ADAPTING TO FINNISH CULTURE
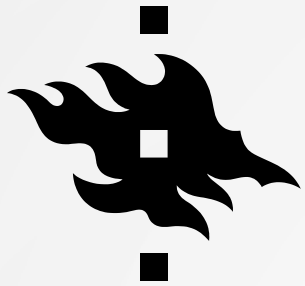
**Larissa Vanamo,
Admission and Student Advice**

TODAY'S AGENDA

- Culture Shock
- Practical tips
- Things you might find peculiar in Finland
- Want to know more?

CULTURE SHOCK 1/2

- **Culture shock stages**

  - **Honeymoon stage: everything seems perfect**

  - **Distress stage: doubts, annoyance, idealisation of home (home sickness)**

  - **Adjustment stage: acceptance, new positivity, getting used to how things work**

  - **Adaptation stage: feeling at home, routines**

- **Reverse culture shock after returning home**

  - **Feeling surprised, confused, disoriented...**

- **Culture shock is not always linear -> back and forth**

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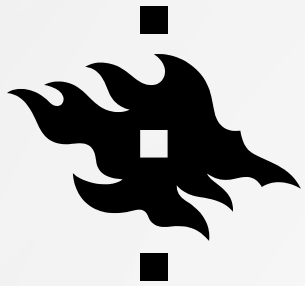**UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI**
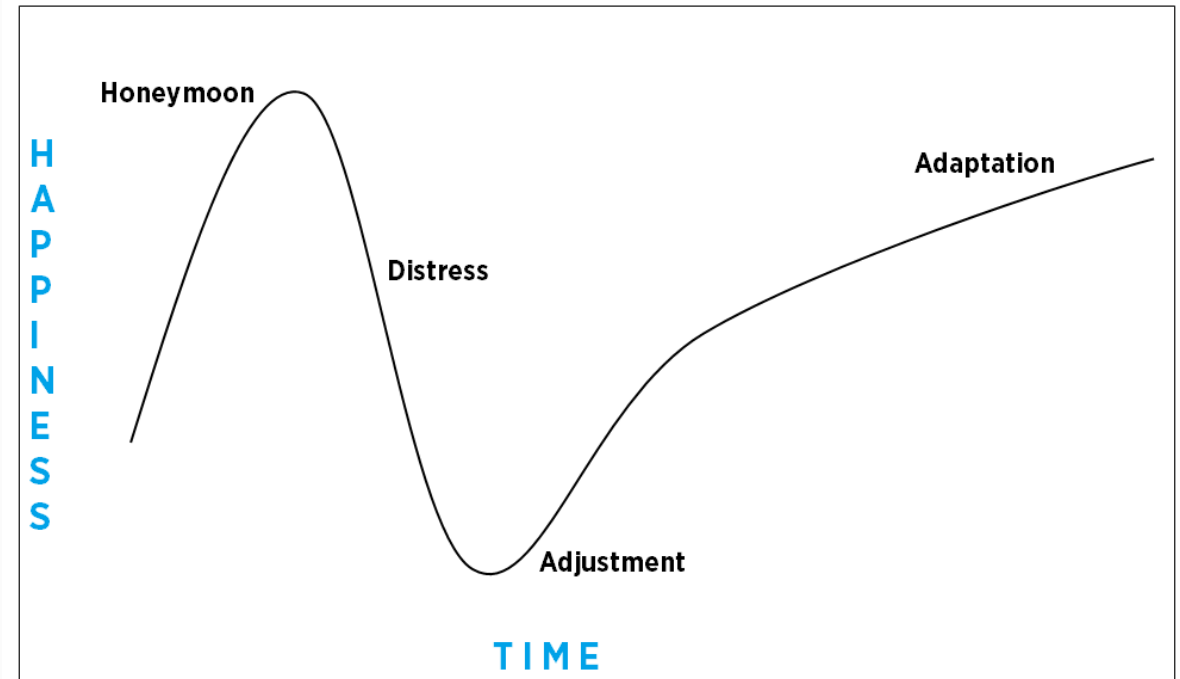
CULTURE SHOCK 2/2

- **Mental and physical symptoms possible**
- **Note that everyone experiences culture shock differently**
- **Ask for help**

- **Experiencing culture shock makes you pay attention to cultures and yourself**

PRACTICAL TIPS

- **Read, ask, explore: Learn about the new place, keep an open mind**

- **Goals: What would you like to experience? Learn? Improve?**

- **Things you love: Write a list of the things you love about the country, e.g. at the beginning when you're looking at things excitedly and with fresh eyes.**

- **Self-care: Sleep, balanced diet, exercise, doing things you love (reading, watching your favourite show), journaling…**

- **A piece of home: Having something dear from home, calling family and friends**

- **Continue with your hobbies**

- **More information and a couple of exercises on [the Culture Shock page](#).**
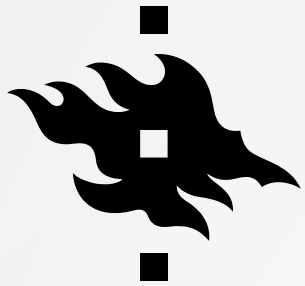
THINGS YOU MIGHT FIND PECULIAR IN FINLAND

- Small talk (or the lack thereof…)

- Minimal body language

- Personal space

- Saying what you mean (literally) & directness

- Silence

- Punctuality

- Importance of sauna

- Friendship

- Please remember that everyone is an individual and these are just some generalisations of the Finnish culture and people!

- Finnish Nightmares (comics)

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

In the Instructions for Students:

- [Culture shock and home sickness page](#)

- [Intercultural Competences](#)

- [Well-being events](#)

- [International gatherings](#) (to be updated!)