

THRIVING ABROAD PODCAST
#40: HELEN WATTS: Watts Your Pathway
Going Home – Tips to ease the repatriation journey.

In this podcast, I talk to Helen Watts about her international journey with particular focus on repatriation – Tips to ease the repatriation journey.

“Helen is a re-entry expert. She lived in Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia for over seven years where she was involved in development work. Helen returned to the UK in 2010 and retrained as a coach and de-briefer - specifically to help others through the re-entry process. Research she conducted in 2017 showed how little support repatriates get from their organisations after their relocation, and how challenging people can find going “home.” Helen has been coaching individuals through their repatriations for the last seven years and has been through re-entry herself as a single student, a married couple, and with a family. She launched her first online course, “From apprehensive to quietly confident” and her first book “Arriving Well” in 2018.”



It’s one of these common misconceptions that returning after a time abroad on an international assignment is simply coming home. It is easy to assume that everything will be fine because we know what’s what and where everything is. And yet, in reality it can be a challenging time.

“But it wasn’t home anymore. Rather than feeling like a part of what was going on, I felt more like a really well-informed spectator.”

Michael Pollock, Arriving Well

In the interview we discuss:

- The challenges of repatriation, which can centre around the question of identity, friendship, confidence and simply trying to settle and find your feet – it takes time. When these challenges are combined with the sense that we have come to the end of an adventure - grief and loss can set in, and this can feel quite isolating.
- Tips and advice on how to prepare to leave well from a practical perspective.
- Tips and advice on how people can help themselves through the emotional impact of repatriation – leaving and arriving. Helen introduces the RAFT acronym (David C Pollock).
- The importance of recognising it takes time to settle in.
- The benefit of making your living environment into a home – even if it is not your permanent home.
- Using social media wisely – some tips.
- How the repatriating employee can ease the transition for themselves – the value of mentors.

- Children and what parents should think about in relation to supporting children when repatriating home – especially when the parent’s ‘home’ may not be their ‘home’.

Helens top tips:

Helen recommends **The Re-Entry Relaunch Workbook. By Dr Cate Brubaker**. Cate is a re-entry expert and brings that expertise to this great book.

I believe that Cate’s book together with Arriving Well would make a great repatriation support bundle.

Why not also give yourself the gift of Helen’s online course ***From Apprehensive to Quietly Confident***. It is currently available for the amazing price of £19, due to rise to £25 in March. You can learn more [HERE](#)

You can also learn more about the report that Helen mentioned by going [HERE](#)

Watts Your Pathway?

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