

RETURNING FROM ABROAD

INTRODUCTIONS

Warren Jaferian, Dean, Office of International Education

Alicia Vinal, Study Abroad Advisor

Cheryl Etu, Clinical Counselor

Gail Cantor, Director of Spiritual Life

A VISUAL IMAGE

The Disruption

Think back to the moment or days when you made the decision or were possibly told that you needed to return to the states. What was your initial reaction? What did you feel?

Now, as you think back to your experience (however long), what word(s) would you use to describe the time there prior to the disruption...

OUR GOALS FOR TODAY

It is complicated. It makes sense. It is important. It is valuable.

- ☐ Create a space for connection, and begin the conversation and reflection with you on your experience.
- ☐ We want to explore the opportunities for ongoing learning, and consider how to make meaning from your time abroad (regardless of the abbreviation)
- ☐ We want to provide ongoing resources and opportunities to share your story as you finish out your “abroad” experience.

START WITH GRATITUDE...

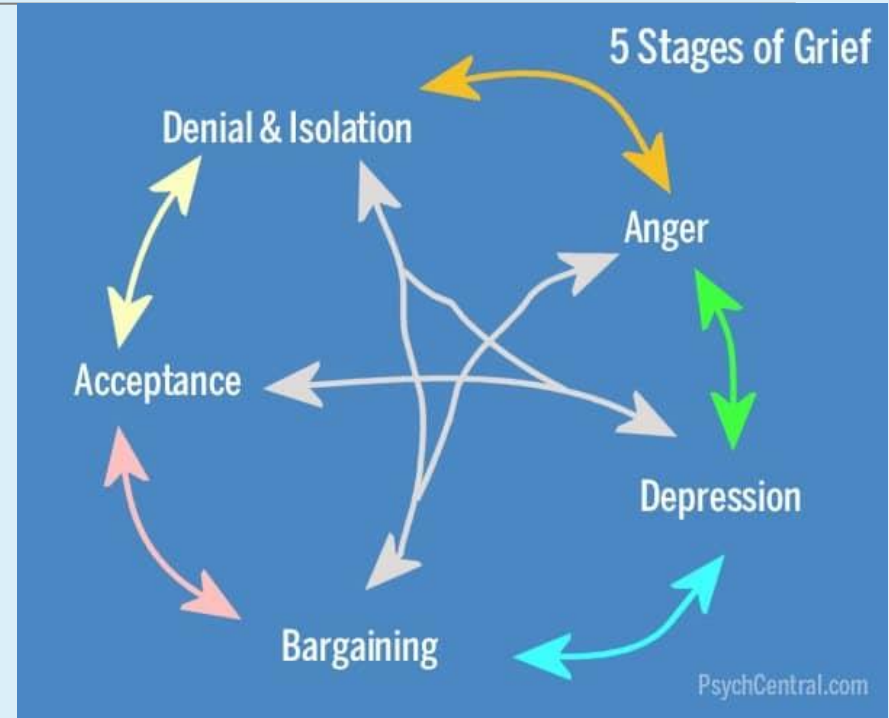
- What is one experience or person you are grateful for from your time abroad?
- Consider a snapshot/memory from your time abroad-- what feelings or thoughts do you have?
- What opportunities and experiences were you hoping for/ looking for in your study abroad experience? What of these were you able to do?
- What cultural mistake(s)/ faux pas did you find yourself making?
- What was a funny moment that you remember?

RECOGNIZE AND GIVE SPACE FOR GRIEF...

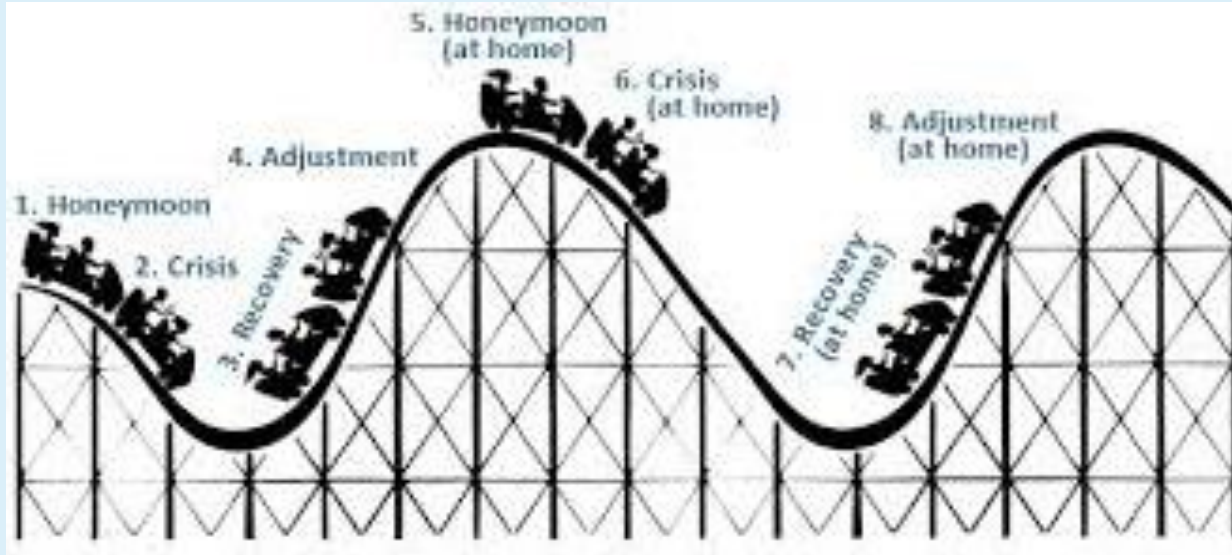
- What were you hoping for that did not happen? What losses are you beginning to recognize?
- How might you be experiencing grief?
- After the disruption to your spring term and your study abroad plans, have you heard any “at least” messages from friends and family since you returned home from abroad? What were they?
- What is an empathic response you wish they would have offered instead?

STAGES OF GRIEF

Grief isn't linear. It is complicated and messy!



REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK-THE “W” CURVE



CARING FOR OUR MENTAL HEALTH

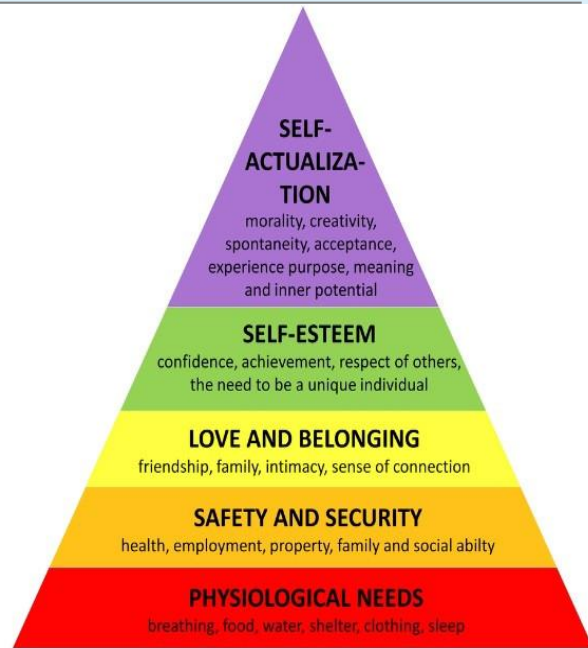
Take time

Tell your story

Connect with others

Practice Self-care and Self-Compassion

Seek support



ASSESSING OUR MENTAL HEALTH

Seek Support- a brief checklist for assessing our mental health

- ☐ Increased worry, fear, and feelings of being overwhelmed
- ☐ Feeling depressed, low and/or sad
- ☐ Inability to focus or concentrate accompanied by decreased academic performance or performance of other daily activities
- ☐ Sleep difficulties- not able to sleep or sleeping too much
- ☐ Excessive crying
- ☐ Isolating or withdrawing from others (emotionally)
- ☐ Unhealthy coping (e.g., increased alcohol or drug use, engaging in risky/impulsive behaviors)
- ☐ A feeling of hopelessness and/or a paralyzing fear about the future
- ☐ Sudden anger or irritability, or noticeable changes in personality


BE CREATIVE. STAY POSITIVE.

How will you be the best version of YOU during this time?

- ☐ Eat healthy/sleep/develop routine
- ☐ Take a walk. Complete at-home workouts.
- ☐ Read a book(s)
- ☐ Cook/bake your favorite dishes
- ☐ Paint. Draw. Take photographs.
- ☐ FaceTime/Zoom with friends & family



MAKE IT COUNT...



How have your
world/cultural
views changed?

How have your
values been
challenged, or
how have they
changed?

What did you
learn about
yourself?

What skills did
you acquire or
develop?

RESOURCES

- ✓ E-mailed Handouts for ongoing reflection: Reflection questions, Tips and Strategies, W- Reverse Culture Shock (Office of International Education)
- ✓ Coffee chats (Office of International Education & Counseling Center)
- ✓ Supportive Coaching Sessions- via Zoom (Counseling Center)
- ✓ Spirituality, worldview and existential questions (Reverend Gail Cantor)
- ✓ Gulls Pause and Chat, The Goddess Group (Reverend Gail Cantor)
- ✓ Tell your story! Home Instagram takeovers with @endicottabroad (Office of International Education)

QUESTIONS?
