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Dear Friend,

X-track is a training required for all Campus Crusade for Christ staff serving long-term overseas. We've reached the halfway point in our cross-cultural ministry preparation. I'm so grateful to be learning from co-workers who collectively have over 200 years of international experience. Some of my current lecturers have given their lives to share the gospel abroad, and I'm so privileged to glean from their experience!

Topics have ranged from spiritual disciplines to preventative health. A great focus has been on learning the language and culture we're entering in order to best connect with the people. One of the most fascinating lessons was entitled "Wealth and Power." This session reminded me how differently authority is viewed in Japan and America. Because there's a much greater Power Distance Index in Japan, society tends to respect leaders without questioning their decisions. As I join a team of majority Japanese staff members, it's critical to be aware of this dissimilarity so I can respect my coworkers and give appropriate input.



We also considered how our host cultures view other aspects such as individualism. The most striking factor was how high Japan is on a scale called the Uncertainty Avoidance Index. Japan is double that of the U.S. on this scale. While Americans are generally comfortable in dealing with ambiguous situations, Japanese people tend to minimize uncertainty through stringent rules and laws. This helped me understand why I got in trouble at least a dozen times by the lifeguards at the lap pool in Tokyo.

X-track has been invaluable so far, and we have a couple more weeks of critical lessons preparing us to thrive overseas. Probably my favorite aspect of this environment, though, has been hearing the stories of my peers. I've identified about strict trash separation policies with people who are heading to Sweden. Others have shared about getting mugged in their cities, which is probably less likely than getting struck by lightning in Tokyo. There are amazing testimonies of how God's love and truth has been spread around the world, and the variety of ways He touches lives is astonishing!



Please continue to pray for us! There are over 15 countries represented, and participants are literally going all around the world. We need energy and wisdom to keep soaking up information that will make us effective once we arrive in our new home countries. The classes have been intense, but we've really been able to relax and enjoy the weekends. I seriously miss the beach in California, but the Rocky Mountains are a pretty good substitute!

Hope in Christ,

Christina