

What Every Volunteer Program Director Needs to Know to Help their Volunteers Transition Successfully

Presented by:
Jennifer Taylor and
Andy Thompson of the
Saint Vincent Pallotti Center

www.pallotticenter.org







What Every Volunteer Program Director Needs to Know to Help their Volunteers Transition Successfully

Presented by: Andy Thompson and Jennifer Taylor of the St. Vincent Pallotti Center


www.pallotticenter.org



Here is What You've Told Us

When asked why you were attending this workshop, this is what you said.

- Define Transition
- Address the Concerns of Volunteers
- Distinguish between Domestic and International Re-entry and Transition
- Challenges to Addressing the Needs of Volunteers
- What Resources are Available?
- How Do Other Programs Prepare their Exiting Volunteers?



Objectives of the Workshop

We want you to leave with a better understanding of..

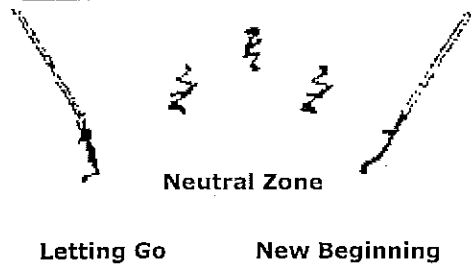
1. The transition process.
2. How you as program staff can address the needs of the "transitioning volunteer."
3. The resources available for the transitioning volunteer.
4. What volunteer programs are doing to address transition and re-entry with their volunteers.
5. How to identify ways that programs and alumni can stay connected to one another.

William Bridges' Model

Change vs. Transition

- Change *occurs outside of us*, e.g. starting a new job or moving to a new place.
- Transition *is the internal adjustment we make* as a change occurs.
- Example - Change follows the timing of a clock whereas transition follows the timing of the heart.

The Three Phases of Bridges' Transition Process



Letting Go

A transition begins when you acknowledge a loss and let go of a past identity.

To successfully transition, we need to deal adequately with *endings*, with *their consequences*, and with *the risks* of letting go.

What's at Risk:

Failure to let go could...

- Lead to a subsequent disabling, chronic or unexplainable sense of loss.
- Foster the development of unhealthy attachments to living in the past.
- Delay consideration of new possibilities.

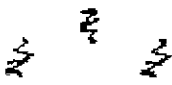
What's Possible:

Letting Go...


- Allows us to better handle the grief caused by the change/loss.
- Helps us, following a loss, face the uncertainty of the Neutral Zone.
- Gives us a chance to grow in new ways.
- Allows us to more aptly consider the new possibilities of the Neutral Zone.

Neutral Zone

The time when the old way is gone, but your new identity is not yet clear. Marvelous growth is possible.




This middle time is like floating between the trapezes. We've let go of one trapeze and believe the second will arrive on time. But for now, we have little to hold onto except our own convictions and skills.



What's at Risk:

During this time...


- Old weaknesses can re-emerge.
- We can become stagnant in self-doubt.
- Instead of pursuing new possibilities productively, we may expend our energy simply coping.



What's Possible:

This is a time when...

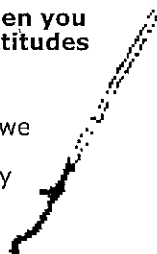
- Through creativity we can experience breakthroughs, rather than breakdowns.
- We can break out of the false belief that whatever *is*, is right.
- Discovery, innovation and personal enhancement are most possible.



New Beginning

The final phase starts when you commit to new values, attitudes and a new identity.

The new beginning is when we have made the internal conversions and convincingly see ourselves in a new role, relationship or situation.



What's at Risk:

New Beginnings can...

- Re-activate the old anxieties associated with the ending of the old way.
- Trigger memories of past failures and their associated loss of self-esteem.
- Frighten us because they call for a new commitment.

What's Possible:

We can experience...

- A strong sense of confidence that we know who we are.
- A celebration of having made a successful transition.
- A sense of well-being with where we are in our lives and where we are going.

Identifying the Needs of Your Volunteers

- *From the perspective of the volunteer...*
It's two months until your term of service ends, What are your concerns?
- *From your perspective...*
What are your concerns in the final few months of the program?

Examples of Volunteers' Transition Concerns

Domestic

- Leaving Volunteer Community
- Staying connected to social justice issues
- Saying good-bye to friends, clients
- Stress about not knowing what to do next

International

- Leaving a culture, they've become accustomed to
- Anxiety about not being able to find a job
- Feeling disconnected from the people they were once close to back home

Program Directors' End-of-Year Concerns

- What's on your plate while your volunteers are entering the transition process?

"The Urgent is the Successful Enemy of the Important."

Resources to Help Meet Volunteers' Needs

o **Pallotti Center Resources**

- The "What's Next?" Notebook
- Shared Visions Newsletter
Includes: Beginning Concerns, Mid-Year Discoveries, Further Challenges and Closure Issues
- Network of Former Volunteers

Additional Resources

- **From Mission to Mission**
www.missiontomission.org
- Reference handouts
- **Jesuit Volunteers International**
Contact: Matt Petrich at
mpetrich@jesuitvolunteers.org
- And You!

Discussion of Programs' Resources

- What opportunities do you have to address transition with the volunteers you work with? (e.g. orientation, retreats, debriefing)
- What are you already doing? What techniques do you use that work well?

How to Stay Connected to Alumni

- What are you doing to keep alumni connected?

Ideas and Suggestions:
 - Creating an alumni network
 - Staying Connected Newsletter (upcoming issue)
 - Ideas shared: mentoring roles for former volunteers, others?

Staying Connected

a publication designed for alumni of Catholic full-time volunteer programs
brought to you by the St. Vincent Pallotti Centers

Volume 2, Number 4

Winter 2000

How to Make the Most of Your Life's Transitions

In the years following service, former volunteers experience many life changes. These major life events - from changing jobs, to living in a new city, to starting new relationships - can be especially challenging for "formers" who often struggle to incorporate their social justice, spirituality and community ideals into all aspects of life. These life changes present rich opportunities for growth.

THE INSIDE SCOOP:

- **Making Sense of Your Personal Transitions.....** p.2
- **Conversion as Transition.....** p.3
- **Former Volunteer Sightings in: the Portland, OR & Seattle, WA areas.....** p.3
- **Leading by Telling Your Story.....** p.4

Making successful transitions is an invaluable skill all of us can develop. In this issue of *Staying Connected*, we present a basic framework for understanding transitions and suggest skills to help you make the most of them, whether in your career, relationships, spiritual life or other areas.

A first step to understanding transition is recognizing the **difference between change and transition**. William Bridges, a renowned transition expert, makes this important distinction: *Change occurs outside of us*, e.g., starting a new job or a long time friend moving away. *Transition is the internal adjustment we make as change occurs*. Each change we experience must be accompanied by a transition in how we think and feel about ourselves, others, our priorities and actions. Below, we present Bridges' ideas about the three phases of transition.

The Transition Process Typically Has Three Phases:

Letting Go

A transition begins when you acknowledge a loss and let go of a past identity.

To successfully transition, we need to deal adequately with endings, with their consequences, and with the risks of letting go.

What's at Risk:

Failure to let go could...

- ▶ Lead to a subsequent disabling, chronic or unexplainable sense of loss.
- ▶ Foster the development of unhealthy attachments, to living in the past.
- ▶ Delay consideration of new possibilities.

What's Possible:

Letting go...

- ▶ Allows us to better handle the grief caused by the loss / change.
- ▶ Helps us, following a loss, face the uncertainty of the Neutral Zone.
- ▶ Gives us a chance to grow in new ways.
- ▶ Allows us to more aptly consider the new possibilities in the Neutral Zone.

Neutral Zone

The time when the old way is gone, but your new identity is not yet clear. Marvelous growth is possible.

This middle time is like floating between trapezes. We've let go of one trapeze and believe the second will arrive on time. But for now we have little to hold on to, except our own convictions and skills.

What's at Risk:

During this time...

- ▶ Old weaknesses can re-emerge.
- ▶ We can become stagnant in self-doubt.
- ▶ Instead of pursuing new possibilities productively, we may expend our energy simply coping.

What's Possible:

This is a time when...

- ▶ Through creativity, we can experience breakthroughs, rather than breakdowns.
- ▶ We can break out of the false belief that whatever is, is right.
- ▶ Discovery, innovation and personal enhancement are most possible.

New Beginning

This final phase starts when you commit to new values, attitudes, and a new identity.

The new beginning is when we have made the interior conversions and convincingly see ourselves in a new role, relationship or situation.

What's at Risk:

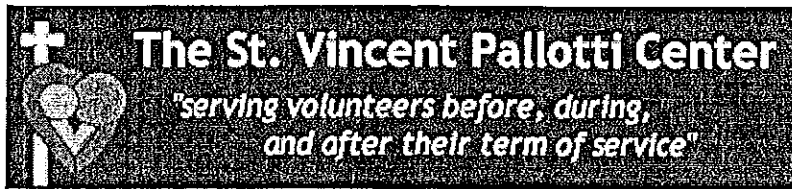
New beginnings can...

- ▶ Re-activate the old anxieties associated with the ending of the old way.
- ▶ Trigger memories of past failures and their associated loss of self-esteem.
- ▶ Frighten us because they call for a new commitment.

What's Possible:

We can experience...

- ▶ A strong sense of confidence that we know who we are.
- ▶ A celebration of having made a successful transition.
- ▶ A sense of well-being with where we are in our lives and where we are going.



[\[Home\]](#) [\[Feedback\]](#) [\[Search\]](#)

Prospective Volunteers

General Information
Should I Volunteer?
Find a Program
Connections Directory
Voices of Volunteers

Current Volunteers

Shared Visions
Free Newsletter
Activity of the Week
Recipe of the Week

Former Volunteers

Staying Connected
Free Newsletter
What's Next Notebook
Network of Formers
Job Bank

Resources

Upcoming Events
Resources in Your Area
Discussion Forum
Order Publications
Links

About the Pallotti Center

Contact Us
Services
Staff
Regional Offices
Who are Pallottines?
Support Our Services

Resource Page: for Directors and Staff of Volunteer Programs

To directors and staff of volunteer programs: This page is designed as your guide to the Pallotti Center's website, so that it might be a more effective resource for your daily work of promoting, developing, and nurturing your organization. We hope that you will find pertinent information, ideas, and even inspiration from our links and publications! Feel free to contact the Pallotti Center with any questions or suggestions. Click [here](#) to send us an e-mail.

Do you want to support and encourage your current volunteers?

Shared Visions is a free newsletter distributed by the Pallotti Center. Shared Visions is published quarterly, with each issue focusing on a particular stage of the volunteer experience. Order [Shared Visions](#) to assist in the spiritual formation of your current volunteers, and peruse our online archives.

Our [Current Volunteers Page](#) offers a variety of resources--both spiritual and practical--to assist volunteer communities throughout their term of service. Please encourage your volunteers to utilize and to contribute to these suggestions for community activities, local resources, books, recipes and more.

The 'What's Next?' Notebook addresses issues encountered in the post-service stage of volunteering. This resource will be helpful to volunteers and lay missionaries as they approach the conclusion of their service term and begin transitioning to their next steps. ['What's Next?'](#) is available online in both HTML and PDF formats.

Do you want the alumni of your program to find meaning in their post-service life?

Staying Connected is another free newsletter from the Pallotti Center, created to assist former volunteers on their journey after their term of service. This newsletter explores questions regarding decision-making, leadership, relationships, and spirituality--an excellent resource for volunteers as they begin a new stage of life. Order a print version of [Staying Connected](#) for your office staff, or browse through our online archives.

Our [Network of Former Volunteers](#) connects 'formers' across the nation, providing a supportive community for discussion, assistance, and advice. Members of the network not only assist each other in finding jobs and

Shared Visions Archives

At a national gathering in 1986, the directors of Catholic lay volunteer and missioner programs said they needed resources to help nurture their volunteers. Shared Visions, a quarterly publication, was the result of this need. It was developed to help volunteers explore five building blocks of spiritual development: Intellectual Growth, Emotional and Physical Health, Leadership and Prayer. This Shared Visions Archive has been indexed according to the typical volunteer year cycle. The issues of Shared Visions have been filed into **four categories** with **the most recent volume** at the top of each section. The sections are as follows:

Beginning Concerns *Number 1*

Everything is new for the volunteers or missioners during their first few months of service. These issues of Shared Visions help volunteers to define expectations and concerns about their community, job placement, program and themselves.

Mid-Year Discoveries *Number 2*

As communities and workers are settling in mid-year, many other concerns are now surfacing and need to be processed and discussed. Shared Visions helps to identify and work through these discoveries.

Further Challenges *Number 3*


The home stretch has started. Volunteers are gaining a second wind and strengthening themselves, both in community and personally. Shared Visions recognizes this opportunity though, to continue delving deeper and confronting challenges head on.

Closure Issues *Number 4*

The time eventually comes when the volunteers and missioners prepare to move on to their next step -- whatever it may be. Through these copies of Shared Visions, we present exercises and reflections to help make this transition easier.

Each issue of Shared Visions may not fit exactly into these categories, but we always focus on topics that are relevant to the volunteers' cycle.

Email: sharedvisions@pallotticenter.org www.pallotticenter.org



The St. Vincent Pallotti Center
*"serving volunteers before, during,
 and after their term of service"*

[Home] [Feedback] [Search]

- Prospective Volunteers**
- General Information
- Should I Volunteer?
- Find a Program
- Connections Directory
- Voices of Volunteers
- Current Volunteers**
- Shared Visions
- Free Newsletter
- Activity of the Week
- Recipe of the Week
- Former Volunteers**
- Staying Connected
- Free Newsletter
- What's Next Notebook
- Network of Formers
- Job Bank
- Resources**
- Upcoming Events
- Resources in Your Area
- Discussion Forum
- Order Publications
- Links
- About the Pallotti Center**
- Contact Us
- Services
- Staff
- Regional Offices
- Who are Pallottines?
- Support Our Services



Catholic Volunteers in Florida

Activity of the Week Archives

From games to biblical reflections, we have over 100 activities for your volunteer community.

Beginning Concerns	Mid-Year Discoveries	Further Challenges	Closure Issues
All These Names!	A Thanksgiving Reflection	Alone Time?	Being Present: In this Time, In this Place
An Exchange of Gifts	Advent/Christmas Sharing Calendar	Are Things Balanced in Your Life?	Bible Stories About Conversions
Bones of Contention	Advent and Volunteering	Ask Vinnie, the Former Volunteer	By the Way How are YOU Feeling?
Building Bridges	Advent: A Time to Wake Up!	Big Picture	Christ Sends You
Confront, Deny or Run Away Screaming	Angelic Christmas Message	Doubting Thomas	Closure Tree
Coping With Stress	Our Lady of Guadalupe	Finding Time for Yourself	Create-a-Cookbook
Creative Confusion	Building Relationships	Folded Linen Cloths	Create-a-Cookie
Expanding Your Comfort Zones	Celebrating God's Presents	Guided Imagery	Award Ceremony
Getting to Know You	Celebrating Saints and Souls	Introduce Your Butterfly	Decoupage
Good Riddance to Junk Mail!	Chicken Soup for the Volunteer.	Live Life to the Fullest	Doors to My Future
Great Volunteer Permission Slip Giveaway	Community Cookie Swap	Living Life Passion-ately	Evening of Reflection: A Time of Transition
Group and Self Awareness Activity	Community Debriefing Game	Lenten Renewal	Goodbyes in the Bible
Have Any Dreams Lately?		Lent: Nurturing a Faith that Does Justice	Grand Finale
Imagine Your Community		Out of the Ordinary	It Did for That One
		Passing Over Into Others' Lives	Let's Hand it to
		Pax Christi: Prayer for World Peace	



Closure Issues

The time eventually comes when the volunteers and missionaries prepare to move on to their next step -- whatever it may be. Through these copies of Shared Visions, we present exercises and reflections to help make this transition easier.

<i><u>Volume</u></i>	<i><u>Topics Covered</u></i>
<u>Vol. 16, No. 4</u>	Transitioning from Volunteer Service Movie Morality 'A Year in Review' BR: Getting to the Heart of the Matter
<u>Vol. 15, No. 4</u>	Thanksgiving in May? Re-entry Resources BR: Taking time to be Grateful
<u>Vol. 14, No. 4</u>	Savoring the Moments Community Ritual Positive Imagery: Who you were, who you are and who you want to be BR: Do you think God Plays Favorites?
<u>Vol. 13, No. 4</u>	What's Your Label? A Voice for the Voiceless Great Fall Recipe Faith and Stereotypes BR: Labels!
<u>Vol. 12, No. 4</u>	How are YOU Feeling? Next Step: Simple Clarifying Questions to Ask Yourself Understanding Your Story Telling Your Volunteer Story BR: Bible Stories About Conversions Can Expand Your Own Story
<u>Vol. 11, No. 4</u>	Managing transitions, coming to terms with unmet expectations & dreams, relating to family/friends upon return, handling future uncertainties Doors to My Future Yellow and Blue Make Green Pallotti Center Services for Former Volunteers BR: Saying Goodbye and Handling the Guilt... in the Spirit of the Gospel
<u>Vol. 10, No. 4</u>	Balancing holding on and letting go. Tell Us What You Want, What You Really, Really Want! It Did For That One" (making a difference) Pallotti Center Services for Former Volunteers BR: What Are the Sources of Your Spiritual Energy?

Telling Your Volunteer Story

..... *The Challenge You Might Not Have Imagined*

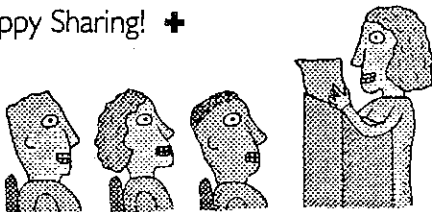
It's one thing to understand your story and feel as though you have done a psychologically balanced job of assessing it all (and that's not to say that the process will not continue with the passage of time). It's a whole other ball of wax to communicate that story to various people and audiences. As former volunteers can tell you, you should be prepared to communicate your story effectively, respectfully and genuinely.

Volunteers can experience disappointment when family and friends seem disinterested or only partly interested in their volunteer story. Family and friends on the other hand, often feel judged or threatened by the volunteer, fearing that not a bit of their old *son/daughter/friend/brother/sister* still remains after so much time away.

In short, the experience of sharing and telling your story can be liberating and cathartic, but also frustrating and upsetting for yourself and others.

Therefore, in light of these challenges we present you with some tips for telling your volunteer story.

Happy Sharing! +



"Ladies and Gentlemen, the topic of my presentation will be 'Volunteering: The Road to Unimagined Bliss or Complete Suffering?'"

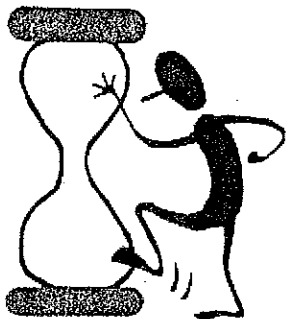
Tips for Communicating Your Story

- ☞ Be genuine. Be true to your ideals and your experience. Don't make the elements of your story more or less dramatic than they were in order to seem more appealing.
- ☞ Reflect on where your listener is coming from. Ask yourself the following questions: Have they volunteered before? Have they ever met someone who volunteered full time? What was your relationship to that person in the past? What is your relationship now?
- ☞ Take the answers to the above questions into account and respectfully address your listener.
- ☞ Don't judge! Ask yourself, "Are my parents/friends etc. ready to hear what I have to say?" Reflect, "Are my emphases on simple living, social justice, etc. just veiled judgments or am I responding to them with love and respect?"
- ☞ With that in mind be prepared that some people will need you to tell them the essence of your story in a few minutes.
- ☞ Prepare different versions of your story for different audiences, e.g., a 2-3 minute version, 5- minute version, or even a 60- minute version with food and stories.
- ☞ Do not take negative reactions or inattentiveness as a judgment on your experience. Only you know the true worth of what you have lived!
- ☞ Understand that no one can validate or legitimate your experience for you. That's your responsibility.
- ☞ Don't think of telling your story as "unloading" it. Unloading is best done with a former volunteer, a spiritual director, a mental health professional and most importantly, God.
- ☞ *Ask God to be with you during this time of transition and communication. Trust in the Spirit's guidance, know that you have your own good news to share, and take heart in the experience of the early disciples who spread the message of Christ all over the world.*

ANXIETY:

HOW TO DEAL WITH IT IN YOUR LAST MONTHS.

Ever tried performing a "mindsweep"?



Volunteers often have a difficult time meeting all the expectations and demands of their final weeks of service. Sometimes the pressure comes from oneself, sometimes from others.

The key is to find practical ways of responding and dealing with it. Here's one technique some people find helpful to do from time to time, namely, a "mind sweep."

DIRECTIONS

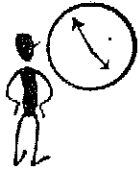
- When you have 20 or 30 minutes to spare, sit down with pen and paper in a quiet place where you will not have to answer phones or meet others' demands.
- Draw a line down the middle of the page. In the left hand column, begin making a list of all the tasks you are worried about completing, be they big or small, job-related or personal, short- or long-term. Take about 10 minutes or until you have between six and 20 items on your list and then stop.
- Now take a second 10 minutes. In the right hand column, across from each item of worry in the left hand column, write a short answer to the question: What's the first action step I have to take in order to get started addressing the task or worry? An example of an anxiety-inducing task could be deciding

where you will live when the volunteer year ends. An example of a "first action step" could be to make a list of all the reasonable possibilities. Another anxiety item could be if you're late in sending in your 1040 tax forms to the IRS. A corresponding action step could be to download the 1040 forms from the web or pick up copies at a local library. Do this for each item in your worry list.

- Having done the first half of this mind sweep, some people initially feel overwhelmed when they see all the anxiety-inducing items in their list. The payoff comes when they complete the second half of the exercise and they have listed their "first steps" they can take toward meeting each demand.
- A lot of free-floating anxiety stems from the general feeling that one has way too much to do and also from not knowing how to begin addressing all the demands. Clarity about what the demands are and the recognition that you can take first steps gives many people the "can do" sense that they will prevail.
- If the list is totally out of control, then the key is to prioritize the list and identify items which you can deal with. Seek help from friends as to how you can let go of the other responsibilities, perhaps transferring them to friends or to other persons in authority. Good luck. †

It does not take much strength to do things, but it requires a great deal of strength to decide what to do.

-Elbert Hubbard






Planning a Goodbye

What do I want the last two weeks at my volunteer site to look like?

For many volunteers, the last weeks are a total blur. It's a rush of completing tasks, marking final exams, cleaning up the volunteer house, saying goodbye to co-workers, to housemates, neighbors, students and clients. All the while, there's a bit of anxiety floating around the edges of your awareness: *What's next for me? Will I find a job and like it? Will it be meaningful? Where can I afford to live? Who will I hang out with?*

The final two weeks

Here's a checklist and some suggestions to help you organize your goodbyes.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>HOUSE PARTY Do I want to have one just for my fellow volunteers so we can celebrate what we have accomplished together? Do I want to give them some gift to remember me by?</p>		<p>SPECIAL LETTERS Who are the five or ten people for whom I really want to write a special letter or note?</p>	<p>PACK SOUVENIRS Think about your fellow volunteers, clients, local music, special places, events, things, smells or foods you have experienced during this past year (or more). Which do you think you will miss the most when you are gone? Think about any ways by which you can "take them with you" when you leave your community. Start "packing" away these intangible treasures.</p>		
<p>NOTE HOW YOU HAVE CHANGED. Make a list of ways you have changed since volunteering. Which, if any, of your beliefs or values have changed? How have your feelings changed about your family, the poor, God, the Church, money, government policy, the environment, your consumption of goods, your skills or your future employment?</p>		<p>BIG PARTY Is it possible to have one so you can say goodbye to a lot of people at once?</p>	<p>WRITE YOUR STORIES People for the next two years will probably be asking you: So, how'd your volunteer year(s) go? Often one of the most helpful activities you can engage in is figuring out and formulating your response. Outline a two minute verbal response and a two and ten page written response. Afterwards, your year(s) of service will not be a blur.</p> 			

Finishing Your Term of Service? Taking an Inventory Will Help You

As you get ready to depart your volunteer placement site, you have to decide which things you're taking with you and which you're leaving behind. But it's even more important for you to think about which *skills* and *values* you are taking with you. Here are two checklists to help you get started.

What *skills* are you taking with you? Put a check mark next to those that apply.

- Administrative and personal organization
- Advocacy: the ability to be a voice for the voiceless
- Conflict resolution know-how
- Cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity to cultural stereotypes
- Communication skills in the workplace, within community, between the genders (from Shared Visions Vol. 15 No. 2 earlier this year)
- Familiarity with using the pastoral cycle to reflect on and process your faith experiences
- Team building
- Ability to self-reflect and to be aware of how others are responding to you
- Yearning for results, seeing change, making a positive difference
- Leadership, openness to yours and that of others
- Better understanding of Catholic Social Teachings
- Expanded sense of diverse ways of praying
- Better facility with a second language
- Ability to live simply and flexibly (Vol. 15 No. 3)
- Better sense of social justice principles
- Better know-how with household skills e.g. cooking, maintenance, etc.
- Better understanding of the marginalized (Vol. 15 No. 3 – "From Wilderness to the Capital")

What values are you taking with you and to what extent have they changed? Here's a list to help you jump-start your values inventory. Feel free to add other values that come to mind. In each of the areas listed below, to what extent have your values: 1) improved greatly, 2) improved somewhat, 3) about the same, 4) decreased somewhat, 5) decreased greatly.

- Appreciation of my family (of origin)
- An expanded sense of who is in my "family"
- Appreciation of Catholicism (or Christianity)
- Appreciation for Scripture
- Altruism, importance of serving others
- Friendship
- Bonds with other volunteers
- Flexibility
- Humility (awareness of your own limitations)
- Hunger for more training or education
- Critical thinking (evaluating your circumstances)
- Spirituality
- Solitude
- Recognition of the importance of how government policy impacts lives
- Seeing myself as a co-creator with God



When you complete your skills and values inventories, you may want to find an opportunity to share your results with your fellow volunteers, friends, support personnel or program staff.

WORKSHEET QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

VOLUNTEEROPOLY

...An old game, but a new way to share your thoughts and feelings with your community or other volunteers close to you. Each player find a button or a small object to use as a player piece. Place on starting square. Find a die or cut out the number circles on the bottom and put them face down in a hat. Each player take a turn picking a number out of the hat (or rolling the die), moving the appropriate number of squares and answering the question on the landing square. Continue taking turns until every player has reached the final square.

Starting Square
The Transition
Begins...

If you could create the ideal job, what would it be?

What have you left undone as a volunteer?

Name two things you can't wait to do when you return from volunteering.

What skills did you develop as a volunteer that you would like to continue to develop?

Name two things you'll miss about your volunteer term?

Where do you see service in your future?

Name two things you won't miss about your volunteer term.

How has your volunteer experience affected your relationship with God?

Name two things you learned about yourself as a volunteer.

What have you learned about being a lay person in the Church?

What have you discovered about living with others in community?

Define "success" for you.

How do you feel about what lies ahead for you?

Name two people who contributed to your development as a volunteer.

How has your prayer life changed since volunteering?

Give three reasons you became a volunteer

How have your personal goals changed since becoming a volunteer?

You're on your way!

1

2

3

4

5

6

Show Us What You're Made Of

In many cultures, especially Latino, a family's cross is handmade and filled with colorful drawings and illustrations depicting the family, their struggles, their triumphs, their joys and their sorrows. Each cross tells a special story. Use your creative side to tell the story of your life as a volunteer. Decorate the cross below with images and symbols that illustrate your work, relationships, community, highs, lows and meaning in your term

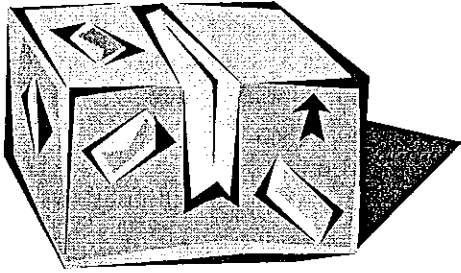
as a volunteer. If drawing is not one of your strengths, use words, symbols and phrases that have a special significance.

Now come together as a community. Spend a few moments simply passing the crosses around in silence. See if you can identify which cross belongs to which person. Take time with each cross that you see. Then allow each person to take a turn explaining as little or as much about their illustrations as they feel comfortable doing. When everyone has had a turn, discuss the following questions: How well do we know one another? What things have we discovered about one another recently? What has been positive about being together? What has been more challenging about being together? What have we learned from one another?

Now Show Us What Your Community Is Made Of!

Now together create a cross that will display what your community this year has been about. Think about leaving it in a prominent spot for next year's volunteers to see.

Suitcase Reflection



What are you leaving behind from your (name of volunteer program) year? Pack these things in the box that will remain there.

(e.g. marks you've made; the impact you've had on others; things left undone; hurts or bad experiences; people you've served; your community; those who were a part of the volunteer program; pieces your 'old self' like former perceptions on poverty, spirituality, God, justice, etc.)

What part of your (name of volunteer program) experience are you taking with you as you leave? Pack these things in your suitcase to bring along on the journey ahead.

(e.g. ways you've grown; acquired skills, gifts and strengths; memories; ongoing friendships; a new understanding of poverty and social justice; a new concept of community; a deeper faith, etc.)

THE PILGRIMAGE

by Josef Honerkamp ('75, Western Samoa)

Once upon a time a people lived on this planet Earth who were different from the rest of the crowds.

And when these people needed a breath of air...
or when their prayers were not answered...
or maybe when their sweethearts died or married someone else...
when they felt guilt-ridden by sinfulness...
when they simply got bored...
or wanted to get away from everything they were used to...
or wanted to find God in a different setting from their little village church images...
They became restless and went on a Pilgrimage.

So they set out for an often long and difficult journey to a place in a land far, far away from where they had lived.

Because it was known that God revealed Himself or Herself there in a special way. Perhaps a miracle had actually taken place.

So they took to the road, and soon learned all about tiredness, blistered feet; about thirst and hunger.

They became friends with desert and jungle, with stones and thorns and strangers.

Not all reached the Holy Place. Some of the Pilgrims got sick and had to return. Others got lost, never to surface again. A few decided to spend the rest of their lives happily in the arms of a newfound wife or husband, so different from the boys and girls back home.

Others died, were mourned and buried in alien lands.

One or two became broody and demented.

But the bulk of the group somehow made it to the Holy City.

There the pilgrims rested, sang their hymns, lit their candles, made their offerings. And their special prayers went up to heaven. And they waited around for Miracles to happen...
And they waited...

Then it was over.

Nobody knew what really happened!

And the equally difficult journey home followed.

Did they every manage to settle again? How could they? They had changed so much.

Some tried for a while to talk about what they had encountered. Who could understand?

Not their families.

Not their friends.

Others could not or would not talk about it at all.

But they all remembered it for the rest of their lives and kept it inside...

A Treasure.

A Secret.

What was the magic of their secret?

Was it the memory of the busy and noisy, strange City?

Was it the color and beauty of exotic flowers and sunsets?

Was it the unbelievable sweetness and richness of wines grown and ripened on the other side of the globe?

Was it the aftertaste of the spices which strange foods had left on their tongues?

What was it all about?

Was it the laughter échoing through their souls?

Was it a song, a melody?

Was it just a memory of the face they could not forget?

Was it a smile that warmed their hearts?

Who will ever know?

So they returned to their cobblers benches and broken shoes...

To their trading stores and wares...

To their oxen, ploughs and farms...

To their sick-houses and their dying...

To their schools and books and students.

And it followed them.

Because now it had gone to their very center.

Somehow they lived on.

But...sometimes they still wondered...and

THEY WERE NEVER THE SAME AGAIN!

Programming for Reentry

Issues and Solutions for Study Abroad Returnees

By Stacey Woody

While most study abroad professionals are now aware of the importance of including crosscultural re-entry in our study abroad programming, this can get pushed aside and seem less pressing than pre-departure programming. It can also be difficult to draw students to attend re-entry workshops or receptions. Nevertheless, it is our responsibility as study abroad professionals not to ignore the issues that students have to deal with during their reentry after study abroad.

Personal Growth and Change

While abroad, most students experience challenges to their values, beliefs, attitudes, and worldviews. This often results in profound learning and changed individuals. The difficult part for the students is fitting their "new" selves into their old environments. Students express feelings of alienation, frustration, disorientation, and even identity crisis. They often say they are quite happy with their personal changes, but do not know how to fit them into their former lifestyle.

• Invite students in your re-entry workshop to develop a personal list of positive changes in themselves resulting from study abroad—changes that they wish to hold onto in their lives at home.

Encourage them to refer back to the list when necessary. Encourage journal writing as another positive outlet for expressing their personal changes.

New Knowledge and Skills

During the study abroad experience, students have developed foreign language skills, new knowledge within their academic discipline,

new research skills, and new problem-solving skills, to name only a few. Frustration comes from feeling there is no application in the home environment for what they have learned.

• Help students identify outlets on campus for utilizing their newly developed intercultural skills. For example, encourage involvement with international students or the international community in your city. Let professors know which students in their courses or departments went abroad so they can draw upon the students' experiences for class discussions, papers, and presentations.

Re-Entry Issues and Solutions

Issues for Returnees	Helping Students Cope
1. Personal growth and change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help students to identify positive changes in themselves. ■ Encourage journal writing.
2. New knowledge and skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help students identify outlets on campus for utilizing intercultural skills. ■ Inform professors of students who went abroad.
3. Relationships with family/friends.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help returnees get in touch with each other. ■ Establish a system for prospective students to contact returnees.
4. Adjustment to home school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Keep students abroad informed about campus news. ■ Facilitate ways students can share experiences with campus community.
5. Adjustment to lifestyle change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help students seek out situations where their intercultural experiences are appreciated. ■ Encourage students to think about return home as another intercultural experience.
6. Dealing with life responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conduct a workshop on working abroad. ■ Develop a resource library of other international opportunities.

S.W.

The Myth of the Triumphant Return

I remember clearly the day when I realized that my year of studying in London would have to end: Friday, May 2. Like many students abroad, I had absolutely no desire to leave. Unfortunately, 30 more credits at UVM, a towering Visa bill, and British Immigration were all forcing me home.

Most, I think, would agree that the shock of returning to native soil is far worse than that experienced when one arrives in a foreign country, perhaps because we do not expect it. My first few months back in the U.S. were difficult—far worse than, say, adjusting to college life as a freshman. I was depressed, irritated, and supremely impatient with the American way of doing things.

The most trying aspect of coming home was something I would have never foreseen. I dubbed it "The Myth of the Triumphant Return." Broken down, the problem looked something like this:

I had never lived in a major city before I moved to London and I was a bit unsure about how successful I would be. Much to my surprise, I came to embrace London culture and London itself. Not only had I adapted to living in a major city, but a major foreign city. While this is not exactly a medal-worthy achievement, it did something for my sense of self-worth. I was excited, for the first time, with where I lived and where I was studying (and, a little later, with where I was working). I felt a new sense of independence that college could never provide for me. With this new sense of self, I returned to suburban New Jersey.

I wanted to share my experiences with my family and friends. However, they didn't really want to hear it, no matter how polite they were. "When people asked me how it was," said one friend, who studied in England as well, "I should

have left it at 'fine.'" I had no outlet to truly express what my life there had been, and the longer my feelings remained unexpressed, the more surreal and painful they became. It got to the point that I had to look at my pictures to make sure I had actually left home.

More distressing, however, were the patterns into which I began to fall. I came home markedly changed (at least I thought so), only to take up the same job, go to the same gym, frequent the same haunts, and do, in short, exactly the same things I did before I left. I was even (gasp) once again living with my parents. When people looked at me, they saw the boy that got on the plane to London, not the one that returned. I had somehow expected everyone to view my miraculous transformation (however much of it there was). Hence, the myth of the triumphant return. I was not asking for a ticker tape parade, just some recognition of maturity. My newfound sense of self was fast withering away to nothing.

Since no one had been there with me, there was really no way they could have seen the changes. And since no one else saw any changes, I began to question them myself. Most critically, since my self-discoveries were inexorably tied to my cultural adjustments, as I lost one, I lost portions of the other. The triumphant return quickly became the unnoticed one.

Fortunately, my friend returned from England. We spent long hours talking through the difficulties we were experiencing. It is truly amazing how far a little solidarity can go. Once you understand the problem (as I eventually did), you can do something to solve it. The gains I had made were not completely lost, they were just in hiding.

Kevin Parker

Relationships with Family, Friends

This re-entry issue can result from several factors: no one is particularly interested in hearing about the study abroad experience; students themselves have difficulty conveying the significance of the experience; and, finally, students often feel that family and friends are pressuring them into being the "same person" as before they went abroad. Returnees express feelings of alienation.

- It is most important to help students realize that there are people who are excited to hear about every detail of their study abroad experience. Putting returnees in touch with each other and with prospective study abroad students facilitates the outlet for sharing the experience.

Adjusting to the Home Campus

Many study abroad returnees say they have difficulty adjusting to the home

campus. After studying abroad in a different educational system, students can find the home campus to be limiting and narrow. They can become annoyed with the perceived obsession with grades and competitiveness. Also, students who study abroad learn both formally and informally—coming back to the home campus and traditional academia can seem uninteresting compared to this "other" form of learning.

- Keeping students informed about news on campus can help them to feel more connected with the campus while they are away. Many study abroad offices coordinate mailings to students abroad to inform them of registration procedures; it is quite simple (and appreciated) to include a campus newspaper in this mailing. Facilitate ways students can share their experiences with the campus community. For example, encourage returnees to write articles on study abroad for the campus newspaper.

Re-adjusting to a Lifestyle

It is often especially difficult for students who studied abroad in cultures very different from the dominant U.S. culture to re-adjust to life at home. They feel stressed by the pace of life, overwhelmed by consumerism, and in some cases even guilty.

- Again, help students to seek out situations in which they can use their new intercultural skills; help them to find places where their international experiences are appreciated and respected. Facilitate students' involvement in the international club on campus, for example. Another way to help students address this issue is to encourage them to think about their return home as another intercultural experience.

Dealing with Responsibilities

After the study abroad semester or year, students often return home to face life responsibilities like summer jobs or internships, changing their major, or the Big Question: what to do after graduation. Some students admit they have postponed making those decisions while abroad; others have given them extensive thought and have made major life decisions. Either way, the stress can aggravate other pressures that students deal with in re-entry.

- Support students seeking other international or intercultural experiences by developing a resource library of opportunities for work, volunteer, or teaching abroad and by conducting workshops in these areas in cooperation with the career services office on your campus.

Remember that each student's re-entry experience is unique, and we should treat it as such. However, it is important to be aware of the general issues so that we can, along with our students, come up with practical and positive ways of addressing them. Although re-entry can be a time of confusion, frustration, and stress, it is important to remember that this phase is a natural and normal part of the cross-cultural adjustment cycle, and it is also the time when most students realize the significant impact their study abroad experience has made on their lives. ■

STACEY WOODY is Coordinator of Off-Campus Study, Middlebury College. Her Master's thesis at the School for International Training was on "Preparing College Semester Abroad Students for Re-Entry." KEVIN PARKER is a Study Abroad Peer Adviser at the Univ. of Vermont.

Reverse Culture Shock

Just as you had to brace yourself for a period of psychological disorientation when you left the U.S., you should know that after your time abroad, you may also have to prepare yourself for a parallel period of readjustment when you return home. Why? Simply because, if you have had a full experience living and learning overseas, you are likely to have changed some while you were away, so the place you return to may itself appear to have changed, as indeed it might have. Even though these changes are seldom huge and may not be apparent to others, you are likely to be very aware of them. On the other hand, it may seem that you have changed quite a bit from your experience abroad, but that everything back home is still the same, and that you no longer feel that you fit in at home.

Immediately after your return, **you can probably expect to go through an initial stage of euphoria and excitement.** Most people are overwhelmed by the sheer joy of being back on their native turf. But as you try to settle back into your former routine, you may recognize that your overseas experience has changed some or many of your perceptions and assumptions, your ways of doing things, even what it means to be yourself. You might have become, in a sense, somewhat of a new person. After all, that is what education is all about. But, this intellectual and personal growth means that you can expect a period of disorientation as you adjust to the "new" environment at home.

The re-adjustment period is usually rather short-lived, since home will never be as foreign to you as the foreign environment you adjusted to overseas. Also, **your experience of dealing successfully with culture shock abroad will have provided you with the psychological tools for dealing with the challenges of readjustment.** Obviously, the more you have changed - often a by-product of the amount of time you were away and how deeply you immersed yourself - the more difficult it will be to have things go back to a previous notion of normality. However, if you are aware of the changes and seek to learn from them, smooth adaptation is more likely.

One of the ways to deal with reverse culture shock is to maintain contact with friends you made overseas, foreign and domestic, and also to keep in touch with the culture you have left - via letters, e-mail, phoning, magazines, books, and other means. Friends you met while abroad will understand well what you are going through.

It is also important to discuss your experiences with your friends and family in the U.S. in order to explain how special your experience was. Be prepared to find that people may not be as interested in hearing about your experience as you are in talking about it.

Remembering what it was like for you to have been, for a time, a 'foreigner' may inspire you to try to get to know people from your host country now living in your home community, who may themselves be feeling some of the same social dislocation and alienation you once felt when you were overseas. The key is to build on the cross-cultural coping skills you now possess and to find conscious ways of integrating your new self into your evolving personal and professional life, not seeing it as a dream or something irrelevant to your future.

Re-Entry Stress

This is the process that you may experience upon returning home. Re-entry stress or reverse culture shock generally is experienced to a greater degree the longer one has been in another country. Disillusionment with the US and US Christianity may play a part in any re-entry stress that is experienced.

Initial Reactions

If this is your first experience outside your home country you will be exposed to things you have never experienced first hand before, such as the plight and poverty of many in developing countries. It is not uncommon upon returning home to become disturbed and even bitter toward America's opulence and waste.

When you return you will be excited to eat the "Big Mac and large fries" you have been craving. Your family and friends will be proud and excited to see you and you will experience a "high". You have just conquered the unknown, been used greatly by God and you will be the center of attention. Soon, however, this "high" drops and re-entry shock may begin.

Following are a few examples of possible reactions you may experience. Be prepared to deal with life back home in light of your new experience. All overseas volunteers will experience some degree of re-entry stress.

- 1. Self-concept** – Any life-changing experience can cause you to re-evaluate who you are in light of the experience. Questions about the meaning of life and its direction may be a part of the re-entry process. You may decide never to go outside the United States again or you may discover that there is a call on your life to ministry outside the United States. Questioning life can be good, but the uncertainty of the answers may cause some stress.
- 2. Value Change and Choice** – Clashes between you and those to whom you return may occur in several different areas, such as material possessions, family life, racial prejudice, national priorities in ecology and politics, and community conflicts. Some workers develop a "holier than Thou" attitude towards those who did not go.

One missionary worker returning home, from the Far East, shared:

"Everybody looks rich. We stayed with good friends in a Western state who complained about the high cost of living. Yet, they are overweight and live like royalty. Many of them were talking about inflation and how they were having to cut corners...but most were wasteful and kept on buying. Why is air-conditioning kept so low? We freeze everywhere we go."

You may face the problem of integrating what you have just seen with what you see around you at home. Your eyes may be opened to the shallowness of western materialism and you may want to react by telling others they are wrong to own so many "things", eat so much food and waste so much.

3. **Expectations** – You will have had many expectations for your experience about the culture and language differences, the new and exotic country and God’s purpose for you in all of it. However, you may not have expected the reactions you may encounter when you return home. You may find that you feel like a stranger now in your own country. You may have expected your family and friends to be as excited as you are about your experience and become hurt if they show little or no real interest about something that has made a tremendous impact on your life. Realize that many will just not be able to understand what you have been through. This seemingly lack of interest can reinforce in you an opinion that Americans are just not interested in the rest of the world and are simply lovers and pleasers of self. You may find yourself feeling resentful/critical toward family, friends and Americans in general. It may help to remember that family/friends have not had the same experience that you have just had and cannot be expected to see the world the same way you do at this time. Being gentle with family, friends and yourself may help to ease this time. Also, remember that it is largely your family and friends that shaped you to be the person that said “yes” to this overseas volunteer work in the first place!

4. **Sense of Loss** – You may experience a sense of loss over newfound friends and places or from being disconnected from the rest of the team. Your recent experience is not the nitty-gritty reality of everyday life. Being in a strange country, away from all familiar cues and the security of familiar faces and places can facilitate a tendency to become extremely close to fellow team members and when you return home you may experience a sense of void. It may take sometime to readjust to your life as it was before you left. You may also feel a loss of purpose and self-importance. It is important to give yourself the time and space needed to grieve the losses during this time of transition home, just as you did upon leaving the US and entering the host country.

STAGES OF RE-ENTRY

1. **Initial Euphoria** -- You are pleased to be home and everyone is glad to see you.
2. **Irritability and Hostility** – After the initial euphoria you may become irritated and hostile towards others for any number of reasons.
3. **Gradual Adjustment** – It may take time for you to readjust to the way your life was before your left.
4. **Adaptation** – You have been changed. Life went on when you were gone and it may take time for you to catch up.

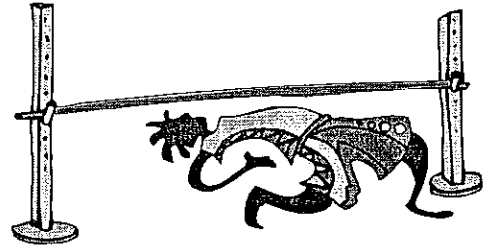
RESPONSES TO REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

To minimize the effects of re-entry stress find methods of “closure”. One example is to stay in touch with other team members after returning home. Be sure you should share things about the present with them and not just the memories of your overseas experience. See your experience realistically and allow God to show you how to use it.

POINTS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER:

1. Be aware that you may experience some depression, loneliness, fatigue and illness as re-entry symptoms of stress. You can be stressed by either happy or sad events. You may go through a grief process.
2. Be alert to your own expectations and the expectations of others. Value conflicts may occur.
3. Allow for rest, reflection and rejoicing in what you have seen God do. Go over your experiences and ask God to show you the various aspects of your experience and grow from them. Evaluate what you have been through.
4. Take your time to readjust. Be patient with others who do not understand what you have experienced.

Stages of Re-entry: Life in Limbo



Just as you had to brace yourself for a period of psychological disorientation when you began your year of service, you may also have to prepare yourself for a parallel period of readjustment when you return home. Why? You are likely to have changed some while you were away, so the place you're returning to may itself appear to have changed, and indeed it might have. Even though these changes are seldom huge and may not be apparent to others, you are likely to be very aware of them. On the other hand, it may seem that you have changed quite a bit from your experience of service, but that everything back home is still the same, and that you no longer feel that you fit in at home.

Part of the preparation for the re-entry transition is to simply consider the circumstances you're returning to, and to learn what you might expect by way of emotions and feelings. This way, you won't be blind-sided, but rather you'll be in a position to deal effectively with the changes. Keep in mind, you already have the skills and tools to manage re-entry, as you've been through countless transitions in the past. Consider the transition INTO the year of service:

Transition INTO a year of service:

Forming: excitement, anticipation, optimism, exploration, discovery; suspicion, fear, anxiety

Storming: reality sets in, frustration, negativity, dissatisfaction, hostility, adjustment anxiety

Norming: shared goals, team cohesion, coping, acceptance, resolution, reconciliation

Performing: confidence, adaptation, cooperation, teamwork, cohesiveness, leadership

Adjourning: separation anxiety, negativity, dissatisfaction, hostility, crisis

THE STAGES OF RE-ENTRY are typically very similar to the above. Take a look...

1. INITIAL EUPHORIA

You're pleased to be home, and everyone is glad to see you. You're excited to experience things of life back home that you missed while being a volunteer (eg, air-conditioning, your car!)

2. IRRITABILITY & HOSTILITY

After the initial euphoria wears off, you may become easily irritated or even hostile towards others for any number of reasons:

- change in self-concept and identity
- value change and choice
- expectations of self and others
- sense of loss and grieving

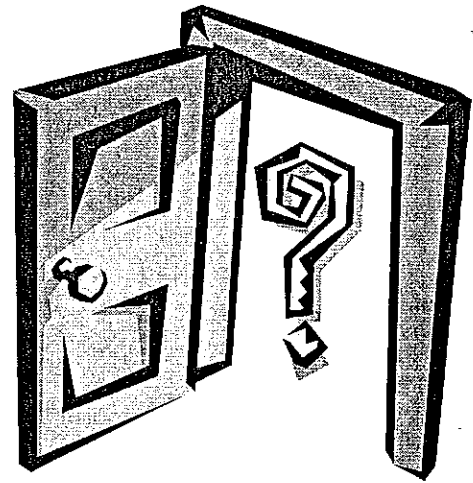
3. GRADUAL ADJUSTMENT

It may take time for you to integrate your life before volunteering, the volunteer experience itself, and the new life as a former volunteer. Life has changed for both you as well as the ones back home. It takes time to renew and renegotiate relationships to self, others and the world. The answer to the question "what's next?" starts to take shape (new roles, work/school, living situation, etc.).

4. ADAPTATION

Integration slowly occurs as the new beginning of post-volunteer service takes root and a new integrated identity takes hold.

Common Difficulties in the Transition Following Re-entry



Personal Self

- Seeming lack of resources to continue the work of personal growth, self-awareness, etc. that took place during the volunteer year.
- Stress with having to meet your own/others' expectations (work, school, apartment, etc)
- Stress with not knowing what to do next
- Questioning the purpose of your life, or the meaningful of life in general
- Friends/family don't understand why re-entry is so difficult ("When are you going to snap out of it?")
- Feeling that everyone is a year ahead of you in terms of work, school, relationships, finances, etc.
- Physical sluggishness, moodiness, edginess, sadness, depressive thoughts/feelings

Ministry/Work

- Guilt associated with leaving service sites (eg "The children still need me; I could/should have done more; what's going to happen to the program I started, or the people I served???)")
- Not knowing what career to pursue
- Hunger to integrate mission into their lives
- New job is less "meaningful" or "fulfilling" than ministry placement
- Anxiety about needing to find a job

Relationships

- Sense of loss of the relationships formed that year (at work, in community, program directors, etc)
- Feeling disconnected from people you were once very close to back home
- Friends and family expect you to be the same person you were before
- Unfulfilled expectations of others to entertain your countless stories and pictures
- Desire to live in a community of kindred spirits
- Difficulty in finding/creating one

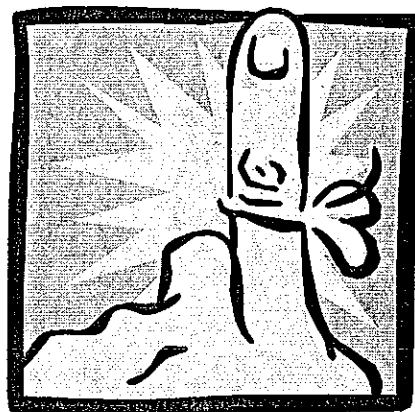
Spirituality

- Sense of loss of attention to spirituality (retreats, community prayer, spiritual direction, etc.)
- Spiritual emptiness
- Lack of resources for ongoing spiritual growth and formation
- Difficulty in finding a parish where you feel spiritually nourished
- A variety of "issues" with the Church (as an institution, its teachings, its spirituality, etc.)

Simplicity/Social Justice

- Difficulty re-integrating into a culture of independence, competition, materialism, consumerism
- Sense of "righteousness" and being "holier than thou" regarding matters of money, social justice, politics, the environment, etc.
- Hunger for involvement in social justice issues but don't know how to get involved
- Conflict with friends/family regarding use of money/things
- Guilt about receiving a paycheck
- Feeling overwhelmed with the number of new expenses

Helpful Tips & Reminders:



- Know that re-entry stress as outlined above is **NORMAL!** You are **NOT** crazy for feeling those things!
- Remember that you already possess the psychological skills and tools to handle re-entry!
- Take time to reflect on the year. Processing the experience is vital to being able to let it go and move onward in a healthy way. Be mindful of both the giftedness and richness, as well as the challenges and difficulties, that were a part of the year of service.
- Be gentle with yourself and others and realize that you are not the only one who has changed! It will take time to get to know some friends and family members again, as their lives have also changed during your absence.
- Staying in touch with people from your service year may be helpful in creating a smoother transition. Be sure you share things about the present, and not simply live in the memory of the past year.
- Discuss your experiences with your friends and family back home. Be prepared that people may not be as interested in hearing about your experience as you are in talking about it.
- Use whatever methods have proven effective for you personally during past transitions. (eg: time for reflection, faith/spirituality, physical activity, journaling, talking with others, whatever works for you)
- Make use of the resources around you! Don't expect the transition to occur smoothly without active participation in the process! If its community you're missing, join a young adult group, or start one! If its spirituality, find a parish that "fits" you, or a spiritual director to journey with. If its social justice, get involved with Pax Christi or other such groups. You get the idea...
- On the **OTHER HAND...** Be gentle with yourself! Allow for rest, relaxation and rejoicing in what you have seen God do this past year. Take your time to readjust. There is no strict time frame for re-entry stages. A change is an external event that is determined by the timing of a clock; a transition is an internal occurrence that follows the timing of the heart.
- Know that its not uncommon to experience some depression, fatigue, physical illness, and loneliness during re-entry. However, if you get "stuck" in these feelings for more than 4-6 weeks, it might be a good idea to seek some additional help to process the experience.
- Take advantage of the many **FREE Pallotti Center Resources for Former Volunteers!** We've got the "What's Next?" Notebook with helpful info on transition, job searching and more; a Job Bank; the Staying Connected Newsletter; the Network; a list of Resources in your Area; a Discussion Forum; a Housing Match-up; Gatherings, and One-on-One support. Check 'em out!

