

The Rotary Youth Exchange Experience:

Culture Shock and Reverse Culture Shock



District 5440 Outbound Student Orientation – April 2025

Adapted from a presentation by Dennis White, Ph.D.

Culture Shock

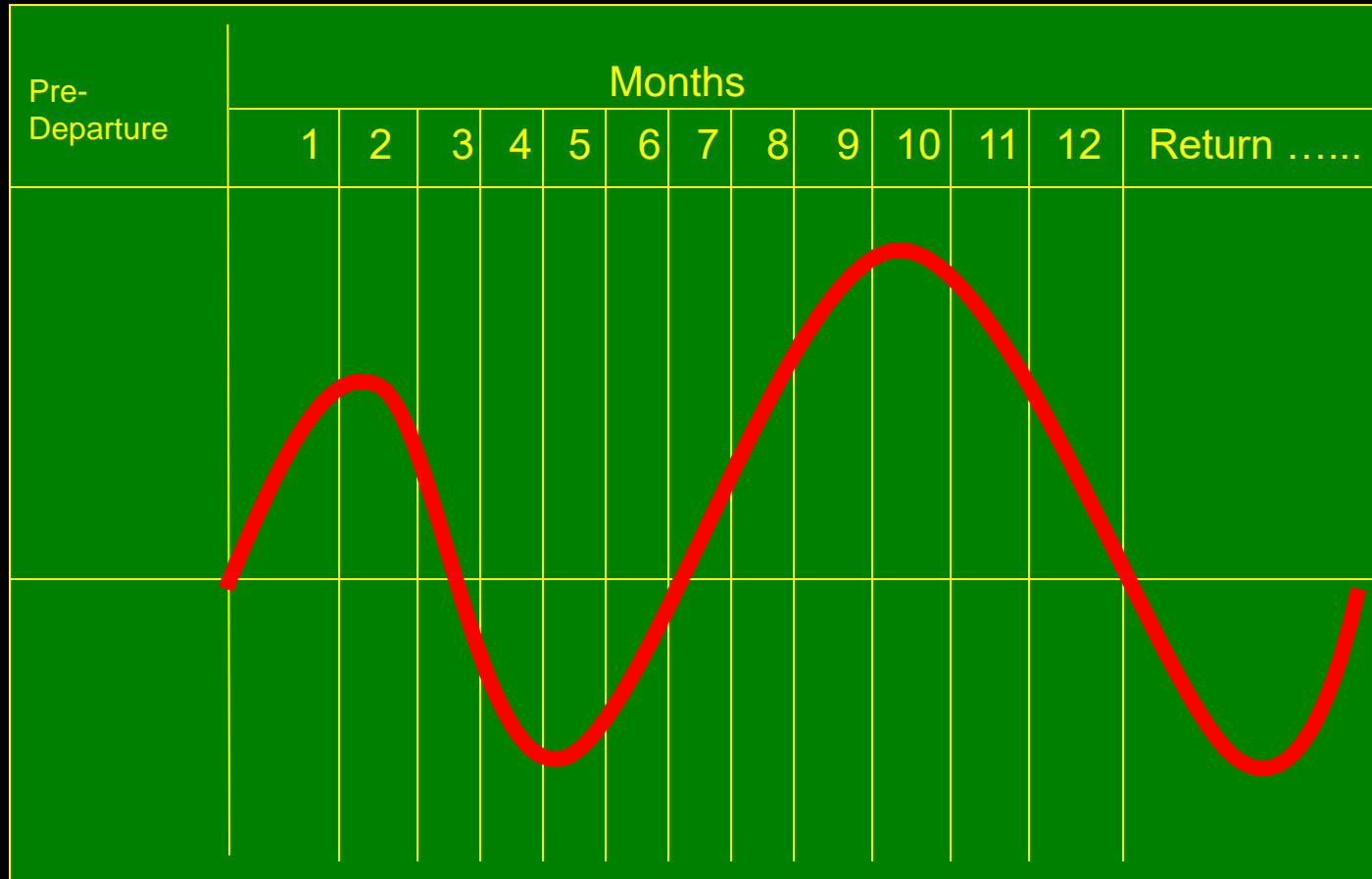


The profound sense of disorientation and discomfort that comes with extended travel or living in a foreign culture markedly different from one's own.

Stages of Culture Shock:

1. Initial enthusiasm and excitement
2. Irritability and negativism
3. Gradual adjustment and adaptation
4. Integration and bi-culturalism

Typical Culture Shock Cycle





How to cope???

- **Seek out students or locals who can offer support and friendship.**
- **Approach new experiences with curiosity and an open heart.**
- **Join clubs, attend cultural events, and be participative.**
- **Try to personalize your new home with homely feelings.**
- **Accept invitations to events and participate in cultural events.**

Coping, continued

- Find something you love to do in your new home.
- Try to get engaged in things as much as you can.
- Take time to explore your new city or town.
- Visit local landmarks and try different cuisines.
- Keep in touch with family and friends back home.
- Take care of your physical and emotional well-being. Get enough rest, eat healthily, and exercise regularly.

THE WAVE

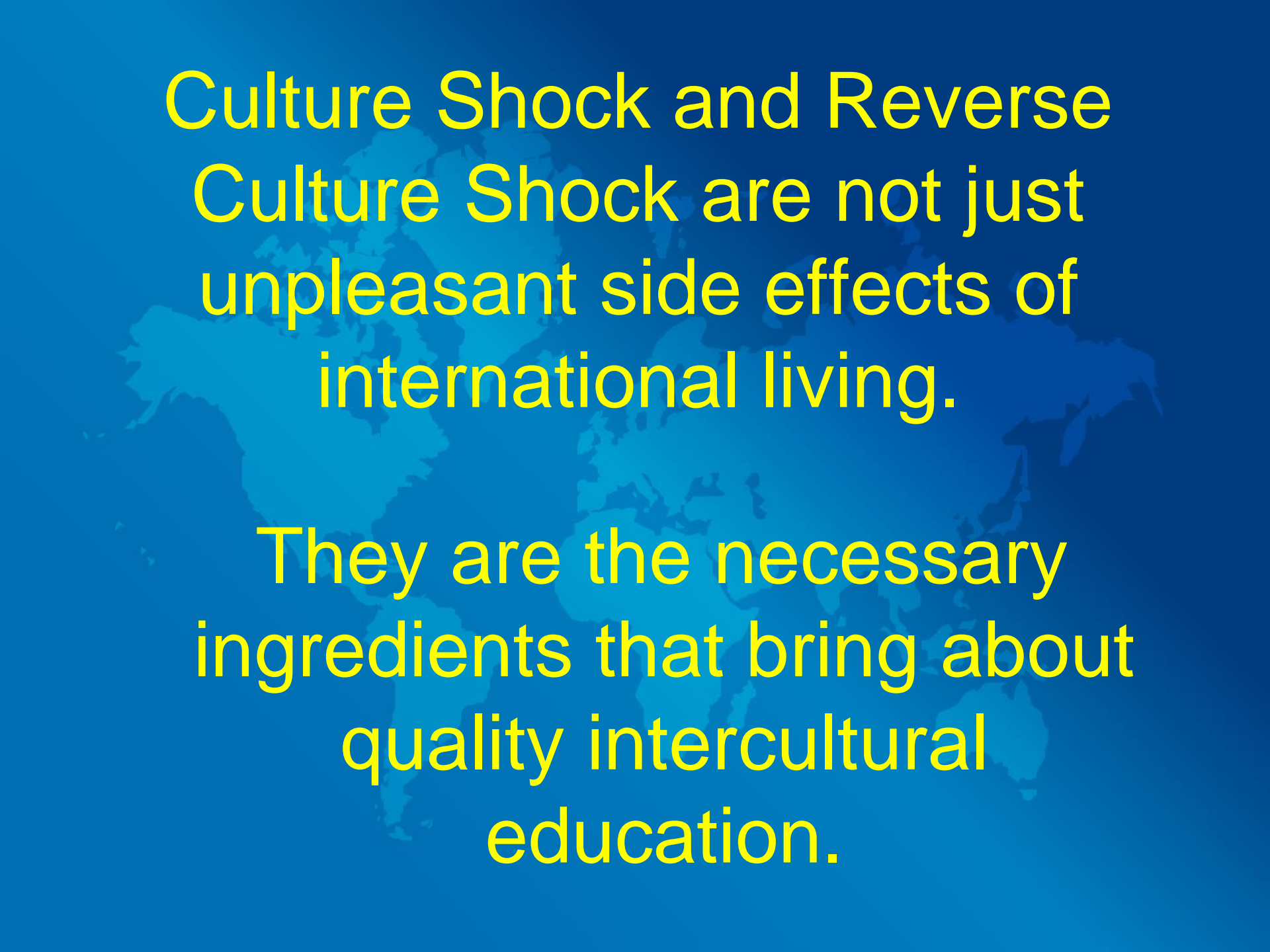
Exercise





Most people anticipate some degree of culture shock.

Very few people believe they will experience reverse culture shock.

A faint, light blue world map is visible in the background of the slide, centered behind the text.

Culture Shock and Reverse
Culture Shock are not just
unpleasant side effects of
international living.

They are the necessary
ingredients that bring about
quality intercultural
education.

“The Wizard of Oz – revisited”



“Damn, Toto! We’re back in Kansas!”



Questions?

Comments?

Will this happen to you?