

## International Students:

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*Hello everyone. This is Mina, Serena and Tlazin. And we are doing a podcast project on international students who are studying here in America.*

[Japanese student] I always had a curious about American culture and I also wanted to learn English in different cultures, that's why I came to the United States.

*Jessica, how long have you been here so far?*

[English student] This is my third year now but before coming here I had only actually been to America once, for a tennis tournament though, so really it's my first time ever. So yeah, three years ago now.

Also, I was limited in what I experienced before, not knowing many American friends in England. I expected them to be loud and girls to be, let's say "girlie". That was primarily from watching films and things but otherwise... I expected them to be outgoing and things, but that was about it.

[Japanese student] You know, they're friendly and they eat hamburgers. The supermarket is huge so I didn't surprise anything like that.

*So would you say that you're having an OK time or easy time fitting in or having difficulties?*

[English student] Definitely when I first came, I felt how different it was with the way that people communicated with each other. From being like in England and spending a lot of time in the rest of Europe, I felt like people communicate and it's very sincere and they want to hear what you have to say- there's eye contact and things. Definitely when I first came to America I said "aw, people seem really friendly!" Like "hi, how are you?" But that was kind of like that was a form of saying "hi" and they carry on walking. And I was turning around to reply. So definitely at first I had to get used to that they may be friendly, but it's not necessarily sincere.

[Australian student] I think that what we found in the theater department, especially as everyone is being so open, you know welcomes us in. We have so many friends in such a short space of time. Everyone is so friendly. And prior to coming here, everyone who had gone to America and done the exchange program said "Oh when you go to America they don't really want to be your friend because they already have their own cliques" and all that. Then they said, "you know, it's really hard. You have to go up and approach them and say 'hi, I'm Emerson' 'I'm from Australia'" and all that. The only thing we had going for us is they said Americans love Australians. So it was like, "oh they'll love you because you're a novelty" and all that. But I've just found that everyone has been so nice- they just let us in!

What are some specific personal things in your life that you've struggled with or that you found difficult getting adjusted to and living here in America?

[Japanese student] I think I have many to say, but basically the huge thing is the language. I still feel uncomfortable to speak English even though I live here long. And I feel more comfortable speaking in Japanese. The language is the biggest thing. And also the time- the conception of time is kind of different. Because Japanese culture is very strict about time, but here people are kinda loose compared to Japanese culture. So I think that time and language are the difference.

[Guamanian student] I was born and raised on Guam, so one time while living in the U.S., I was talking to a roommate of mine. Somewhere along our conversation I asked her, "whose own is this?" And she was like, "wait, what?" And I repeated my question, "whose own is this?". She didn't understand me and finally concluded that I was trying to say "whose is this". I still can't even say it. I told her yes, but another way to say it correctly is "whose own is this".

[Peruvian student] The worst thing I guess from being here is when you have an accent and you just talking and after a while people get bored and just won't take you seriously. They just leave or whatever. And sometimes you don't know the word, so it kinda sucks.

[Australian student] And the other thing is sometimes just being naive to the fact. It's OK- sometimes they'll say to me, "Are you from England?" And I'm like "if you came to Australia, we'd know your accent pretty much off the bat.". Where you're from, we could pick it. I think back in Australia, I mean it's really diverse here, but I think there's a lot of close-mindedness here, culturally.

[Guamanian student] I feel that exactly. When I tell people I'm from Guam, they think I'm from the Caribbean or South America- which is on the other side from where I'm actually from. They didn't even think. "Oh my god, you speak English so well!" Like I was born with English, of course I speak it so well. But you know, you're right. The U.S., they're closed in, a lot of them don't care about everything else because they think they have everything.

[Japanese student] The culture shock, I've experienced a lot. I didn't surprised or anything. But, I had a culture shock- so many things. Maybe American people are so lazy- I can say, I don't know. At the customer service, Japanese people are very quick. We don't wait on line. But in America- the DMV, hospital, or bank- we have to wait so long. One time I went to the emergency room and I waited for six hours and it's not emergency at all. I was kind of surprised because they are so slow to do some kind of work. I'm not say that all Americans are lazy but I experienced that kind of thing and I was kinda surprised.

[English student] Definitely I experienced culture shock when I first came. Like when I said hi to people- thinking that people actually wanted to stop and talk and they were just going by. Actually when I started seeing guy, there was definitely culture shock that I saw there. I would try to talk about things and people didn't necessarily have an idea

about my culture because it's so different and so far away. I find that Americans are so patriotic and really care about their country that sometimes they don't open their eyes to other countries. That's not necessarily bad because I feel in a sports perspective that they're so passionate and so driven to play well for their sport that they have that drive. Whereas England is just a bit more wishy-washy I would say. They aren't as proud of their country. I don't know why, they're just not. So definitely there was some culture shock when I started to have more relationships cuz it's just a different background.

*Was it easy for you to adapt?*

[Japanese student] It was a little bit hard because I never lived in another country before or experienced another culture by living there. Plus I didn't know a lot of English either. It was really hard to adapt because I wasn't really prepared as I thought I was. It took a few months to get used to the culture.

[Australian student] I haven't been culture shocked at all. However we had a party on Saturday night and it was pants off at 1am. I thought people were joking, but people actually really did it. All clothes came off and people were just in their underwear- their bras and undies- and just sweaty dancing. I was like, "is this seriously happening?" That was my culture shock- that everyone actually went through with it and were just naked, dancing around.

*Are there things that you will miss about American culture when you return back home?*

[Japanese student] Yes, maybe it's Californian culture but we can eat good foods- like Mexican food or Thai food or Chinese, French, almost every food from each culture.

[English student] One thing I'll miss is about the food, not necessarily the fast food, but actually the choices you get when you go into a restaurant. I'll miss the Mexican choices and being able to have a salad and soup and things. I know it sounds silly, but definitely at home if you want to have a salad, if you want to have bread. You have to pay extra.

[Peruvian student] Here people dress up- wear whatever they want- and nobody is going to judge you. In Peru, you just can't like go out dressed in... it has to match. There are certain stereotypes that you have to follow. Like, nobody is going to have pink hair.

[English student] I'll miss people being so friendly and seeming that they're upbeat, even if they're not. Cause definitely in England if it's gloomy weather, people have gloomy faces.

*Do you think when you return back home, you will have a difficult time adjusting back to your everyday lifestyle?*

[English student] Um, I think I'll have more a difficult time because of the age that I'm at and that my friends have been to university in England and I've been to university in America. If anything, that will be the main thing. Definitely some phrases or words I've picked up in America- like 'my bad' and things. People at home don't have a clue what that is. I do find sometimes I say things and they're kind of like "I'm not quite sure what she's referring to now". So there's a little bit of that. And definitely, I've just been learning

about the history of America and the government and I think that I'm gonna find it hard to remember that that has nothing to do with my government... It's a totally different history back at home.

[Japanese student] Yes, of course, that's what I'm worried about right now. I'll go back to Japan- in January, pretty soon. And I worry about it so much. I think I'm Americanized since I come here, even if I don't notice. I speak English and Japanese- kind of mixture. So I don't know how to talk officially Japanese right now. I think my mind is more Americanized so it's gonna be really hard to re-adapt to Amer.. Japanese culture. See, I said American culture! Yes, Japanese culture.

*Do you have any advice for other international students coming to study in the U.S.?*

[English student] First, I'd say just be open. I feel I've really benefitted from being here in America.

[Japanese student] Yes, study abroad is definitely a big opportunity to grow up or learn about other cultures and expand your horizons. So just be open minded to everything.

[English student] When I go home, I know that I enjoy certain things more because I realize "wow, this isn't everywhere else". So this definitely helped me realize what I do have at home and I just feel that I can learn from both. So I'd just say to come here, experience it all, then you can pick and chose what you like and not like.

*And that concludes our interview on international students... By listening to different cultures we found out how important it is to relate to each other by finding similarities within each other.*