

# How to Use These Cards

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The **Expat Trump Cards** is a unique deck of virtual cards made specifically for expats to help you adapt to change, make the best of tough situations and still come out a winner:

- Get stress under control before it causes trouble at home or at work
- Manage uncertainty and overwhelm successfully
- Stop regret in its tracks
- Explore how culture impacts your daily life
- Be more productive and do more of what makes you happy

## **The process is simple:**

- 1) Pick a card that addresses a challenge you are facing.
- 2) Work through the questions on the card.

Use these cards when you feel stuck, or schedule in 15 minutes each week to proactively manage your challenges before they become burning issues.



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# Making a Big Move

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**Know your “why”** behind a big change to avoid regret or lose focus:

- What seems “right” about the decision?
- What benefits do you anticipate?
- How does this move align with your values?
- What will you be most grateful for in 5 years due to the change?



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# The Road Ahead

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Every road has bumps, some more than others.

Get prepared:

- What are the 3 main challenges you anticipate?
- List your top strengths and resources that have helped you get through tough times in the past.
- List 1-2 specific things you can do to work through each of these challenges.



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# Live on Purpose

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Clarity, planning and follow-through lead you to the life you want:

- What do you want to happen on a daily basis? On a weekly basis?
- What are a few important, adventurous and/or interesting things you want to do once a month?
- How can you make sure these things really take place?

Make sure these ideas are S-M-A (Specific, Measurable, and Attainable). Set these in your calendar and review regularly.



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# More Change, Less Pain

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Deal with tough changes by trying the 3Ls:

## Letting go

- What was the best part about your life before the change?
- What was your role in making these good things possible?
- What feelings from this time would you like to take with you? (i.e. confidence, belonging)

## Letting in

- What is your life like now?
- What is the best part about it?
- What is one small step you could take to (re)create the feelings you want?

## Letting out

- What do you dream of for the future?
- Name three specific things you'd love to see in your life in the next 1-2 years?



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# Wallow in Your Misery

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## A cheat sheet for change

**Observe.** Be present and gather information:

- What physical or emotional discomforts are capturing my attention?
- How is this information useful?
- What thoughts are causing me the most discomfort right now?

**Serve.** Serve yourself up a big portion of what you need right now:

- Based on my observations, what do I need?
- What am I really craving (deep rest, release of anger, calm, etc.)?
- What is the kindest thing I can do for myself right now?

**Unwrap.** Identify what you are gaining:

- What am I learning? What am I un-learning?
- What do I gain from this experience?
- What gifts are hiding under my discomfort?



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# Regretting a Big Change?

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Not so fast!

Name 3 examples for each:

- Negative or unpleasant things you have left behind.
- Ways your life is better now.
- New skills you´re gaining.

Throughout the day look for examples of how your life is better.

Note how you could bring cherished aspects from your past into your life now.



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# Avoid the Breaking Point

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Resilience is the ability to bend, without breaking. Find out how far to go:

- Make a list of all of ways you are getting “stretched” right now. Put them into three columns (list positive, then neutral and finally negative life stretches).
- How much importance are you giving to each?
- What does this say about your ability to both perform and live well at the moment?

What do you need to start or stop right now to avoid a breaking point?



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# Can I Do This?

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When you are questioning your abilities, take inventory:

- **Personal:** What personal skills, abilities and traits do I have going for me? What has served me well in the past?
- **Professional:** What professional skills and abilities do I have? Who can I count on in my professional network?
- **Social network:** Who can I count on in my social circle?

This is your safety net.

Now ask yourself, "Can I do this?"



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# Save the Stress

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## Save yourself from yourself.

- Identify 3 people in your (personal or professional) network you can trust.
- Explore individually what signs they notice when you're taking on too much.
- Request their commitment to "blow the whistle" when you start showing these signs.
- Agree on exactly how and when they'll do this.

Make sure there is a reward. Set the stakes high in their favor.

Most importantly - make it fun.



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# Six Ways to Celebrate YOU

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Need a boost? Pick a recent challenge or relevant timeframe in your life.

Brainstorm examples (big and small) for each of these six milestones:

- 1) I accomplished...
- 2) I learned...
- 3) I overcame...
- 4) I am proud of...
- 5) I totally enjoyed...
- 6) I was inspired by...

Now get out there and celebrate!



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# Stress Busters

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4 ways to beat stress:

1. **Get control:** Where *do* I have control right now?
2. **Plan:** What can I plan now to ease my mind?
3. **Get support:** Who or what could support me right now?
4. **Think positive:** What is good right now?



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# Start with the End in Mind

Before you dive into a new adventure, get clear on “why”.

- List 3 meaningful areas of your life
- Identify desired outcomes. Be specific. (If you´re stuck, list what you want to learn, do, experience, have, feel.)

Create a chart and fill it with your aims and ambitions, like this:

Personal	Professional	Family
Fit body Feel balanced Understand local culture Have 2-3 new good friends ...	Business is profitable by the time we leave Client list is growing ...	Well-settled New cultural experiences Everyone healthy Kids speak a new language ...

Revisit this every six months to make sure you are on the right track, or when you´ve forgotten why you said “yes” to a new adventure.



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# Second Chances

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With all the highs and lows of life abroad, why not learn from it?

Tap into your wisdom:

- Which aspects of life abroad have given you the most energy?
- What has drained you the most?

Repeat the good, avoid the bad:

- List three ways you can do more of what *gives* you energy.
- Brainstorm how you can adapt “energy drains” for the better.

Don't judge, just list.

Pick one and then try it!



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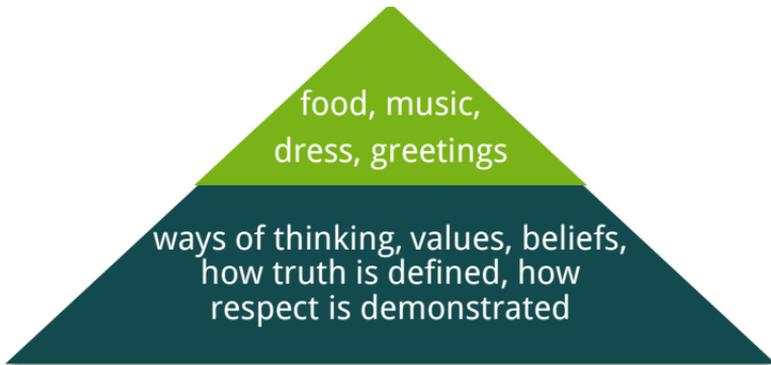
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# Culture Matters

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Culture is like a pair of eyeglasses: When we look our own culture, we see these ways of behaving, speaking or thinking as normal.

Leaving our cultural comfort zone shakes up these ideas of “normal,” helping us notice differences in the “surface” culture (like style of dress) and then slowly discover the “deeper” layers.



What is one small thing you can do this week to add to your understanding of a “deep” layer of culture?



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# Diagnose Culture Shock

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Check for “symptoms” of culture shock:

- Are you confused, anxious, suspicious, or simply have a strong desire to be somewhere else?
- Do you frequently feel awkward in social situations or worry that you’ve done something inappropriate?
- Do you feel unsettled or uncertain about your identity? Are you questioning the values you were raised with?

If you answered “yes” to any of the above: You’ve likely got culture shock – and feeling the emotional, behavioral or cognitive strains of adapting to a new culture.

Now is the time to take special care of yourself.



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# Safe Havens

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When you´re adapting to a new culture, don´t forget to build your endurance by creating a few “safe havens.”

A safe haven is a place or activity where you can mindfully and quickly feel at ease, retreating to a comfort zone.

## 1) Get prepared:

- What are three things you can do to feel more at ease or at home? (Stuck? Consider familiar movies, books, traditions, food, sports, etc.)
- Have a few of these things available for “emergency” escapes.

## 2) Get back to business:

- After you have thoroughly enjoyed a visit to your safe haven, leave. Don´t get stuck. Know you can periodically return when times get tough.



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# Relationship Building

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Coffee, shots or a sauna?

Depending on the continent, you may get to know people over coffee, shots or even in the sauna.

No matter where you are, it is vital to know **how, where, and for how long people build relationships.**

- Read up on common social and business practices for the region.
- Ask people who have lived and worked in region (expats and locals) where and how people connect, do business or socialize.

Apply this mindfully to build your relationships in the new environment.



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# What time is it, really?

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Five minutes isn't always five minutes.

Know how others differ in their use and perception of time. For example:

- Monochronic cultures are typically comfortable with schedules and plan so things are done one at a time. Time is seen as more "fixed."
- Polychronic cultures are adept at attending to multiple things at one time, and are comfortable with interruptions. Time is seen as more "flexible."

When you live in a new area, investigate whether "at 2 pm" means 2:00 pm exactly or whether it means *sometime this week*. Both are possible.

Accepting this as a neutral cultural practice can save you both time and energy.



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# Re-entry

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The familiar is now different.

You look forward to “home”. You can’t wait to see familiar faces, taste familiar foods and relax in familiar ways.

But something is different. You.

When you plan on returning home long-term or just for a vacation, use this checklist:

- Have I planned extra time to adjust?
- Which “old” relationships may likewise need time to adjust?
- How can I use times of frustration or shock to identify how I’ve changed?
- Have I built in regular times to rest and avoid being overwhelmed?
- What can I fully embrace that “home” has to offer?



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# Thank You

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The **Expat Trump Cards** is my gift to you – because I understand the challenges of a global life. I am American by birth, Swiss by passport, and an expat in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso by choice.

As an executive coach, trainer and intercultural specialist, **I help professionals and their families live well and work successfully across cultures, without losing their sense of purpose or adventure.** My clients include European multi-national organizations, international NGOs, and Fortune 500 companies, representing 40 countries across 6 continents.

Contact me if you are interested in working together at [contact@sundaebean.com](mailto:contact@sundaebean.com) or learn more by checking out my website: <http://www.sundaebean.com>.



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