Putting It into Perspective

Just as you had resources and preparation before you departed for your time abroad, similar resources and preparation can help a great deal in returning to the US. This activity begins by asking you to think back about when you were getting ready to go abroad and then asks you to consider how you might have changed during your time abroad. Answering these types of questions is a way to help you recognize small changes in yourself, while also helping you find the words to explain to others what your experience was like and why it is so important. Take your time to think about the questions before answering them, and feel free to come back to the activity later if you remember something you would like to add.

1. Before you left for your program, what excited you about it?
   - □ The opportunity to study overseas
   - □ Living in a different culture
   - □ Speaking another language
   - □ Making new friends
   - □ Developing professional skills
   - □ Becoming more independent

2. What reservations or fears did you have about going abroad?
   - □ Studying in a different culture
   - □ Housing arrangements
   - □ Speaking another language
   - □ Making new friends
   - □ Financial arrangements
   - □ Leaving friends and family
   - □ Medical facilities

3. What expectations did you have about the following items?
   - Academic environment
   - Communicating in another language
   - Housing
   - Transportation
   - Traveling
   - Developing new relationships
   - Keeping in touch with family and friends back home
   - Food
   - Other

4. Were your expectations met? If not, why?

5. Think back to when you first arrived in your host country and city. What were your initial observations and experiences? Were you surprised by anything your saw or experienced?

Adapted from “Back in the USA” by Dawn Kepets
6. How do you feel now about those initial observations and experiences?

7. What environmental factors affected you when you first arrived in your host country?
   - Noise level/type
   - Hours of sunlight
   - Automated systems
   - Urban/rural settings
   - Racial/ethnic population
   - Population density
   - Smells

8. Will these environmental factors be the same or different when you return to the US?

9. Did living in another culture cause you to change your daily routine? How is it different from the daily routine you had in the US before you went abroad?

10. How did your attitude change toward the following:
    - Concept of Time
    - Noise
    - Privacy
    - Spatial relations
    - Touching
    - Independence
    - Academic course load
    - Dress
    - Responsibilities at home/school
    - Status/prestige on campus
    - Pace of life
    - Material concerns

11. What were the three easiest adjustments for you to make? How long did it take to make those adjustments?
    1.
    2.
    3.

12. What were the three most difficult adjustments for you to make? How long did it take to make those adjustments?
    1.
    2.
    3.
13. What did you do to make these adjustments?

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________________________________________________________________________

14. What skills did you use in making these adjustments?

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________________________________________________________________________

15. Is there anything that you were never able to adjust to?

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16. What did you enjoy most about your time abroad?

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________________________________________________________________________

17. Are there any customs, sports, styles of dressing, foods, shopping patterns, etc. that you have adopted from your host culture?

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<th>Socially</th>
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18. Will you be able to continue these practices or customs back in the US?

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19. What greetings, gestures, or expressions that you have begun to use regularly?

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________________________________________________________________________

20. How do you think your family, friends, and professors will react to the items you listed in #17 and #19?

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