

# 4. Knowing Ourselves

## Introduction

In the first part of the “inner journey” we looked at the emotional challenge of moving to a new culture and the culture shock that most people will experience – its symptoms, causes, stages and consequences.

But awareness of culture and culture shock is not enough to make problems go away. In this second part, we will look at what we can do about it. We will consider:

- Knowing ourselves
- Strengthening our inner selves
- Preparing ourselves
- Connecting with God
- Other ways of caring for ourselves
- Pressing on

## Knowing Ourselves

How easy we find it to adapt to a new culture depends as much on our personal make-up as it does upon the culture we are moving to. Being self aware is a crucial element in this process.



## Take Time to Reflect

Take some time to consider the following questions. These can help you grow in self knowledge and identify areas you need to invest in. It is important to be real and honest and also ensure we are not too negative.

Ask others to help you answer these questions. For example, if you are married work through this together including what may be weak between you.

### **Handling change**

- 1) How well do you deal with change?
- 2) Do you like/ need to be in control of the situation around you? Why?
- 3) Are there things you are fearful of to do with change or not being in control?

### **Handling and expressing emotions**

- 4) Are you an internal or external processor? An introvert or an extrovert?
- 5) How easy do you find it to discuss your emotions with others?
- 6) How do you replenish yourself emotionally?
- 7) What are the things you enjoy doing?
- 8) What drains you emotionally?
- 9) What makes you feel tired?



### **Handling stress**

- 10) How do you define success?
- 11) What makes you feel stressed?
- 12) Do you have prolonged periods of feeling low or depressed?
- 13) How would people around you know that you are stressed?

How do you think these traits will affect you as you adapt to a new culture?

These and other personality traits will affect how we take to living in an alien environment. Being aware of these things allows us to anticipate how we will react and take action to mitigate against their effects.