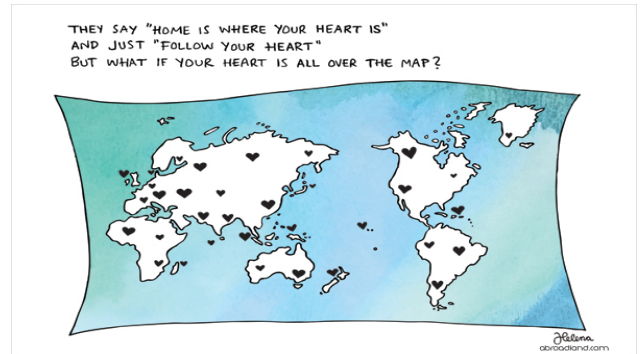


Thriving Abroad Podcast

#41 HELENA JALANKA – Greetings from Abroadland

In this podcast, I talk to Helena Jalanka. Helena shares her story and the insights she has developed from her international journey – so far!

Helena is a creative designer who comes from Finland. Her background is in digital media and marketing, and she currently focuses on visual storytelling and graphic design. One of Helena's latest projects is a book call ***Greetings from Abroadland*** that shares stories, tips and cartoons about experiences of living abroad as a family.



About international relocation, Helena says:

“Go with an open mind, you will see how everything goes and you won't have certain expectations about how things should go, or how people should live – you're curious to see other ways of living and thinking.”

I love that so many great tips and insights can tumble out of a thirty-minute conversation. I'd like to think that it is a result of great questions, but actually, it is more to do with the wisdom and self-awareness that Helena has developed through her international transitions.

Understanding what motivates you to relocate abroad is an important element of the decision-making process outlined in my book *Thriving Abroad: The definitive guide to professional and personal relocation success*. Curiosity was an important motivating factor for Helena and her partner in their decision to move abroad and also facilitating how they experienced their lives abroad. This is great news as it turns out that possessing an open mind and curiosity are two fundamental skills for successful international living. Curiosity is an important behaviour in developing 'Cultural Agility'. If you are interested in developing your level of cultural agility go [HERE](#)

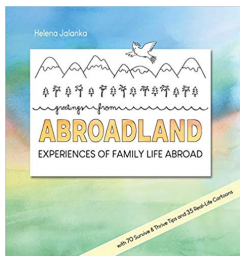
Helena suggests the following tips for living an international lifestyle:

- Focus on living in the moment, build your home where it is now.
- Recognise that challenges are often opportunities – we talk about the challenge and opportunity that comes from creating time for your family, learning languages and the freedom to reinvent yourself and start anew.
- How living abroad means that we are encouraged to develop our concept of self – you may be interested to read some recent research I mention on this subject the reference is posted below.

- Take time to really explore your new locality – the fact that your time there is limited means you have more motivation to get to know your environment.
- Stop categorising ourselves, we are not ‘a role’ alone, we are so much more.
- Career development, particularly for the partners of international assignees, can be challenging. Helena shares how her location independent career evolved and the role that creativity had in that development – and how her international experience fed into her creativity.

Helena’s top tip:

“Try to make the most of your time abroad – as my son used to say: ‘I live wherever I live’. Try to build your life where you are at the moment, and also focus on the positives....create your own land in your current land.’



If you would like to learn more about Helena’s book **‘Greetings from Abroadland: Experiences of Family Life Abroad’** you can visit her website:

www.Abroadland.com

You can buy her book from [Amazon](#)



Research study mentioned: *Organizational Behaviour and Human Decision Making, Volume 145, March 2018, Pages 16 – 29: The shortest path to oneself leads around the world. Living abroad increases self-concept identity.*

Interested in learning more about Cultural Agility? Go [HERE](#)

You can learn more about my book **THRIVING ABROAD: The definitive guide to professional and personal relocation success** [HERE](#)

You can download workbook that accompanies the book **THRIVING ABROAD** [HERE](#)

