What Would You Do?

**Leaving Study Abroad Early because of Homesickness**

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Studying abroad is a once in a lifetime opportunity, as we’ve all been told. I, however, always had doubts about leaving my home for four months to explore another country. Leaving for college was hard enough! But if I wanted to travel the world like I’d always dreamed of, I knew I couldn’t do it alone.

As the beginning of sophomore year rolled around, I was talking with a friend who was in the same boat as me. She was planning to go to Rome, but was extremely nervous about immersing herself in a new way of life. She told me she thought a friend would help ease the transition – I jumped at the opportunity. The rest of my friends were planning their trips abroad for Fall 2011 and I felt left out so I had to pick a destination. After being accepted for a [Rome study abroad program](http://www.studyabroad.com/programs/europe%2Citaly%2Crome%2Bother%2Crome-other%2Crome/default.aspx), I began to get excited. Rome had so much to offer from the architecture to the pasta, from the wine to the foreign language, I was anxious to start experiencing new things.

During summer break I moved back home and suddenly lost my momentum – I wasn’t excited anymore. I became comfortable at home with my family and I didn’t attempt to learn any Italian or research Rome. I had already enrolled in the program and my flights were booked – so I decided to leave anyway. The whole flight I just wanted to turn the plane around. I couldn’t come to terms with the idea of spending four months in Rome; it was too overwhelming and different than what I was used to.

After two exhausting days of touristy activities, I began begging my parents to let me come home. Shortly thereafter I left Rome, despite the consequences of wasting an entire semester and a lot money. Now, after hearing about my friends’ experiences abroad, part of me wishes I had stayed and worked things out. I bet I would have had some awesome stories to tell…

**What should you do...if you're not ready to study abroad?**

There are many ways to cope with a situation like this so you don’t have to go home. First, try picking a destination you are familiar with. Maybe you have family somewhere overseas, or a place you’ve always dreamed of studying. Studying abroad somewhere you are familiar with can help alleviate some of the anxiety.

Choosing a location where they speak English could also ease the transition. Being able to easily communicate with the people around you will make living in another country less jarring.

Set personal goals for yourself. Do you have list of cities you want to travel to? Do you want to be more adventurous? Making a detailed bucket list will remind you why you chose to study abroad in the first place. You could even make this list on the plane ride over to take your nerves away from flying.

Keeping in touch with family and friends back home might just be the best way to [cure homesickness](http://www.studyabroad.com/articles/dealing-with-homesickness-abroad.aspx). They will be a great support system for you as you set sail out of your comfort zone. By utilizing new technologies such as Skype, gchat or Facebook, you can easily keep in touch with the ones you love back home.

Finally, don’t feel like you’re alone. There’s a good chance a lot of the people you are traveling with may be feeling the same way. Reach out to them and talk – it will surely make you feel more connected!

Read more: <http://www.studyabroad.com/articles/what-would-you-do-homesickness.aspx#ixzz3M8Ndoiv5>