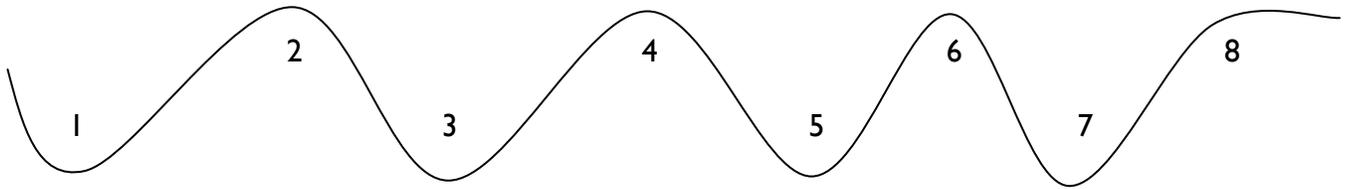


The Exchange Cycle



1. Application Anxiety
2. Selection/Arrival Fascination
 - Elation
 - Expectation
3. Initial Culture Shock: 1-6 Months
 - Novelty wears off
 - Characteristics:
 - Sleeping Habits
 - Disorientation
 - Language difficulties
 - Fatigue (Mental/Physical)
 - Eating
4. Surface Adjustments
 - After initial “down”
 - Settle in:
 - Language improves
 - Navigate culture
 - Friends
 - Social Life
5. Mental Isolation
 - Frustration increases
 - New sense of isolation
 - Boredom
 - Lack of Motivation
 - Unresolved problems
 - Language problems
6. Integration/Acceptance
 - Begin to examine society
 - Accept surroundings/self
7. Return Anxiety
 - Preparation for departure
 - Realize changes
 - Desire to stay
 - Results
 - Confusion/Pain
 - Breaking of bonds
 - No promise of renewal in future
8. Shock/Reintegration
 - Contrast of old and new
 - Family/friends
 - Difficulty to accept change
 - Not the center of attention
 - Others not interested in experience details
 - Reorientation

All exchange students experience phases of elation, anxiety, and depression. One or more of these phases will be experienced near the time of application processing. Various phases will then continue even after the student returns home. It is important that this be anticipated and calmly accepted and dealt with.

The best method to resolve each occurrence is to keep busy and remember that all the exchange students before you, with you, and who follow you, will experience similar circumstances.

Parents and host families need to know that exchange students will experience these phases and should not be alarmed. They should be ready to help the student work their way out of the down cycles.

The time necessary to work through each phase is not predictable and will depend on the student and circumstances.

Ref. Helmut Muscheid, Rotary Youth Exchange Officer - Germany