

# Living in Singapore: Tips for settling in



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# Did you know?

- Average Temperature 88 F / 31 C
- Average Humidity 84 %
- Land Mass 250 sq miles  
647 sq km
- Languages: English, Mandarin,  
Bahasa Malay, Tamil
- Lightning Capital of the World
- No Typhoons, No Earthquakes,
- No Tsunamis





# Population (as of 2018)

- 5.64 million people
- 3.99 million citizens or permanent residents
- 1.6 million expatriates
- Demographics of local population
  - 74 % Chinese
  - 13 % Malay
  - 9% Indian



Source: [http://www.singstat.gov.sg/docs/default-source/default-document-library/publications/publications\\_and\\_papers/population\\_and\\_population\\_structure/population2018.pdf](http://www.singstat.gov.sg/docs/default-source/default-document-library/publications/publications_and_papers/population_and_population_structure/population2018.pdf)



**RED signifies universal brotherhood and equality**

**White signifies purity and virtue**

**Crescent moon represents a young nation on the rise**

**Five stars signify ideals of democracy, peace, progress, justice and equality.**



## RELIGION

43% of the population  
are Buddhists

15% are Muslim

8.5% are Taoist

5% Catholic

4% Hindu

10% other Christian  
denominations

15% no affiliation





# Singaporean ways

- Singlish—“ Nola” is not a person (Ah, Lah, Wah)
- Customer service
- Very little imagination—“a rule is a rule”
- Limited selection consumer goods
- Creativity stifled
- Public discourse limited
- Emergency trauma services Ph: 995
- Parkway Ambulance Service: 64703307

# Singapore: The interesting

- There is a fine for everything
- There is no welfare
- Toilets
- Durians & mangosteens
- Mosquitoes are illegal
- No shoes in homes
- Don't expect to get invited to homes





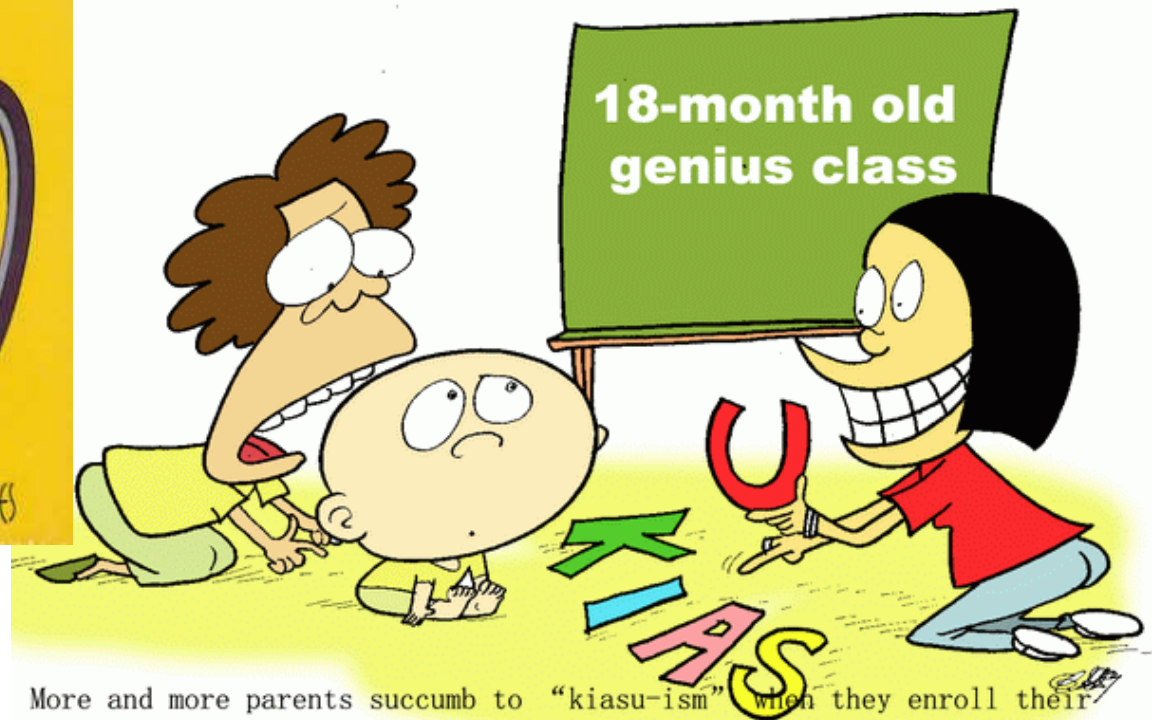
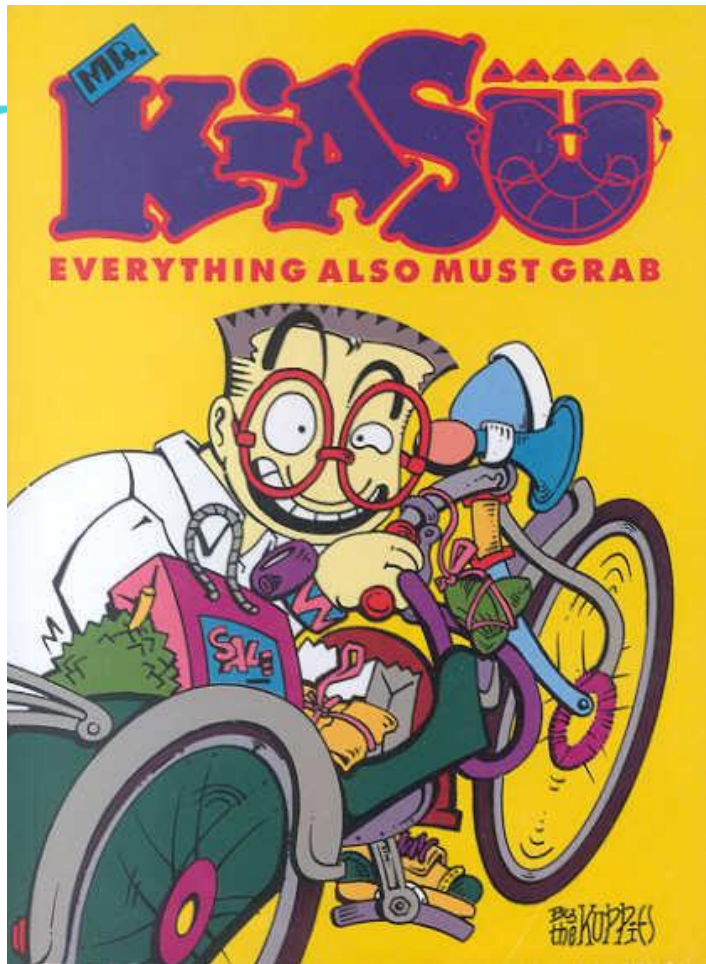
# Singapore: more interesting things

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- Singaporeans generally will not ask questions or otherwise participate
- No tipping
- Children tend to be more deferential to adults, less outgoing, less adventurous
- Can't Buy Apartment till Age 35 . . . So:
  - Singles Live at Home
  - Multiple Generations live together
  - Grandparents often raise children

# Singapore: more interesting things

- Singaporeans often have two events on the same evening—don't expect them to stay late
- Kiasu
- Gifts: No clocks . . . No knives
- Uncle / Auntie: Terms of Respect
- Cars and the COE
- Red Packets



More and more parents succumb to “kiasu-ism” when they enroll their child in countless programs and activities even before the child can walk.



# The internationally mobile child:

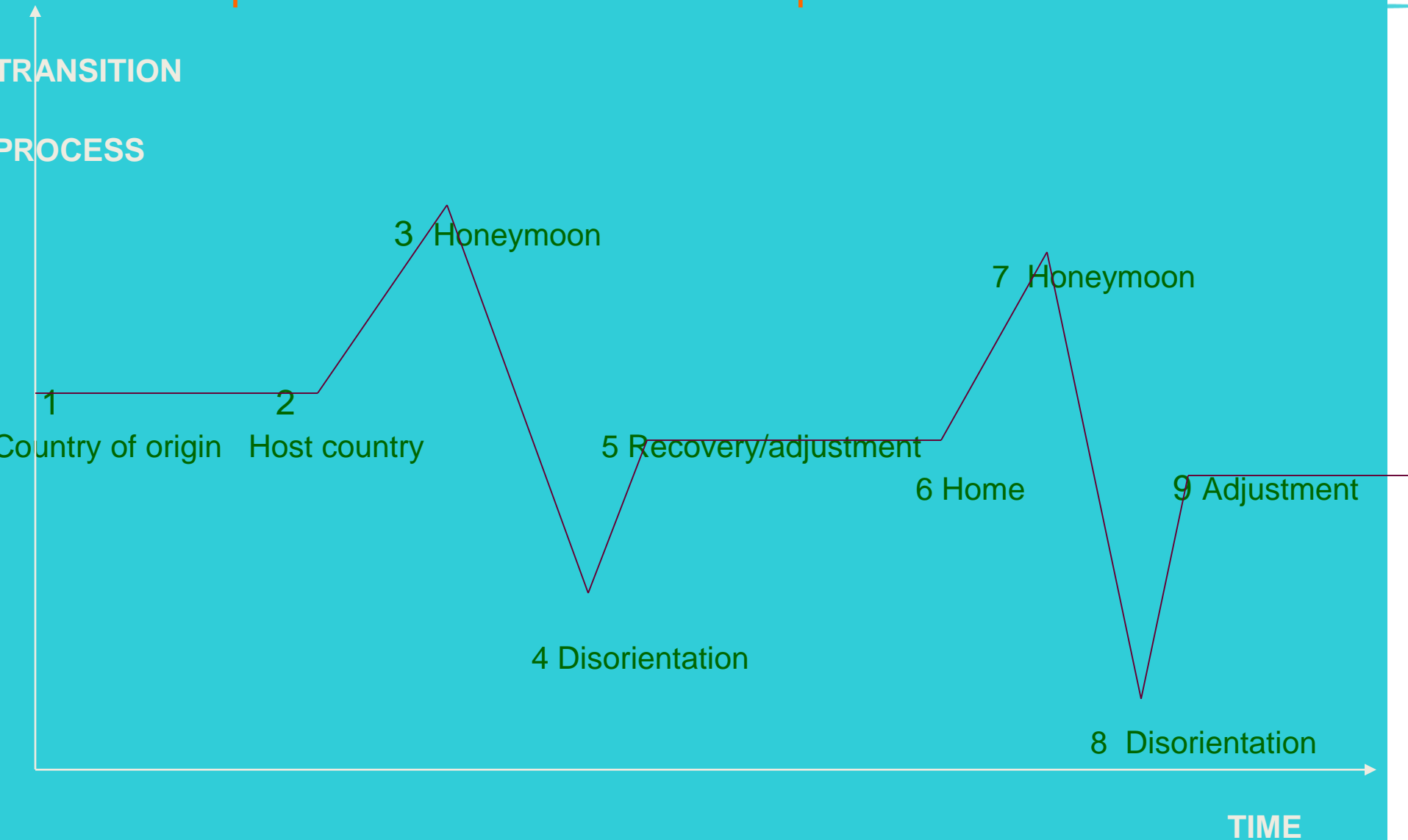
## POSITIVES

- Meeting new people
- Friends all over the world
- Travel
- New food & other cultural experiences
- New language
- Different perspective on life
- Good communicator (many stories to tell)

# The internationally mobile child: **CHALLENGES**

- Emotional roller coaster ride
- Search for identity
- Changing cultural boundaries
- Cross-cultural kids
- Need for relationships

# Expatriation “U” curve and Repatriation “W” curve

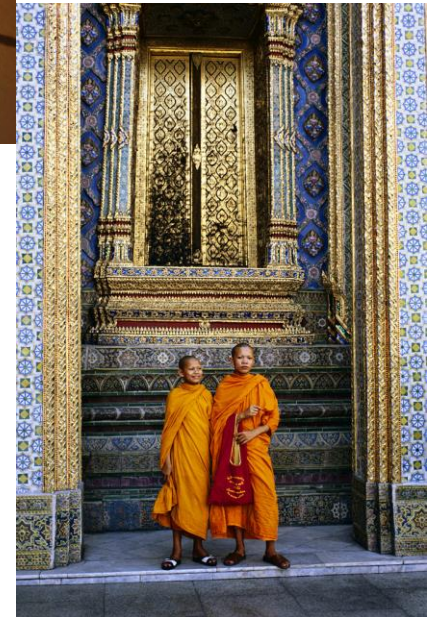


Gullahorn & Gullahorn (1963)



# Developing Cross Cultural Skills

- This is about valuing the host culture
- Steps Towards Integration
  - Ethnocentric
    - Denial
    - Defense
    - Minimization
  - Ethno-Relative
    - Acceptance
    - Adaptation
    - Integration
- Get curious about your new home, its people and its culture



# Settling In



- **Make a Home, a Haven**
- **Deliberately develop new rituals and keep the old ones**
- **Move quickly to establish community**
  - Social Organizations: e.g., Parents association, ANZA
  - Sports Groups: e.g., Dragon boat racing
  - Cultural groups: e.g., Friends of the Museum
  - Special interest groups: e.g., Drama Club
  - Church
- **Celebrate the Holidays that are important to you**

# Guidelines for parents

- Acknowledge the move  
(grief, sadness, loneliness)
- Stay positive
- Be a good role model
- Look after your health  
& well being
- Keep an eye out
- Maintain open communication





# Singapore: The Benefits

- Strong Infrastructure
  - Telecoms, Transport, Sanitation, etc.
- Centrally located
- Very low crime
- Can eat & drink everything
- Affordable healthcare
- Good schools



# Sources of Information

- [www.expatsingapore.com](http://www.expatsingapore.com)
  - Guide to expatriate needs in Singapore
- [www.xpatxperience.com](http://www.xpatxperience.com)
  - Individual European country welcomes
- [www.entersingapore.info](http://www.entersingapore.info)
- [www.gov.sg](http://www.gov.sg)
  - Guide to all Singapore Government Guidelines & Regs
  - Links to all Embassies & Consulates
- Your Embassy
- [www.visitsingapore.com](http://www.visitsingapore.com)
  - Official Singapore tourist website
- Living in Singapore Book,
  - [www.aasingapore.com/lis/](http://www.aasingapore.com/lis/)

With special thanks and acknowledgements to Suzanne Anderson from [Restorative Community Counselling](#).

# Thank you

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## Q & A

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