

SWOAN P. WRIGHT CONSULTING

What Kind of Life Are You Trying to Build?

A practical worksheet for thinking about life abroad before choosing where to live.

PREPARED BY

Swoan P. Wright | Founder & International Relocation and Lifestyle Strategist

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Before You Choose a Country

Moving abroad often begins with a country.

Where is affordable? Where has good weather? Where can I get a visa?

Those questions matter. But they aren't necessarily the best place to begin.

A destination can look perfect on paper and still be a poor fit for the life you actually want to live.

This worksheet asks you to begin somewhere else: **with your life.**

There are no right answers. The purpose is to identify what matters to you before comparing destinations.

Start Here

Imagine an ordinary Tuesday in your life three years from now. You're living abroad, the novelty has worn off, and this is simply home.

What would make you think: **I chose well?**

How Do You Want Everyday Life to Feel?

Don't think about destinations yet. Think about the experience of your everyday life.

1. PACE

Which feels more like the life you want?

- ☐ Quiet and unhurried
- ☐ A comfortable balance
- ☐ Active and energetic
- ☐ Fast-paced and constantly changing

2. COMMUNITY

What kind of social environment feels most like home?

- ☐ A close-knit community where people know one another
- ☐ Friendly, but with plenty of privacy
- ☐ An active social environment with lots happening
- ☐ A large, diverse community where I can choose my level of involvement

3. ENVIRONMENT

Where can you most easily picture yourself living?

- ☐ In or near a major city
- ☐ In a smaller city or town
- ☐ Near the coast
- ☐ Surrounded by nature
- ☐ I'm open — the lifestyle matters more than the setting

4. DAILY CONVENIENCE

How important is it that everyday necessities are easy to reach?

- ☐ Very important — I want most things close by
- ☐ Important — I don't mind traveling a little
- ☐ Somewhat important — I'm comfortable planning ahead
- ☐ Not especially important — I'm comfortable being more remote

5. CLIMATE

Which statement comes closest to what you want?

- ☐ Warm weather most of the year
- ☐ Four distinct seasons
- ☐ Mild temperatures without major extremes
- ☐ Climate isn't a deciding factor for me

Looking at your answers, what stands out most about the life you're describing?

What Does Your Life Need to Support?

The life you want still has to work in the real world. Think about what needs to be present for you to live comfortably, independently and sustainably.

Choose the things that matter most to you.

- ☐ Reliable healthcare
- ☐ Financial affordability
- ☐ Easy transportation or walkability
- ☐ Reliable internet and connectivity
- ☐ Safety and personal security
- ☐ Access to an international airport
- ☐ Opportunities to build friendships and community
- ☐ Arts, culture, dining and activities
- ☐ Access to nature or outdoor recreation
- ☐ Ability to communicate comfortably in the local language
- ☐ Proximity to family or easy travel back to them
- ☐ Other: _____

Now choose your five non-negotiables.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

And one final question:

What are you willing to compromise on to get the life that matters most to you?

Your Life Before Your Country

Before researching destinations, use what you've discovered to describe the life you're actually looking for. This becomes your filter for evaluating countries — instead of allowing the country to determine the life.

MY IDEAL EVERYDAY LIFE

Complete this sentence:

I want to live somewhere that allows me to...

WHAT MATTERS MOST

From everything you've identified so far, what are the three things your future home must support?

1.

2.

3.

WHAT I DON'T WANT TO RECREATE

Moving somewhere new doesn't automatically create a new life. Think about what you don't want to carry into your next chapter.

What are you hoping to have less of in your life?

What would you like to have more of?

MY RELOCATION BRIEF

Using your answers, complete this statement:

The place that's right for me will...

Keep this statement nearby when you begin researching destinations. A country may be appealing and still not be right for the life you want to build.

MY NEXT STEP

Based on what I've discovered, the next thing I need to do is:

Don't start with a country. Start with the life. Then look for the places that can support it.