



FOCUS & ME

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FOCUS & me lets members share their experience of what it means to be part of our community.



In the summer of 2018, my fiancé Tyson and I arrived in London. Being international travelers and having lived in foreign countries before, we were confident that we would be fine and do well in the UK.

One morning, during the first 90 days in the small corporate apartment that Tyson's company furnished for us, it hit me: "I don't really know anyone here. How am I going to succeed in this country? I miss my family. Tyson will be fine – his new workplace will have co-workers and teammates... but what about me?" Questions and doubts flooded into me. After no time at all, I was ready to fly back to Tokyo on any available plane.



I've spent many years living in America and have done some exchange programs in Australia, but I always had family members, school events, friendly neighbours, school counselors and teachers I could count on when I struggled. But now in the UK, I felt completely alone.

It was in that state of mind that we received an invitation to join FOCUS on the recommendation from Tyson's company. Still depressed, I consented and joined.

After just the initial call with Eva Stock, director of business engagement at FOCUS, my heart lightened. She was incredibly welcoming and pleasant, and I felt right at home. In our first face-to-face meeting, she walked through everything we had to know about living in the UK, from the NHS to cultural advice on how to work with house contractors. I remember her concern and stress on how important it was to register with NHS immediately, so we did! Looking back, the advice was golden – I ended up going to the emergency room with a head injury a week later. I cannot thank Eva enough for her foresight.

Three months into living in a new country, we've also attended social events such as a pleasant welcome breakfast at the Victoria and Albert Museum and a brilliant social night at the Saatchi Gallery where we met fabulous gallery members as well as other FOCUS members.

I have now also completed a Career Development Programme workshop at FOCUS. This was a fantastic course for professionals who would really like to succeed in the UK. I was never satisfied with my resume and my interview skills, so focusing on these topics alone served me well.

Now, I cannot think how I would've gone through my new life in London without FOCUS. Thank you for all of your useful information, networking events, and for being our rock!

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