



# Escuela Las Morochas

ciudad Ojeda, Venezuela

*Developing lifelong learners and global citizens*

## *Cultural Adjustment*

Culture shock is a term used to describe the anxiety produced when a person moves to a completely new environment. This term expresses the lack of direction, the feeling of not knowing what to do or how to do things in a new environment, and not knowing what is appropriate or inappropriate. The feeling generally sets in after the first few weeks of coming to a new place.

We can describe this kind of transition as the physical and emotional discomfort one suffers when coming to live in another country or a place different from the place of origin. Often, the way that we lived before is not accepted as or considered as normal in the new place. Everything is different, for example, not speaking the language, not knowing how to use banking machines, not knowing how to use the telephone and so forth.

### **Characteristics of Culture Shock**

- Sadness, loneliness, melancholy
- Preoccupation with health
- Aches, pains, and allergies
- Insomnia, desire to sleep too much or too little
- Changes in temperament, depression, feeling vulnerable, feeling powerless
- Anger, irritability, resentment, unwillingness to interact with others
- Identifying with the old culture or idealizing the old country
- Loss of identity
- Trying too hard to absorb everything in the new culture or country
- Unable to solve simple problems
- Lack of confidence
- Feelings of inadequacy or insecurity
- Developing stereotypes about the new culture
- Developing obsessions such as over-cleanliness
- Longing for family
- Feelings of being lost, overlooked, exploited or abused

**Venezuelan Mail**  
Apartado Postal # 235  
Ciudad Ojeda - Estado Zulia  
Venezuela

**Director: Jeff Trudeau**  
Telephone: 58-265-631-5539 / 631-6032  
Fax: 58-265- 631-5539  
Cellular: 0414-3606827  
Email:  
[jtrudeau@escuelalasmorochas.com](mailto:jtrudeau@escuelalasmorochas.com)

**U.S. Express Mail Address**  
Escuela Las Morochas  
MCO 2409  
P.O. Box 025323  
Miami, FL 33102 - 5323



## **Stages of Cultural Transition**

Cultural transition, sometimes called "culture shock," has many stages. Each stage can be ongoing or appear only at certain times. In the first stage of culture shock, you may feel euphoric and be pleased by all of the new things encountered. This time is called the "honeymoon" stage, as everything encountered is new and exciting.

Afterwards, the second stage presents itself. You may encounter some difficult times and crises in daily life. For example, communication difficulties may occur such as not being understood. In this stage, there may be feelings of discontent, impatience, anger, sadness, and feeling incompetence. This happens when you are trying to adapt to a new culture that is very different from your home culture. Transition between the old methods and those of the new country is a difficult process and takes time to complete. During the transition, you may have strong feelings of dissatisfaction.

The third stage is characterized by gaining some understanding of the new culture. A new feeling of pleasure and sense of humor may be experienced. You may start to feel a certain psychological balance. You may not feel as lost and starts to have a feeling of direction. You are more familiar with the environment and want to belong. This initiates an evaluation of the old ways versus those of the new.

In the fourth stage, you realize that the new culture has good and bad things to offer. This stage can be one of double integration or triple integration depending on the number of cultures that the person has to process. This integration is accompanied by a more solid feeling of belonging.

The fifth stage is the stage that is called the "re-entry shock." This occurs when you return to your home country. You may find that things are no longer the same. For example, some of the newly acquired customs are not in use in the old culture.

These stages are present at different times and each person has their own way of reacting in the stages of culture shock. As a consequence, some stages will be longer and more difficult than others. Many factors contribute to the duration and effects of culture shock. For example, your state of mental health,

**Venezuelan Mail**  
Apartado Postal # 235  
Ciudad Ojeda - Estado Zulia  
Venezuela

**Director: Jeff Trudeau**  
Telephone: 58-265-631-5539 / 631-6032  
Fax: 58-265- 631-5539  
Cellular: 0414-3606827  
Email:  
[jtrudeau@escuelalasmorochas.com](mailto:jtrudeau@escuelalasmorochas.com)

**U.S. Express Mail Address**  
Escuela Las Morochas  
MCO 2409  
P.O. Box 025323  
Miami, FL 33102 - 5323



# Escuela Las Morochas

ciudad Ojeda, Venezuela

*Developing lifelong learners and global citizens*

type of personality, previous experiences, socio-economic conditions, familiarity with the language, family and/or social support systems, and level of education.

## How to Fight Culture Shock

The majority of individuals have the ability to positively confront the obstacles of a new environment.

Some ways to combat stress produced by culture shock are:

- Develop a hobby.
- Don't forget the good things you already have!
- Remember, there are always resources that you can use.
- Be patient, adjusting is an ongoing process of adaptation to new situations. It is going to take time.
- Learn to be constructive. If you encounter an unfavorable environment, don't put yourself in that position again. Be easy on yourself.
- Don't try too hard.
- Learn to include a regular form of physical activity in your routine. This will help combat the sadness and loneliness in a constructive manner. Exercise, swim, take an aerobics class, etc.
- Relaxation and meditation are proven to be very positive for people who are passing through periods of stress
- Maintain contact with the new culture. Learn the language. Volunteer in community activities that allow you to practice the language that you are learning. This will help you feel less stress about language and useful at the same time.
- Recognize the sorrow of leaving your old country but accept the new country. Focus your power on getting through the transition.
- Establish simple goals and evaluate your progress.
- Find ways to live with the things that don't satisfy you 100%.
- Maintain confidence in yourself. Follow your ambitions and continue your plans for the future.
- If you feel stressed, look for help. There is always someone or some service available.

**Venezuelan Mail**  
Apartado Postal # 235  
Ciudad Ojeda - Estado Zulia  
Venezuela

**Director: Jeff Trudeau**  
Telephone: 58-265-631-5539 / 631-6032  
Fax: 58-265- 631-5539  
Cellular: 0414-3606827  
Email:  
[jtrudeau@escuelalasmorochas.com](mailto:jtrudeau@escuelalasmorochas.com)

**U.S. Express Mail Address**  
Escuela Las Morochas  
MCO 2409  
P.O. Box 025323  
Miami, FL 33102 - 5323