

PREFACE

When I was at university in Manchester and Oxford 30 plus years ago, I noticed one prevalent social phenomenon: most Asian students kept themselves to themselves, they roamed in groups of two or three (with other Asian students), and generally preferred to cook at home than embracing the host country's pubs, (cheap) restaurants, student union bars, dorm parties and university social events.

Whilst this may seem admirable (studying instead of partying, and saving money), you lose SO much by staying in your room and hanging out with the same few people. I will give you three strong reasons:

1. To go abroad to study is a huge privilege that not many young people have. If your experience of studying abroad is confined solely to your room and the lecture theatre only, then your parents would have wasted their hard-earned cash paying your expensive university fees. You could have gotten the same degree much cheaper via correspondence courses, such as Open University, or doing affiliate university programmes in your own country.
2. These days, the job market is very competitive (especially if you are thinking of applying to large global companies or blue-chip firms). Even if your CV says that you studied abroad, can you tell the interviewers about your experience of studying in a foreign country succinctly? Can you create an engaging narrative about your experiences? It says a lot about you as an individual if it came across that you made no effort to learn anything beyond what is put in front of you (i.e. exams). It shows a lack of initiative and zero curiosity for life.
3. You are missing out! There is a world of opportunities out there that exist beyond your room and beyond your home country! Your university will provide you with the access to these opportunities, but it is up to you whether you take advantage of them or not. If you

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don't socialise wider than your small circle, you would not know of what's available to you, and you might miss something big and wonderful that is perfect for you.

Here's one thing to remember: even if you are a genius, unless you can communicate and socialise your genius, you will remain undiscovered. This book is not about discovering your genius, but rather, helping you to grow into the best adult you can be, which includes preparing you for getting your dream job. And of course, most importantly, it is a book to help you enjoy your years studying abroad (whilst staying safe and getting good results).

And to make this book super good and super relevant for you, I am working with a group of students (the Asian Kid Abroad Team) who are from several schools in Kuala Lumpur to capture the diversity in age, ethnicity and lived experience. These students organised themselves into the editorial, design and marketing team, with the design team working with the talented Argentinian artist and illustrator, Viviana Moyano, who helped with the design of the book cover. The first tranche of profit from this book goes to the charity PAWS Malaysia, with future beneficiaries planned for future tranches. For more information on this, please visit <https://cheeseplantbooks.com/asian-kid-abroad-project/>

Wishing you the very best,

'Auntie' Jacq

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