



Enjoy Being A Trailing Spouse

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The Cambridge dictionary defines a Trailing Spouse as: “the partner of an employee who is sent to work in another country”. Being a trailing spouse can be an extraordinary experience. While some challenges might arise and the process will have its ups and downs, with the right mentality the experience can be gratifying and enrich your life and that of those around you.

When a family decides to accept a new

opportunity to move abroad, the experience is magnificent, and the whole family is often thrilled. Relocating to a new country is compelling. The working partner will have a considerable career opportunity, including a nice financial benefit. The kids will attend a new school and find new international friends. Everyone will discover something new, including the trailing spouse who might decide to stay home, to ensure everyone’s needs are fulfilled.

For you, the trailing spouse, it isn’t uncommon for the initial excitement to wear off once the busyness of relocating and adjusting is finished. After settling down in the new home, finding suitable activities for the kids, and having some free time, the trailing spouse can find that free time does not always translate into “happy time.”

From my experience, I was once a new trailing spouse just like you. I understand the mixed messages sent by family and friends who are happy for you, but at the

same time might be envious of your great new adventure. If they only knew how challenging it can be to be a trailing spouse. Your partner is consumed with their new work, and you wonder: what’s in for me? Occasionally your needs are not met by your partner or your kids, and even your self-care can suffer. It is difficult to put the feeling of loneliness into words.

If this describes your experience, know that this is completely normal, and growth awaits! If you find yourself feeling unfulfilled instead of excited, you can overcome this feeling by intentionally finding new activities and new friends. Finding the right friends — the ones who will cherish your friendship for the long run — is critical. After all, you are the rock of the family, and you need a solid foundation to build on.

There is no manual on how to deal with the ups and downs. But I can confidently say that the answer lies within you. When you accept that life isn’t perfect, but you are doing your best, you are on the road to success.

You have to search for YOUR sense of belonging, find your positive mindset,



discover new activities and routines, and locate the right people to be part of your inner circle. As noted above, new activities and new friends will be your anchors as you adapt and transition to your new reality. Be patient. You don’t know how or when these changes will happen, but they will happen, and you’ll slowly become aware of them. It’s a process, and it may include heartfelt conversations with your new friends, shedding tears, and accepting the difference between where you came from and where

you want to be.

You are the one holding the key to your success, the feeling of belonging to the new city you now call home. From time to time, it’s ok to go down memory lane, but recognize that it’s important to live in the here and now.

Living in the present helps you unfold your happiness, remain positive and live a fulfilled life. Trust me - you will succeed! Of course, you’ll reminisce about the family and friends you left behind, but that

too is part of the journey. It’s living in the moment that will make you a happy trailing spouse.

Partnering with a Cross-Cultural Coach will help and reassure you along your journey. This Cross-Cultural Coach will listen nonjudgmentally, hold a safe space for you, offer an emotional connection, and talk openly about your challenges to unleash the extraordinary life you are meant to live.

BE YOUR BEST ANYTIME, ANYWHERE!

