

The English Group “Vienna” is a club of English speakers and Austrian natives that come together to enjoy the Alpine Environment.

The group meets once per month, and through 100% volunteers we arrange trips and events for our members.

Through the love of the outdoors we have been able to bridge a cultural gap between the Austrian culture and non-native guests and residents of Austria.

We hope this pamphlet will smooth the transition into Austrian Culture for non-natives and show Austrians a brief look why their guests sometimes act the way they do.

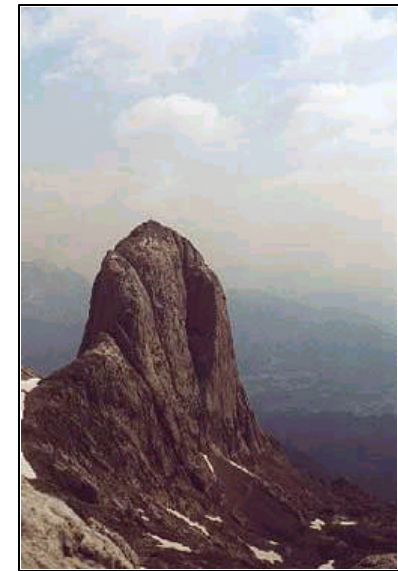
Visit us online at

<http://members.chello.at/monika.lang>



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# Mountain Medicine For Culture Fatigue

## CULTURE SHOCK AND CULTURE FATIGUE

Practically everybody who goes overseas for a substantial period of time experiences culture shock in some form and/or to some degree. It's natural and not a sign that you're deficient or strange -- you'll live through it as thousands of others have.

*Our Alpine Club brings together those individuals who are experiencing the process of growth within another culture, and allows them to realize that they are not alone. Here are some tips to help you through the process, easily or through difficulty -- we all go through it.*

### HOW TO DEAL WITH CULTURE SHOCK AND FATIGUE WITH THE ENGLISH GROUP VIENNA

1. Select one or two areas of interest and investigate them more thoroughly than the other topics.

*If you love the outdoor life, you will find ample opportunity to enjoy it within our club.*

2. Begin (if you haven't done so already) consciously to look for logical reasons behind everything in the host culture which seems strange, difficult, confusing, or threatening.

*The Club is not only about hiking. Sharing your experiences with Austrians and other "seasoned" non-natives allows you to clarify in your mind why things work the way they do in Austria, closing cultural gaps.*

3. Make a list of all the positive things that you can identify about your present situation. (Ignore the negative -- which you've probably been concentrating on too much anyway.)

*The Club adds many small positives through the social side of the Club. Our members are the best reason to join us.*

4. Avoid those individuals or other foreigners who are in a permanent state of culture shock and who spend their days seeking company to commiserate with.

*The English Speaking Alpine Group is not about walling off the Austrian Culture, nor is it about being a tour guide. We allow our members the chance to grow into self sufficiency in Austria.*

5. Don't succumb to the temptation to disparage the host culture yourself.

**The best way to discourage yourself from "thinking down" on others, is to come to their level and know them as individuals. You just might realize that you were looking up at a helping hand.**

6. Work at maintaining a healthy sense of humor. Especially, be ready to laugh at yourself.

**The relaxed atmosphere of the club allows you to share your experiences at a higher level. This avoids the „meet the natives“ mentality and offers a „share my experiences“ exchange of ideas.**

7. Find someone who has been there longer, gone through culture shock, and has a positive attitude toward the host country, and use this person as a sounding board to help you get some perspective on the experience you are having.

**Our group consists of many seasoned veterans, from various places around the world.**

8. Make friends with host nationals and try to develop a deeper, more intimate relationship with one or two of them. Discuss with them the problems you've been having, taking care to present them in a way that doesn't sound like you're criticizing their culture.

**It is a truism that individuals who spend their time associating only with other individuals of the same background never do adjust to the host country. In our group about 50% of the individuals who attend events are natives of Austria, and not just from Vienna.**

9. Keep busy, keep active, keep your mind occupied. Don't sit around and feel sorry for yourself.

**Not only are there many opportunities within the group, but Section Austria many chances to get outside and involved offers (often in German and English).**

10. During the deepest plunges into culture shock, take a trip -- get away to a scenic spot or a nearby country. When you return, be open to having good "coming back home" feelings.

**The group not only allows you to share in our "special places", but will build confidence when you want to go back there by yourself.**

11. If your spouse has accompanied you but is not working outside the home, be especially concerned about his/her welfare. "Non-working" spouses can soon become bored and dissatisfied if they are not challenged to get out and explore the new environment.

**We have lots of opportunity to get outside and get involved. A "Friends Inviting Friends" attitude guides our every action.**

### KEEP THIS HANDY AND READ IT AGAIN.

The English Speaking Group "Vienna" suggests that you think about each one of the 11 points we have listed, and find a solution that fits you. Our group is mostly about hiking, and the overall enjoyment of the Alpine Environment. Just because we like it, does not mean you must. Take time to choose your path into Austrian life.

Then, if you need a helping hand to apply some of this -- think about us. See you in the mountains - and on the street!

