

EXPATRIATION CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

HOW TO COPE WITH 'CULTURE SHOCK'

Transition is often the basis of many personal and interpersonal challenges.

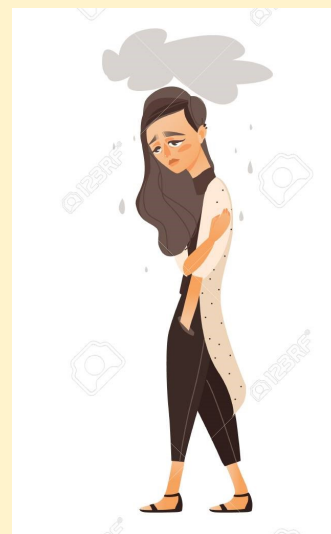
What may seem like an **obstacle** arising from transition may be a valuable **opportunity** for personal growth.

Culture Shock is the tension that results when there is a conflict and/or change involving core values. It is a **normal** response that can arise when you explore beyond the boundaries of your own culture and bump into differences that:

- 1) may not make sense to your way of thinking and behaving
- 2) cause you to feel an unfamiliar sense of tension or vulnerability

Common symptoms of Culture Shock may include:

- Sense of sadness, loneliness or melancholy
- Preoccupation with health
- Aches, pains and allergies
- Insomnia, desire to sleep too much
- Feeling vulnerable or powerless
- Anger, irritability, resentment
- Unwillingness to interact with others
- Identifying only with or idealizing home culture
- Sense of loss of identity
- Feeling of being overwhelmed
- Unable to solve simple problems
- Lack of confidence



Ten tips for coping with Culture shock:

- 1) Understand symptoms and recognize signs of Culture Shock
- 2) Know that your response is normal
- 3) Recognize that emotional reactions are not always subject to rational control
- 4) Gather information to understand cultural differences
- 5) Look for logical reasons behind host culture's patterns
- 6) Relax your grip on some of your home culture's practices and try to cheerfully adapt to new rules and roles
- 7) Resist the temptation to disparage what you do not like or do not understand about the host culture
- 8) Identify a support network in the new culture
- 9) Remember that any cultural clash you may experience will likely be temporary
- 10) Give yourself « quiet time » and some private space to calm internal tension and stress



EXPATRIATION CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

GET THE RIGHT INFORMATION

◆ LANGUAGE PROGRAMS

French lessons on site and off site

◆ DEDICATED NETWORKING FOR SPOUSES

The Welcome Volunteer network, special events for spouses (upcoming work forum), dedicated flyer for spouses

◆ ITER COMMUNITY

CEA-ITER activities

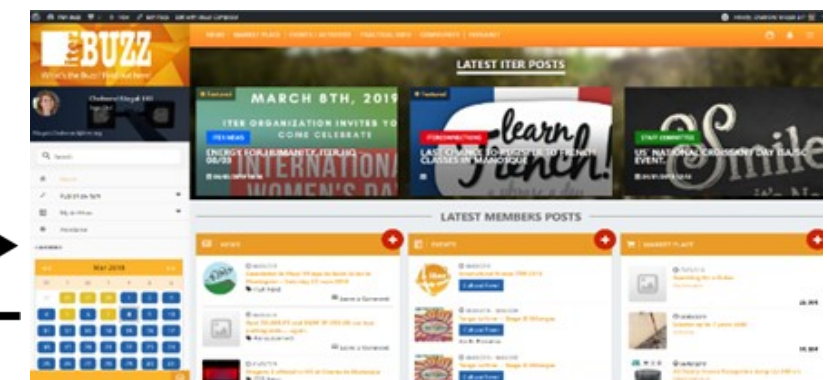
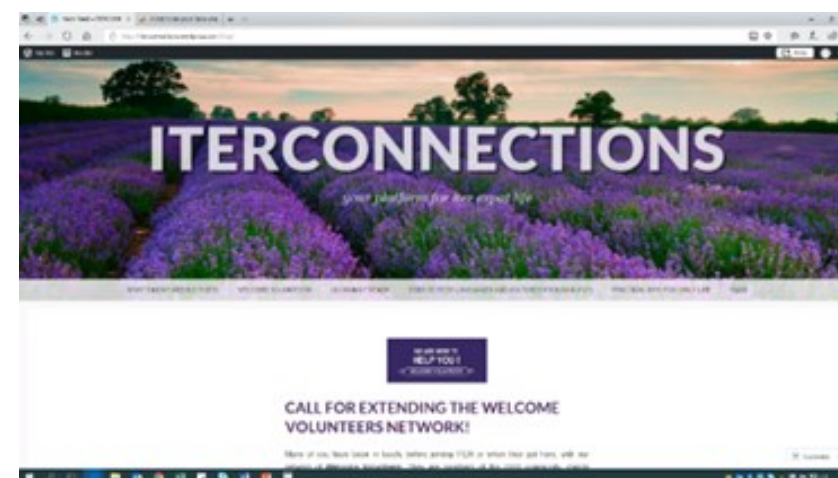
Intercultural events

◆ BOOKLETS / GUIDELINES

Medical / road safety / insurances / what to do in case of emergency/ guidebooks for day care centres, employment for spouses, tool kits for relocating in Provence...

◆ SOCIAL LIFE / NETWORKING

Iterconnections posts, local associations, WO events dedicated to staffs and families, inter-cultural awareness and workshops for staff and spouses



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ADVICE

- ◆ Do learn French - invest in your new life here
- ◆ Talk, make mistakes, be proactive in your communication and don't be afraid about it
- ◆ Interact with the French community, your neighbors, shopkeepers
- ◆ Simple words like: Bonjour, merci... will highly be appreciated
- ◆ Don't stay within your cultural community, go out of your comfort zone
- ◆ Speak to others about your expatriates challenges, they have been there too
- ◆ Sign up for activities or events so you can learn about French culture and all the other cultures at ITER
- ◆ Do not hesitate to contact the Welcome Volunteers for any help on everyday life



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ANY QUESTION?
CONTACT US AT welcome.office.admin@iter.org

That you enjoy your expatriation is one of our priorities !

Our mission is to provide you with useful tools and information
so that you can live a successful expatriation experience in France.
We are very happy to share our culture with people coming from all over the world.
We are also glad to learn from all of you.

For any questions and/or suggestions, come see us or do not hesitate to contact us.
Providing the right information or guidance and high quality services
within the scope of our missions is our main purpose.

Welcome to France and enjoy your time here !