Adjusting to Life After Studying Abroad

**Getting back into your groove**

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Anyone who has studied abroad can tell you, it’s a great life changing experience, and I’m no exception. I’ll never forget how I felt when my [study abroad program in London](http://www.studyabroad.com/programs/europe,england,london+other,greater+london,london/default.aspx) came to an end. I felt like the time went by too quickly and I wasn’t ready to go back home yet. Take it from me, adjusting back to life after studying abroad requires a conscious effort in order to positively re-assimilate, but by me sharing my experience, you can better prepare for your post-study abroad life.

**Friendly advice**Make sure you keep in touch with the people you met abroad. Whether they were fellow American students or foreign students you met during your trip, don’t forget them. Even though your friendships will likely be long-distance, a well-timed email, Facebook photo perusal or video message can make a world of a difference. Remember, the friends you made abroad are people you've come to care about, and it always feels good to hear from a person who shares the same experiences and fond memories as you.

Also, make an equally conscious effort not to push away your social life back home while you’re abroad. It’s easy for many students to come back from abroad and become a social hermit, which clearly won’t help matters either. Make the extra effort to meet new friends and stay in touch with old ones after you come back from studying abroad. Instead of sulking about why you’re no longer traveling and sightseeing in a foreign country, being social with friends eases the transition back to life at home because you’re engaged in the present instead of reliving what has already happened in the past.

It’s important to accept that your post-study abroad life is likely going to be different than your pre-study abroad life. You probably have a more open mind and you may have a different outlook on life, education and your future after returning home from your trip, thus changing some of the foundations that make up who you are and what you want.  Embrace these changes and use your abroad experience as a way to continue shaping who you are now and who you hope to become in the future.

**Don’t sweat the small stuff**When I became overwhelmed with reacquainting myself back to the U.S., I told myself to take it day by day and focus on the positives. For example, I made it a point to get excited about all of the things I could see, eat or do here at home that I missed while abroad.

I also kept a memento with me at all times to help cope with any sudden pangs of nostalgia for my time abroad. I chose to put a London Oystercard (their public transportation card) in my wallet which always makes me smile when I see it. It also always serves as tangible reminder of my adventures abroad and that if I want to, I can always choose to visit or move there in the future.

Remember to stay positive during your readjustment after studying abroad. It’s going to take time to get accustomed to your new life at home, but you never know, you could find yourself abroad again before you know it.

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