

THE PLACES WE CALL HOME

THE EMOTIONAL MAP OF MOVING ABROAD

A PRACTICAL COMPANION FOR THE FIRST WEEKS
AND MONTHS AFTER A MOVE



GUIDE 1

EXCITEMENT

New places, new routines, new possibilities.

DISORIENTATION

Things that used to be automatic now take effort

HOMESICKNESS

Missing people, food, rhythms or familiar sounds

GRIEF

Emotional Map worksheet

Short practices to try this month

WHO IS THIS FOR?

You moved — or you're about to — and the logistics are mostly handled. Now you're noticing the quieter stuff: the odd loneliness, the small wins, the moments you don't have words for. This guide helps you name what's happening, track it, and take small actions that make daily life steadier.

- People who recently moved abroad or are still settling into a new country
- Partners, friends, and supporters who want to understand and help
- Anyone who wants practical tools to move intentionally

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

I created this guide following a very challenging return back to the USA after more than a year living abroad. A few of us had big issues leaving the new life in Europe, big emotions resettling, too. Understanding what we were feeling made a big difference and helped us deal with all the emotions, one at a time.

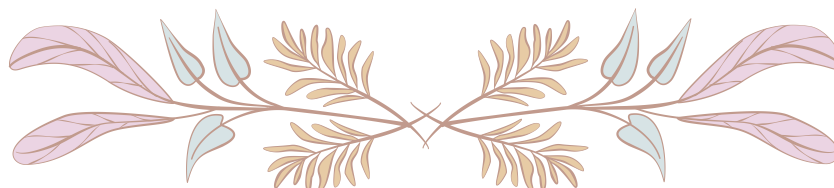
I hope it may help you name common emotional experiences after a move. Notice patterns, take small, practical steps that make daily life steadier.



- Read one short section at a time. Try one tip per week
- Use the Emotional Map worksheet to track feelings for 1-4 weeks. Keep it brief.
- This guide is practical, with tips I've used (I've relocated 6 times), noted ideas guests on the show shared, and lived experiences. It's not clinical.
- Play episode #11, Darsha from Russia saw a therapist for her situation

WHY AN EMOTIONAL MAP MATTERS

Moving rearranges routines, relationships, and expectations. Naming common emotional states helps you respond with small, effective actions instead of getting stuck in confusion or shame. The map below gives short descriptions and practical takeaways for five common experiences.



NAMING THOSE EMOTIONS

EXCITEMENT

What it looks like:

Energy, optimism, and a sense of possibility. New opportunities can feel energizing and motivating.

Research context: Positive expectations help resilience, but unchecked optimism can delay practical planning for challenges.

Practical takeaway: Pair enthusiasm with a short “reality check list.”



GRIEF

What it looks like:

Loss of people, familiar places, routines, . Looks like brooding, low energy. Rose tinted glasses.

Apprehension.

Research context: Often layered and ongoing. Talking about it reduces isolation and increase distress, urge to run.

DISORIENTATION

What it looks like:

Everyday tasks feel confusing; time and routines lose shape.

Research context: Unfamiliar systems and long processes.

Practical takeaway: Build a micro-routine to restore predictable anchors and reduce cognitive load. Find a cafe/hobby club, visit regularly



What it looks like:

Yearning for your people, places or rhythms from home.

Research context:

Among people who immigrate, distinct adjustment challenges

Practical takeaway:

Distinguish missing people from adjustment problems. Schedule one weekly ‘home’ activity - a food, music, call - and one new activity to build routines.

HOMESICKNESS

SHORT PRACTICES TO TRY THIS THIS WEEK

I'm sharing a few tips that I've used over the years, short practices to try for five days this week:

- Micro-ritual (3 minutes): Make a cup of tea, take three slow breaths, set one practical intention for the day.
- One-sentence check-in: Each evening, write one sentence about how you felt that day. Keep it simple.
- Local anchor: Visit one neutral place (park, café, library) and note how it affects your mood.
- Journal what feels very different around you, your feelings and actions relating to these.

REFLECTIVE PROMPTS (PICK 2-3)

When did you first notice you felt different here? what happened?



Who has helped you feel less alone since the move? How did they help?

What small thing today made you feel steadier? Describe it.

what routine or habit could you start this week that would make daily life easier?



What part of your identity feels most changed? What feels the same?

PRACTICAL RESETS



Forest bathing'. I have to admit, I imagined people skinny-dipping in the muddy ponds in the woods. Now I see it's getting lost(ish) in a forest, hopefully with a stream, soaking in that amazing peace. It is wonderful. We are hooked.

- Forest bathing, take a blanket, hot tea. Invite a potential friend.
- 30 minute walk morning and evening. #episode 7 guest recommends for thoughts, feelings,

PRACTICAL RESETS

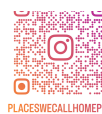
Connect with me for Guide 1 worksheet - your daily mood log check-in.

Download the Emotional Map guide. Share one insight through our subscribe page, the connect icon below takes you there.

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