

Culture Shock



What it is it?

An [online dictionary](#) defines culture shock as: ***a state of bewilderment and distress experienced by an individual who is suddenly exposed to a new, strange, or foreign social and cultural environment.***

To delve a bit further in the definition: culture shock is a reaction to all the changes that surround you when you arrive in a different country/place. The differences vary from the weather, the landscape, the smells and sounds, the food, store hours, and language ... just to name a few!

What are some of the symptoms?

Here are *some* signs and symptoms of culture shock:

- a feeling of sadness and loneliness
- an over-concern about your health
- headaches, pains, and allergies
- insomnia or sleeping too much
- feelings of anger, depression, vulnerability
- idealizing your own culture
- trying too hard to adapt by becoming obsessed with the new culture
- the smallest problems seem overwhelming
- feeling shy or insecure
- become obsessed with cleanliness
- overwhelming sense of homesickness
- feeling lost or confused
- questioning your decision to move to this place

How to Cope?

If you feel any of these symptoms, it's very important that you take **action** to help you get back to feeling like yourself! There are many resources that can help you manage and cope with your adjustment to a new place. The common answer and the most important thing you can do to help yourself adjust is **GETTING INVOLVED!** Whether it be volunteering, joining a club, or just hanging out at the local coffee shop, anything you do to get yourself out there will help you make friends and slowly get you acquainted with your new surroundings!

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Fortunately, being a part of the York University community allows you the access to a wide arrange of services and opportunities to help you enjoy your time and succeed while studying at York!

Here is a list of some departments and/or services that may help you overcome culture shock and help you academically as well. *(Note: This is not an exhaustive list)*

- **YUconnect** -- A new online system for getting involved at York! A place to find resources and involvement opportunities. They also list all the student run clubs and organizations and have a list of events for you to participate in!
[Visit YUConnect](#)
- **U Centre for Student Success** -- Connect with the LA&PS Centre for Student Success and discover how getting engaged outside of the classroom can enhance your York experience!
[Visit the Centre for Student Success](#)
- **U Liberal Arts & Professional Studies (LA&PS) Academic Advising** -- Get information on university and program policies or other academic options!
[Find out about Academic Advising](#)
- **@tutor** -- Through the Writing Department, Liberal Arts & Professional Studies, students have the opportunity to improve their writing skills and help you build your confidence!
[Find out more about the Writing Department's resources](#)
- **U English as a Second Language (ESL) Open Learning Centre (OLC)** -- A **free** service to all York students that offers one-on-one tutoring with a York Faculty member, small group discussions, movie nights, workshops and more!
[Learn more about the OLC](#)
- **York International** -- The Department of York International is committed to helping all of York's international students and is a good place to start if you have any questions and want to meet other international students!
[Visit York International](#)
- **U Counselling and Disability Services** -- This department offers free personal counselling services and much more to help students manage the challenges of university life.
[Learn more about CDS](#)