

Think about reentry...

1. What are you expecting to happen?
2. How do you imagine it is going to feel?
3. What assumptions are you making about how people are going to react to you, about the place you're going back to?
4. What assumptions are you making about the people you left behind....years ago?
5. Do you assume that you are the same person you were when you left.....?

Adjust your attitude and expectations...

1. Don't be so eager to tell everything that has happened to you all at once.
2. Ask the people back home what has happened in their lives while you were away.
3. Develop a budget as soon as possible.
4. Prioritize the things you have to do, quite apart from the costs...
 - Place to live
 - Car
 - Children in School
 - School clothes and supplies
 - Open a bank account
 - Tax and insurance matters
 - Shipment hasn't come, came too soon, missing items
 - Hook up phone, gas, electricity, cable, water
 - Driver's license
 - Unpack, put away, store, clean and repair
 - Buy furniture and appliances
 - See relatives
5. Seek out other returnees for a sympathetic ear.
6. See if there are international clubs or organizations nearby.
7. Get connected with a place to worship.
8. Realize the international exposure has a particularly deep impact on children, on those whose sense of core identity is still in development. Their sense of identity may very well be different than yours.
9. Take time on a regular basis to celebrate the time and experiences you had living abroad. Do this as a family playing the "Remember When" game...
10. Have realistic expectations of yourself just as when you were moving abroad...it does take time....but it is a task and experience worth the effort and the wait.
11. Remember family communication is VITAL as there may not be anyone else nearby that understands the expat experience.