived "rude" behavior is acceptable back in their home country or whether it is just as rude there as in one's own country.

To think "they are treating me rudely!" Will tend to drive the visitor away from further contacts with local people. But to think "they do things here that we would find rude back home" leaves one's mind open to the realization that, very possibly, people in the host country are not acting in a way that they consider to be rude. This, of course, improves the chances of making continuing human contact.

Negative Red Flag 2: "They Are Dirty!"

People in most cultures place a very strong emphasis on cleanliness. But misunderstand-ings arise because different grc~ups have different definitions or customs about what constitutes the right sort and amount of cleanliness. When one comes into contact with people who have different customs or rules about cleanliness, he or she may judge them to be "dirty" or "picky" depending on whether they are less or more attentive to a particular sort of cleanliness.

L. Robert Kohls, in his excellent manual *Survival Kit for* Overseas *Living,* mentions several areas in which Americans are often perceived as dirty. Kohls notes that when Americans bathe, they soak, wash, and rinse their bodies in *the* same water--though they would never wash their clothes or dishes that way. The Japanese, who use different water for each step of bathing, find the American way of bathing hard to understand, even dirty. Kohls asks also whether it is dirtier to spit and blow your nose on the street or into a little piece of cloth that you keep in your pocket and reuse regularly.

Raymond Gorden, in his perceptive book *Living in Latin America,* reported a study of American students living in Bogota, Colombia. The Americans mentioned that they had the impression that Colombians were dirty because they turned the hot water on onlyin the morning and washed dishes in the evening with cold water. It is revealing that the Colombians with whom the Americans lived also thought that the Americans were dirty because they did not bathe every day.

When one goes to a new culture, it may well happen that one gets the impression that the native people are dirty. Rather than stopping at this powerful negative observation, one should be able to use the reaction as a signal--a red flag--that one may have hit upon an area where there are cultural differences in what is considered to be proper cleanliness. It may be possible then to reflect constructively upon these differences instead of simply reacting in a negative way that will tend to separate one from those *"dirty* people."

Negative Red Flag 3: "They Are Hypocrites!"

Most cultures disapprove of hypocrisy. So the feeling that someone is a hypocrite can be a major barrier to intercultural communication.

I asked a group of California students who had been in France for about eight months how they felt about the French. "They're pretty nice," said one girl, "but they are all hypocrites. They kiss you on both cheeks, as if they really like you, but it doesn't mean a damn thing!" As she said this, several other students in the room nodded their heads in agreement. Their judgment, "they are hypocrites," was wrong, however, because they had misinterpreted the meaning of the event "being kissed on both cheeks." In the United States, kissing may com-municate an especially close relationship, but in the student population in France it means hello and nothing more. Few French people would consider *la bise* to be hypocritical.

The perception, "they are hypocrites," while a very natural one, tends to stop all further reflection and to build a barrier between people from different cultures. The sojourner should learn to translate his complaint into a more subtle form: *"I* get the feeling that they are hypocrites. This could be because I have misunderstood Something. I must try to find out."

Negative Red Flag 4: "They Are Stupid!.,

Cultures differ in what they consider to be intelligent or stupid. The result is that visitors often find the people of their host countries deficient in this regard. In *Students as Links Between Cultures,* lngrid Eide reported a study in 1970 of students from Egypt, Iran, and India who were at school in the U.S., the United Kingdom, and West Germany. She asked the sojourners to check on a long list of personal traits those that applied to Se nationals of their host countries and those traits that applied to their own homelands. The results were striking: 76 percent of the Egyptian students, for example, said that the trait "intelligent" applied to Egyptians, but only 28 percent said that the people in their host country were intelligent. A similar result was

obtained for the students from Iran and India. Knowing that this is a common pattern may help us to start an analysis.

People from Japan staying in France are surprised to find that in many stores a transaction involves standing in line once to get a product, then again to pay the cashier. Being unused to such a system, they may react with a quick, "they are stupid!" Like other negative reactions, this one often terminates reflection. But it can help to use this reaction as a signal to try to figure out why things are arranged this way. I believe that the system in France can be traced to a basic security problem. If only the owner handles cash, then there is no chance that hired employees will act dishonestly or make cosfly errors. It may well be that internalized controls are quite sufficient to keep clerks honest in Japan while other forms of controls may be needed in other countries.

The reaction, "they are stupid," is often accompanied by very strong emotions and a sense of personal outrage. For example, the sojourner often discovers that the host nationals are ignorant or ill-informed about the sojourner's homeland. People from all parts of the world who come to the U.S. get upset because Americans in general seem rather uninterested in what goes on outside their own country. Another example is that Swedes who live in France discover that when they go to a movie they find an usher, or *ourreuse,* waiting to show them to their seats and that she expects a tip for the service. This small custom triggers strong emotional reactions: *"What* a stupid system! I can find my own seat!" The French people, of course, give the custom little or no thought. The tip is part of the cost of going to a film. The service may seem pointless, but perhaps it's a way of fighting unemployment.

The feeling, *"they* are stupid," may stem from basic differences in the way people think and the way they convey ideas. At one seminar involving Japanese and U.S. businessmen, an American asked a Japanese what was most difficult for him in the United States. The Japanese replied, *"The* most difficult part of my life here is to understand Americans. They are so irrational and ilioncal."

It is troubling to find out that people from another culture find one stupid or irrational. But knowing this may help one to keep things in perspective when he or she gets the impression that people in other cultures are irrational, or that they do not think clearly. The "they are stupid" reaction can serve as a red flag, a signal to think, "Something's going on here that seems very stupid to me. I wonder if it seems stupid to them?"

Some Additional Negative Red Flags

There are many negative reactions that the sojourner can use to signal, "Start thinking about possible differences between the two cultures." Reading through the following negative red flags may help the reader to think about other examples of the application of inappropriate meaning rules to an event in an unfamiliar culture.

"I can't accept..."
"They are cold!"
"They are dishonest!"
"I hate the (nationality)!"
"It's incredible!"
"They are insulting!"
"They are patronizing."
"It's ridiculous!"
"It's so expensive!"
"They are uncultured!"
"They are untrustworthy!" "Why don't they do it our way?"
"They are like children!" "It's disgusting?
"It makes me furious? "They are hostile!"
"They are inscrutable!" "They don't respect me!" "They are primitive!"
"It is shocking!"
"It's uncomfortable!"
"They are unfriendly? "They are unpredictable!" "They are years behind us!"

POSITIVE RED FLAGS

Most red flags are negative; they are unpleasant reactions. But cases of the opposite sort do occur. These are situations where things appear to be better or more pleasant than they actually are, again because of a difference in cultural meaning. Positive red flags are also more hazardous because an inappropriate expectat-/on of something pleasant is quite likely to lead to disappointment.

Positive Red Flag 1: "They Are So Friendly!"

Visitors to the U.S. are often gratified by the warm reception they get in the first' few days. They may be greeted with broad smiles, invited for meals, or even invited to stay in Americans' homes. Depending on the culture from which they come, they may interpret such gestures as meaning, "We are going to be close friends and will see a lot of each other." The next step can be harsh disillusionment. The same American families that seemed to be indicating the beginning of a strong relationship are likely to forget about the foreign visitors after a week or two. The sojourners would be wise to investigate the different meanings of friendship in the two cultures. Friendships in the U.S. often do seem to start easily and to reach quickly a level of intimacy that would take much longer in Europe, for example. But it also seems that American friendships are less durable and that the obligations of friendship are weaker in the U.S. than in many other places. "You must drop by and see us sometime!" is an American expression used casually and usually without serious intent. It should not be taken literally. Indeed, the visitor who takes the "invitation" at face value and does drop by unannounced may find that the American hosts are rather dismayed.

Positive Red Flag 2: "We Are Going to Be Intimate Friends!"

Assumptions about intimate friendship vary greatly from culture to culture. If you expect meanings to remain unchanged when you go to a new country, you are likely to misread the signals of others and perhaps to do things that will lead to misunderstandings on the part of your hosts. A Dutch woman living in Paris had a disagreeable experience of this sort. She enjoyed talking with a French friend and invited him to her apartment for dinner one evening. The meaning she had intended to convey was "we are going to eat dinner together" and nothing more. But her friend interpreted the gesture as implying an invitation for sexual intimacy. He discovered the miscommunication in the middle of dinner. At this point the Frenchman stood up and said, "You don't think I'm going to cross Paris just to have dinner, do you?' and stormed out the door. (Note that in this case the Frenchman made an inappropriate assumption even though the incident took place in his home country.)

The Dutch woman indicated that a number of her friends had similar problems. Analogous problems have been reported by sojourners between many pairs of cultures. The issue of intimacy, and especially sexual intimacy, is a large and difficult one that can lead to major misunderstandings between culturally different people. We have merely touched on it here,

Positive Red Flag 3: "They Are So Generousl"

You may be charmed by the generosity of your hosts, but it could be that in terms of the host culture's rules, you are incurring a debt or obligation that you are not aware of. It wouldn't hurt to try to understand what sort of implicit assumptions exist in the culture with regard to the obligations that one takes on when he or she accepts another's generosity.

Often the social rules of a situation require your host to make amazingly generous offers, offers that you feel unable to accept. If you admire an object in the home of a Brazilian, you may find that it is offered to you. A naive reaction of "oh, how generous!" may be quite an oversimpli-fication. So, quick thinking on your part is required. A friend suggested the following gambit: "Oh, thank you for your great generosity! It is a beautiful music box and I am happy to own it. But it looks so nice here that I would like to leave it where it is. I will think of it as mine, and the thought will make me happy. But I want to keep my music box on your table."

Dealing with generosity is especially tricky if the visitor comes from a wealthy nation. A host in a lesser developed country may feel obliged to entertain on a scale appropriate to the wealth of the visitor's country. But the sacrifice of money and material goods by the host may be overwhelming in relation to what he can truly afford. I have talked with American students who accepted gestures of extraordinary hospitality from host nationals who were digging very deeply into their pockets in order to be especially welcoming. The question of when to accept and when to decline is very delicate, and the question of how to decline in a culturally appropriate way may be especially perplexing. In any ease, the visitor should keep in mind that such acts may show a far greater sacrifice in the host country than they would have reflected back home.

RECIPROCAL RED FLAGS

A third type of warning signal occurs when the visitor finds host nationals reacting in unexpected ways to his or her behavior. When the reaction of culturally different people to one's usual behavior is one of anger, surprise, or laughter, it is possible that one has done something unusual in the terms of the host culture. I call these reactions of one's hosts "reciprocal red flags."

Reciprocal Red Flag 1: "They Are Angry at Me!"

A study-abroad program director in England regularly asks her students, "Has anybody become angry at you this week?" The students sometimes recall cases in which someone did get angry at them and begin a cultural analysis to attempt to understand what they had clone that was inappropriate in England. A discussion of these incidents with the program director often. leads to a better understanding of the students' native cultures as well as of English culture.

A Frenchwoman working in California tells of the following incident. She was driving on a large highway when she saw a police car behind her with a bright red light on. She wondered what was happening but kept on driving. In France the police always drive beside a car and signal the driver if they want the car to stop. Since the police behind her did not do this, she kept driving. Only when the police car turned on its siren did she pull over and stop. She was puzzled when the police officer was angry at her. Thinking back on the incident later, however, she could see that her behavior, which made perfectly good sense according to French rules, was not appropriate from the point of view of a California policeman.

When a host national gets angry, it is a good idea to start thinking. Many of us stop thinking and react emotionally when someone becomes angry at us. But even if one has not learned to inhibit his or her emotional reactions, they can still be used as signals to begin a systematic cultural analysis in order to determine what went wrong.

Reciprocal Red Flag 2: "They Are Surprised at Me"

When living in France in 1978, I opened a checking account in a French bank. I casually asked the bank manager, "What do you do if I write a check for which there is no money in the bank?" The banker looked very surprised, paused for about fifteen seconds, cleared his throat, and said in a severe tone of voice, "I certainly hope that will never happen{" I tried to reassure him that I didn't intend to let it happen, and let the subject drop. Some time later I asked some French friends why this was such a surprise to the banker. I learned that "bouncing a check" is much more serious in France than in the U.S. To do so is a criminal offense. In this situation, I was able to use the reciprocal red flag, "they are surprised," as a cue to start an analysis; consequently, the experience was educational.

Reciprocal Red Flag 3: "They Are Laughing at Me"

It is likely that at some point a sojourner in a new culture will behave in what seems a perfectly normal way, only to find that the natives burst out laughing. There are two common reactions to this experience: One may feel hurnilated and hurt, or one may be able to laugh with the others, even before completely understanding the humor of the situation. Later, the visitor may be able to find out what made his or her hosts laugh.

A Norwegian girl went to France as part of an exchange program and lived with a French family for a year. A few days after her arrival, the French mother serbed artichokes to start the dinner. The Norwegian, who had ni~ver seen such a thing, picked up a knife and fork and tried to cut it into pieces. The family began to laugh.

How a person reacts to such an experience depends on many factors. But if the visitor can manage to laugh with the hosts and to explain the perfectly natural fact that certain things are unfamiliar, the experience can be a very positive one. Later, the visitor may be able to put him- or herself in the hosts' shoes, and to imagine what the situation must have looked like from their point of view.

WHAT TO DO AFTER SEEING THE RED FLAG

The basic thrust of this essay has been that the sojourner can use his or her own reactions, and those of others, as warning signals, or red flags, to prompt the beginning of a cultural analysis. This means that he or she can start thinking about cultural differences, that is, about the possible differences in the meaning of similar behaviors in the home and host cultures. Sometimes one will be able to figure things out alone. But especially in the first few months it is helpful to ask host nationals join in the investigation. Perhaps the best host nationals to ask for help are those who themselves have lived in other cultures, especially those who previously have

stayed in the sojourner's country. They will have encountered some of the same differen-ces that the visitor is seeing and will be able to aid the visitor in understanding the point of view of the local people.

Talking with other foreigners can help too. It might be a good idea to start or join a group of people from various cultures who meet to discuss their cross-cultural experiences. Often people from various cultures will have quite different perceptions of the same host culture. BY comparing these perspectives, one can gain an improved understanding of the situations that have been detected by using the red flags. For example, English people living in France get upset because the French "don't know how to stand in line." This is a major source of annoyance to the English. It helps to enlarge their perspective if they talk with Italians living in France. Several Italians with whom I spoke were vociferous in their objections to the propensity of the French to stand in lines: "They spend their life in lines, always queueing! What a bore! It's so dead! I prefer the way we handle such situations in Italy. There things are more sporting, and you can get things done more quickly!"

A tactic that may help one to understand both the home and host cultures is to look for parallels between them when a red flag occurs. For example, many Americans get upset when traveling in Mexico because a small bribe, l*a rnordida,* is sometimes required to get things done. The Americans are likely to feel morally superior to their hosts. It would help in this situation for the Americans to reflect on the various mechanisms that exist in the U.S. to help get things done more efficiently. Bribes are not common in the U.S. But many Americans think nothing of calling on a friend who works in an office when they need something done by that office, of using a "connection" to find employment, or of having a friend help in buying something at a lower price. Such tactics for obtaining special privileges are common in the U.S., and they may serve a purpose somewhat similar to that played by *la mordida* in other countries. The person who has looked for parallels in the two countries may make progress in understanding both.

Seeing a red flag is just the beginning. Even when a red flag lets one know that a cultural difference is operating, it may not be simple to bring that difference to light and to understand the differing values and patterns of behavior that are involved. The process is a little like working a crossword puzzle--the more parts one has answered, the easier it is to answer the remaining ones. But, at the beginning, it is often very difficult to get started. This is why I am suggesting that recently arrived sojourners should discuss perplexing situations with others and should look for parallels within their own home cultures.

If we overlook cultural differences and interpret another individual's behavior according to our own cultural rules, serious errors are likely to occur sooner or later. To some extent, such errors are bound to happen; no one can know every subtle detail of a new culture when he or she first arrives, regardless of how much investigating was done beforehand. But careful use of our own subjective reactions as Warning signals, or red flags, can help to more rapidly reduce the amount of miscommunication and misunderstanding between ourselves and our hosts.

RESOURCE 21: INFORMATION ON ADJUSTMENT STRESS FOR HOST FAMILIES

THE FOLLOWING ESSAY WAS WRITTEN BY CORNELIUS GROVE, DIRECTOR OF THE AFS CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF INTERCULTURAL LIVING, AS A BASIS FOR HOST PARENTS AND THEIR OLDER SIBLINGS TO COPE MORE REALISTICALLY WITH THEIR EXCHANGEE'S ADJUSTMENT PROCESS. AS THE PRIMARY GIVERS OF SUPPORT AND ADVICE TO EXCHANGE STUDENTS, HOST FAMILY MEMBERS ARE A SPONSORING ORGANIZATION'S FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST THE PROBLEMS THAT MAY OCCUR FROM THEIR STUDENT'S STRESSES OF ADJUSTMENT TO A FOREIGN ENVIRONMENT. UNDERSTANDING THEIR PROBLEMS AND BEING BETTER EQUIPED TO EMPATHIZE WITH THEM REDUCES THE HOST FAMILY'S STRESS, TOO. WE HOPE YOU'LL FIND IT BENEFICIAL,

RICHARD S. PAGE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of P.E.A.C.E.,INC.

Whenever people encounter a substantial change in the typical patterns of their lives, adjustments become necessary. When new infants come home for the first time, their parents must adjust. When families move from one community to another, their members go through periods of adjustment. When children leave home for college, the military, or work in a faraway place, they must adjust to new ways of life--while their parents adjust to their absence. The death of one's spouse entails the longest and most difficult adjustment challenge for many people, but researchers have found that other especially troublesome life changes include divorce, serious injury or illness, being fired, going to jail, financial loss, and starting a new job (even in the old company), plus ostensibly positive changes such as retirement, a major increase in income, marriage, and outstanding personal achievement3

The twentieth century has vastly increased the opportunities for human beings to face another abrupt change in their ways of life--by flying thousands of miles in a few hours to an unfamiliar country, community, and culture, there to take up residence for an extended period of time. Nowadays, this type of transition is faced routinely by businesspeople, military person-nel, technical assistance experts, missionaries, diplomats, teachers, students, and many others.

As a host family member, you have graciously volunteered to play the key supporting role in a life-change experience of a young person from a distant community and culture. For a while after he or she arrives on your doorstep, you and the other members of your family will need to make certain efforts to adapt to his or her presence. Your process of adaptation may be burdensome at times, and nothing in the following pages is intended to belittle the effort that you will put forth to make the appropriate changes in your patterns of living. This essay, however, focuses on the adaptation process of your exchange student. No matter how hard you work to accommodate him or her in your home, chances are that he or she will have to work harder in order to make that mutual accommodation satisfactory. And you will need to advise and assist your student as he or she faces this special challenge.

Why Is Adjustment Potentially So Difficult for Exchangees?

Look at it this way. You and the other members of your family are living in your own home and community, going daily to your own schools and places of work, shopping, and recreation; depending on your own friends and nearby family members; eating your accus-tomed

foods; speaking your accustomed language; and living by your accustomed values and norms of behavior. Into this reasonably stable situation is introduced only one new element--your exchange student. Chances are, you're going to be able to deal quite well with one new element in an overall context that is so thoroughly familiar to you°.

What about exchange students? Well, they come into your community all alone, leaving far behind old friends and family members. Your home is unlike the home they grew accustomed to. The school they attend in your community, the places where they shop and play, all are unusual in some ways, maybe in many ways. Your food is different, possibly to the point where they feel unwell for some weeks. Your language may be anywhere from highly similar to totally unintelligible. Potentially even more troublesome are Your values and norms of behavior, which, because they are intangible and usually unspoken, may be recognized only when erabarrassment or even anger attends their violation. All this and more must be faced by a relatively youthful person who, quite possibly, was never before all alone in a completely unfamiliar place.

Really, when you think about it, exchange organizations expect an awful lot from these young students. But the vast majority of them do manage to make the necessary adjustments and do return home far wiser for their challenging experiences. And why is this so? Because human beings are adaptable and because they help each other as adaptations must be made. In the case of youth exchanges, it is in part because the young people are helped through their processes of adaptation by a variety of people doing a variety of jobs in both their home and host countries. Some are professional staff members. Many more are volunteers. But none of them has more contact more often with the exchange students than you, their respective host family members. No one can take more credit than you for the satisfactory adjustment and accelerated learning of one particular exchange student.

What Is Involved in a Satisfactory Adjustment?

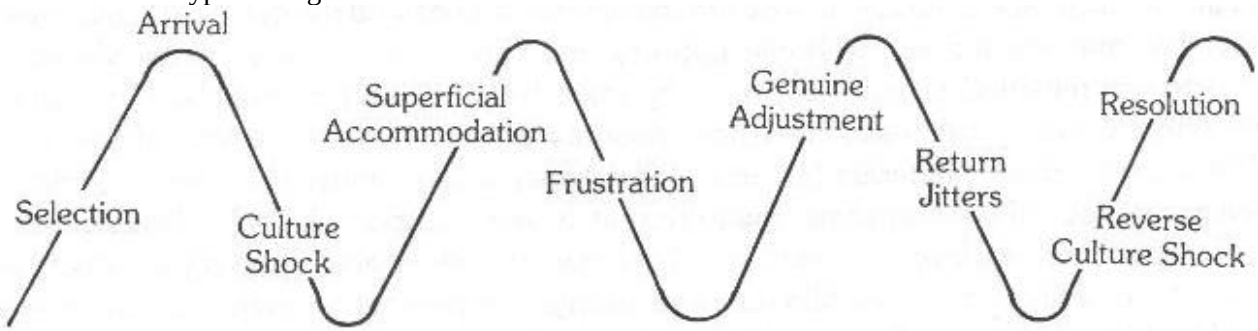
Different people have widely varying reactions when faced with the perplexities of an unfamiliar culture. Numerous complex factors are involved in any given sojourner's pattern of adjustment. These factors are related to (1) the sojourner's own family and cultural background and his or her previous contact with unfamiliar cultures, (2) the sojourner's attitude toward and expectations regarding the experience, (3) the nature and extent of the differences between the home and host cultures, (4) the quality of the sojourner's preparation and training, (5) the helpfulness of the support he or she receives from people in the host culture, (6) numerous details of the new culture and environment, and, no doubt, (7) a variety of other less easily identifiable factors, possibly even including the extent to which the sojourner has a predisposition to deal more or less effectively with sudden changes in the patterns of daily life.

In spite of these complexities, many sojourners go through adjustment processes that are similar to some extent. Generalizations about adjustment are possible, and intercultural special-ists have' been offering generalizations for decades. One characteristic of virtually all such generalizations is that they include alternating high and low phases. In other words, there is wide agreement that sojourners go through cyclical periods of feeling very good and very bad for a period of time after entering the new environment.

So the first thing that can be said about a satisfactory adjustment is that some difficulties can be anticipated. A satisfactory adjustment is likely to include feelings of disillusionment, discouragement, depression, and so forth. Some sojourners are able to adapt far more easily than others, but all have problems to some extent. (We are talking now about sojourns in which the visitor is thoroughly involved with host nationals, as is the case with any intercultural homestay. We are not talking about tourist jaunts or resort vacations abroad, during which it may indeed be possible to avoid adjustment stress by maintaining only superficial contacts with host nationals.)

In the literature about student exchanges of some years ago, a popular way of describing a typical

student's ups and downs was to draw a wavy line (technically, a *sine wave)* running from left to right, and to label and describe each of the high and low points. Often the wavy line wisely represented not only the time the student spent in the host culture, but also periods of time before and after the sojourn abroad. An'illustration of this type of diagram is shown below?



This illustration was, and is, useful in emphasizing that the process of adaptation involves emotional highs and lows, and in pointing out that the return home ("return jitters" and "reverse culture shock") is a problematic experience, just as is the entry into the new culture. Also, the illustration's distinction between early "superficial accommodation" and later "genuine adjust-ment" is quite interesting because it underscores the fact that some values and norms of behavior of a new culture are so subtle that much time is required for a sojourner to really get a firm understanding of what is going on.

A problem with this way of illustrating the adjustment process is that it depicts the height of the highs and the depth of the lows as being uniform throughout the sojourn, thereby suggesting that the typical sojourner makes no progress toward returning to a normally stable emotional life. Another problem with this type of illustration is that it adopts an overly simplistic view of the nature of adjustment, treating it as though it is merely a matter of feeling emotionally good or bad. A more complex theory was published in the mid-1980s and may be consulted by interested readers)

Around 1980, some intercultural specialists tried to stop talking about adjustment or adaptation and instead began referring to the *effectiveness* of the visitor to the host culture. This approach, which originated with a respected research team in Canada,[4] was intended to draw the attention of practitioners away from the presumed importance of eliminating emotional and practical problems. After all, some sojourners can eliminate their distressing culture-contact problems by withdrawing from (or never entering into) significant daily relationships with host nationals and interacting almost exclusively with other expatriates living in the area. The emphasis, said the Canadians, should be on the sojourner's gradually growing ability to be fully involved with host nationals in a mutually satisfying way--in a word, to be interpersonally effective.

Adjustment Is Difficult! How Do People Cope?

Even though the process of adjustment--of becoming interpersonally effective in an unfamiliar culture--is fraught with challenges and periods of distress, most sojourners eventual-ly get through it. Along the way, however, they are likely to try to cope with the difficulties in ways that are unproductive. Two typical coping strategies have been labeled i~ and fi/ght. Fight suggests that the visitor adopts a hostile or excessively critical stance towards host nationals and their ideas, values, and customs, often noting their inferiority in comparison with home country ways. Flight occurs when the visitor withdraws from all but superficial contact with host nationals, either by maintaining close relationships only with other expatriates or, in a few cases,

by returning home prematurely.

Fight and flight are grounded in a desire to preserve and defend the values and patterns of behavior that one learned in the home country and should not necessarily be viewed as behaviors to be prevented at all costs. For many sojourners, adjustment must be a two-steps-forward-one-step-back process. The sheer quantity of new patterns--some of which are bound to seem not merely different but actually improper or even immoral--would overwhelm many people if they did not find some way to retreat, at least temporarily, into a familiar mental world. Seen from this point of view, fight and flight may actually enable some sojourners to feel safe and sane for a time while they gain renewed strength for another attempt to come to terms with the bewildering, perhaps threatening, newness of the host culture.

A rather rare coping mechanism is *going~ native,* This term describes those who rapidly and uncritically abandon their home-culture-based identities and attempt to imitate the behaviors and values of their hosts in every possible way. Typically, such people have little or nothing to do with fellow expatriates and adopt a disparaging attitude toward their own home country and its ways of life. Going native is difficult to understand because it appears to do nothing to help the visitor preserve his or her familiar world. And, insofar as it represents maximum adjustment to the host culture, it seems to be desirable. But going native is not a balanced approach to the conflicts between one's home and host cultures. The ease or even eagerness with which those who are going native renounce their home cultures suggests that they may have lacked a healthy sense of their own identity to begin with.

Like fight and flight, going native is not necessarily pathological. In the context of student exchanges, however, a tendency to go native is especially troublesome; all reputable sponsor-ing organizations take the position that the purpose of their programs is to broaden the young people's understanding of themselves and the world in which they live, not to replace all or even most of the values and behavorial norms that the young people learned in their home cultures. If you find that your exchangee is openly determined to reject all of his or her former ways of life in favor of yours, you should discuss the situation with a local or regional represen-· tative of the exchange organization.

What Is Culture Shock? And How Dangerous Is It?

Culture shock is a term that first appeared in 1958[s] and gained wide acceptance as a shorthand way of referring to the subjective impact of trying to deal with one's daily affairs among people whose habits of thought and patterns of behavior are different from one's own. Of course, this subjective impact is negative.

Almost all of our ideas about culture shock come from psychologists, who have tended to explain it in terms of mental confusion, emotional disturbance, and a long list of possible resulting symptoms including anxiety, frustration, insomnia, irrational fears, withdrawal, apathy, irritability, depression, homesickness, self-doubt, over-dependence, alienation, absent-mindedness, tenseness, hostility, hypochondria, feelings of isolation, overconcern with cleanliness, psychosomatic disorders, and other mental health problems,[s]

(It is fortunate indeed that most exchange students are not plagued by such a long list of complaints!)

Little has been said in the literature of intercultural relations about the physiological consequences of culture shock.[?] Meanwhile, however, physiologists have devoted decades of study to understanding the ways in which the body copes with a high degree of unfamiliarity in any environment. Their findings are directly applicable to the experiences of all sojourners. The physiologists tell us that the human body is well equipped to deal with events that are unfamiliar

or even threatening. Our endocrine (hormonal) and neurological systems are the ones that respond to unfamiliar situations by bringing our brain and sensory organs into a state of heightened alertness and by increasing almost instantly our physical preparedness to do what-ever may be required. Physiologists also tell us that whenever these systems are activated, our bodies are under stress.

Stress is by no means necessarily bad. Problems do occur, however, when one's neurolog-ical and endocrine systems rrlust respond to a high degree of unfamiliarity in the environment constantly and over a long period of time (days or weeks). When this happens, the body's coping systems become exhausted through overstimulation. Outwardly, the person looks and feels progressively more tired, weak, and depressed. Internally, the person's ability to produce white blood cells is sharply lowered, a serious matter because these cells are the central components in the body's immune system. The result is that he or she becomes highly susceptible to diseases such as the common cold and others that are more serious. If the person has a chronic illness such as diabetes, that is likely to take a turn for the worse. It is also known that this kind of long-term stress leads to menstrual irregularities in women.[8]

What Can Hosts Do to Help Prevent Culture Shock?

You've already done one thing that should prove useful. By studying this document, you have gained a better understanding of the nature of cultural adjustment and of culture shock. More to the point, you are aware that mental confusion, emotional mood swings, physical fatigue, and physiological susceptibility to disease are all normal and more or less temporary consequences of the intense effort that exchangees must put forth to understand and adapt to the unfamiliar values, habits of thought, and patterns of behavior that they suddenly encounter in your home, community, and culture. In short, you know that culture fatigue is to be expected and that culture shock is to be prevented.

Here are some specific steps you can take to help the exchange student whom you are hosting to avoid the serious impact of culture shock.

predictable. The life of your exchangee, at first, is not smooth or stress-free because so much of it is not predictable. What you need to do for him or her is to help make daily life predictable. And that requires explaining overall patterns as much as small details.

Keep in mind, by the way, that a significant portion of your student's life in your community will be spent with people his or her own age. The norms and fashions of young people tend to change fairly rapidly and to be rather opaque to adults. The host sibling closest in age to the exchange student therefore is likely to be best able to introduce him or her to the ways of the adolescent or young adult peer group, ff there is no host sibling of similar age, someone else should be recruited to help. Incidentally, asking someone to do this for the exchangee is not identical to asking that person to become the exchangee's best friend during the entire time of the homestay. A cultural informant may become the visitor's best friend.., or may remain merely a helpful acquaintance.

One final point about explanations: they probably will need to be given several times. Your culture is complex; one discussion is not likely to be sufficient for full understanding. Be patient. Try again.., and maybe even again.

2. Encourage Your Exchangee to Get Extra Rest. Culture fatigue, which is normal, and

culture shock, which is serious, are the result of requiring one's body to cope with unfamil-iarity (unpredictability) in the environment constantly and over a long period of time. Quite literally, the body becomes mentally and physically exhausted from the intense and unre-lenting effort. The exhaustion may not be avoidable, but the more serious psychological and physiological consequence of exhaustion--culture shock--is avoidable by the simple means of getting extra sleep and other forms of rest. Encouraging your student to get extra rest is probably the single most effective step you can take to prevent culture fatigue from turning into culture shock. Keep in mind that one can get extra rest by sleeping more or by merely having more quiet time in one's life. So do not make the mistake of overscheduling your student's time, especially during the early weeks.

3. Attend to All Minor Illnesses of Your Exchangee. It is quite common for sojourners of all kinds to become ill some days or weeks after entering the host culture. These illnesses are very likely related to the body's lowered resistance to disease, a result of the reduced number of white blood cells that is a well-known consequence of extended periods of stress. Knowing this underlying cause of the illness is not a reason for you to belittle its seriousness, but, on the contrary, to pay special attention to it. With the body already lacking its usual ability to fight off infection, disease is a more serious threat to one's well-being. An illness, even a sore throat, can linger far longer than it ordinarily might and can pave the way for more serious problems. Insist that the student get extra rest, in bed if the illness seems more serious than a common cold. Pamper him or her a little. Don't wait until matters begin to look serious before obtaining the advice of your family's physician. In the case of any illness requiring a physician's attention or of mental or emotional instability lasting more than a few days, be sure to tell the appropriate representative of the sponsoring organization.

4. Discuss All This Information with Your Exchangee. Some sojourners think that they have been singled out by fate for special problems; they become discouraged over their supposed bad fortune. Some become deeply distressed because they are unable to be as successful in getting things done and in dealing with other people as they were back in their home communities. But, of course, their difficulties are very probably within the normal range that is faced by virtually every sojourner. You can help by seizing opportunities to talk with your exchangee about the information given in this document. Emphasize to him or her that mental, emotional, and physical troubles are to be expected for a time. Suggest that temporm;ily lowered personal standards of success and failure will be useful in preventing undue discouragement during the first month or two of the homestay. Reassure your exchangee that you and others in the community understand the difficulties of adjusting to a new culture and will not make harsh judgments about his or her performance. And make it clear that, within the limits of your ability, youll always be available to listen, sympathize, and explain.

Children

ARE LIKE KITES.
YOU SPEND A LIFETIME
TRYING TO GET THEM OFF THE
GROUND. YOU RUN WITH THEM 'TILL YOU'RE
BOTH BREATHLESS..THEY CRASH..YOU ADD A LONGER TAIL.
THEY HIT THE ROOFTOP..YOU PLUCK THEM OUT OF THE SPOUT..YOU PATCH
AND COMFORT, ADJUST, TEACH..YOU WATCH THEM LIFTED BY
THE WIND....AND ASSURE THEM THAT SOMEDAY THEY
TOO WILL FLY!. FINALLY...THEY ARE AIR-
BORNE....BUT THEY NEED MORE AND
MORE STRING...YOU HESITATE
AND LET MORE OUT, AND IN
EACH TURN OF THE BALL
OF STRING THERE IS
A SADNESS.. SINCE
THE KITE GETS
MORE DISTANT
AND SURELY
IT WON'T
BE TOO
LONG
ERE
THAT
BEAUTIFUL
CREATURE
WILL
SNAP
THE
LIFE
LINE
THAT
HAS
BOUND
YOU
TOGETHER
FOR
THE
FIRST
YEARS
AND
THEN
THEY
SOAR
AS
IT
IS
MEANT
TO
BE

FREE
AND
ALONE!