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## Letters From Abroad: Step In Tune

Amy Westlund  
*Concordia University - Portland*

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# Letters From Abroad: Step In Tune

By Amy Westlund

Whatever in the world could have possessed me to uproot myself from the warmth and security of my friends and family to fly half way around the globe and plunge myself into a completely unfamiliar environment? This question has been at the tip of my tongue and the bottom of my soul since the day I arrived in England.

I was suddenly in the Twilight Zone: no one from my new school met me at the airport in London, the bus ride to Birmingham--normally a two hour jaunt-- took me **four** hours, and I discovered that the room I am to live in for the next nine months is smaller than the shoebox that Concordia calls a dorm room. Yet, the most frustrating experience I encountered was the loss of my hard-earned self-confidence and independence in less than a day's time. So what possibly could have motivated such self annihilation?

It was time.

I've often wondered what it must be like for the unborn child, who is probably just getting a handle on life inside the womb, to be then suddenly thrust into a world of unfamiliar sights and sounds. It must be so comfortable in there during that ninth month; he/she is nearly developed, all of his/her basic needs are systematically cared for, and then suddenly that's no longer enough. That child has outgrown life and home as he/she has known it, and somehow he/she just senses that it is time to move on.

It's a shame, really, that we cannot appreciate what a great achievement we have reached at birth, so that we may be proud of ourselves. It is just something unconscious--nature working its art. I suppose it's a good thing after all that we don't know what we are doing, since I suspect that some of us would be afraid to take the plunge.

Now, like a newborn, I find myself in a new world and a life which is frightening, yet exhilarating, at the same time. There's no going back now, and after the initial shock, I've spanked myself, so to speak, taken a deep breath, and accepted the challenge. I feel like I am experiencing a sort of rebirth, but this time I am fully aware of what I am accomplishing. I also have a new appreciation for the many exchange students who flock to campuses all across the United States. I wish everyone could do something like this--if not for the cultural awakening, then at least for the opportunity to learn something about him or herself.

My self-confidence has bounce back quickly and I am looking forward to the year ahead, but what's more, I have taken a risk and survived. But it does not take a year in Europe to achieve this. It is the faith in yourself (conscious or not) which allows you to try something new--from food to lifestyles. So what are you waiting for?

Isn't it time?