"Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending."
-Maria Robinson

Creating Inclusive Relationships Series
Part I Identifying Your Cultural Lens

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WE RE DIVINE
WHERE THE JOURNEY BEGINS

AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT

Increasing Self-Awareness, Reflection & Life-long Learning

- **Continued Learning**.
  - Increasing your understanding, exposure, experience and skills in becoming culturally responsive and effective
  - Where are you currently and who do you want to be?
  - **The importance of Exploring and Defining your individual Cultural Identity and Lens**
- Are you aware of your lens, reactions, experiences and how it may impact others?
  - **Assess Intercultural Development**
- **Duality in holding your own experiences** and development and what is expected of you because of your role.

Mitigating the Power Dynamics

- Transparent Communication and who should shift and adapt?

Institutional Accountability

- Shift the Cultural of the Entire Agency
- Define expectations in this work for staff, board, leadership and overall organization..

Citation: Cultural Humility: People, Principles and Practices," is a new 30-minute documentary by San Francisco State Professor Vivian Chávez

Monocultural Mindset Denial

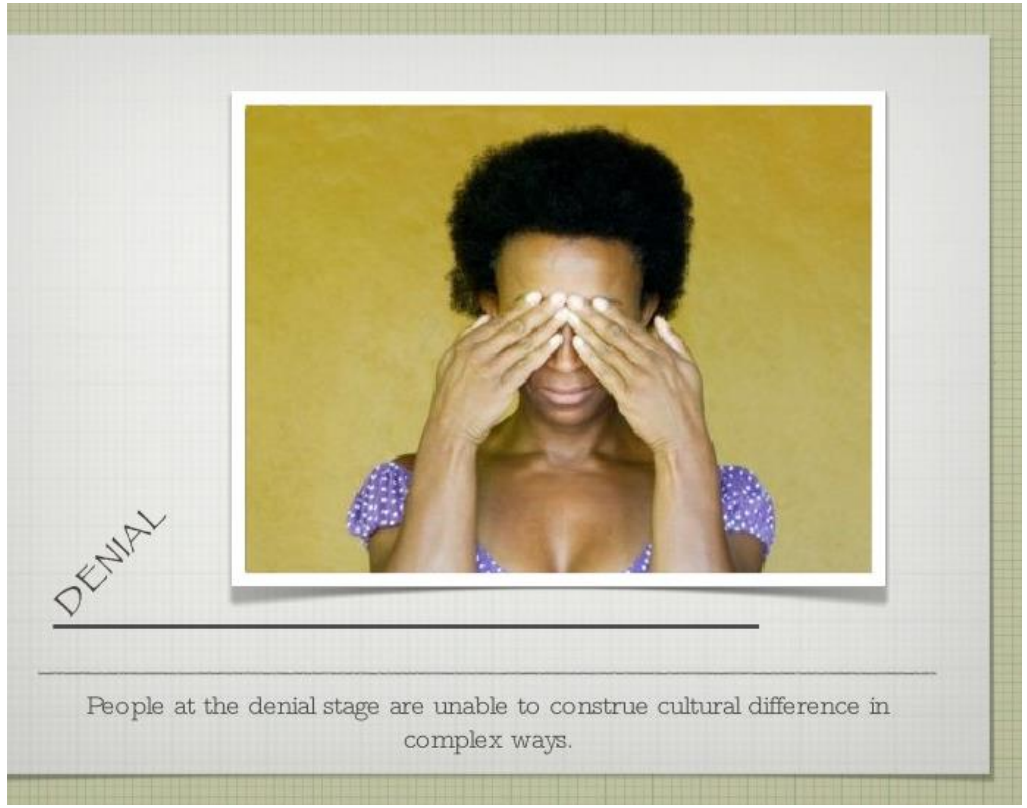
5 Stages of Intercultural Development. Dr. Milton Bennett's

- This stage is often created based on the belief that a person's **culture is the only real culture**.
- People in this stage often **fail to see cultural** differences and tend to isolate themselves from other groups.

They experience differences from a surface level; simple.

- Being comfortable with the familiar
- Not noticing much cultural difference around you
- Overly simple views of other cultures; stereotypes
- Seem accepting, but tend to dehumanize outsiders.

Citation Dr. Milton Bennett and Dr. Mitchell Hammer



Polarization: Experience cultural difference in a polarized way

This stage is marked by a judgmental orientation that views cultural differences in terms of "us" and "them"

Dualistic thinking good/bad

Polarization Defense: **Typically, one's own culture is glorified, and other cultures are belittled with negative stereotypes.**

- A strong commitment to one's own thoughts and feelings about culture and cultural difference.
- Aware of other cultures around you, but incomplete understanding of them and probably fairly strong negative feelings or stereotypes about some of them.
- leading to some distrust of, and a tendency to be judgmental about, cultural behavior or ideas that differ from one's own.

Polarization Reversal : The person feels that some other culture is better and tends to exhibit distrust of, and be judgmental of, their own culture.

Citation Dr. Milton Bennett and Dr. Mitchell Hammer

Minimization
An orientation that highlights cultural commonality

In this stage people think they are being open-minded, yet they are still in their comfort zone.

- Some knowledge about differences, but people from other cultures are pretty much like you, under the surface.
- **Treating other people as "you" would like to be treated.**
- **A tendency to assume you understand the situation the same as a person from another culture**.

The task is to learn more about your <u>own</u> culture and to <u>avoid projecting</u> that culture onto other people's experience.

Citation Dr. Milton Bennett and Dr. Mitchell Hammer

Acceptance

- Beginning of ability to interpret behavior, values, perceptions etc. within a cultural context
- Acceptance does not mean that one likes or approves of all aspects of each culture
- Aware of your own culture(s). See your own culture as just one of many ways of experiencing the world.
- Understanding that people from other cultures are as complex as yourself.
- Being curious about other cultures. Seeking opportunities to learn more about them.
- Recognize that all cultures are equally complex and valid

Citation Dr. Milton Bennett and Dr. Mitchell Hammer

Adaptation

- Recognizing the value of having more than one cultural perspective available to you.
- Able to "take the perspective" of another culture to understand or evaluate situations in either your own or another culture.
- Ability to see things from others' points of view (empathy), and Ability to adapt behaviors to act in culturally appropriate ways
- Able to intentionally change your culturally based behavior to act in culturally appropriate ways.
- Development of a flexible mindset and skillset needed for intercultural communication competence

Citation Dr. Milton Bennett and Dr. Mitchell Hammer

CULTURE SHIFT

The Discussion Style – Direct and Emotionally Restraint

- Resolves issues through a focused, problem-solving process in which objective facts and information are presented in a logical argument format.
- It's important as is maintaining emotional calm when tensions rise.

This style: "Say what you mean and mean what you say."

Strengths include an ability to directly confront problems and elaborate arguments, so people do not misunderstand your views and a willingness to maintain a calm atmosphere.

A few exemplar cultures that normatively function largely within a discussion style are those of the United States (European American), Australia, and northern Europe.

The Engagement style- Direct and Emotionally Expressive

Comfortable with more emotionally intense dialogue and in fact participants feel that when each party "puts their emotion on the table" the resolution of the dispute is satisfactorily progressing.

Irish proverb, "What is nearest the mouth is nearest the heart."

- Strengths include an ability to provide detailed information and explanations and a sincerity and commitment to the other party through more emotional expressions and a positive sense that sharing one's feelings is how conflicts are successfully resolved.

A few examples of engagement-style cultural systems are those of African Americans in the United States and people of southern Europe, Cuba, Nigeria, and Russia. Mitchell R. Hammer; Michelle Lebron

The Accommodation Style

Emphasizes ambiguity, stories, metaphors, and use of third parties to soften verbal confrontation between contending individuals.

- Relational harmony is maintained in a tense conflict situation by masking or controlling one's own emotional discomfort.

The accommodation style follows the Japanese maxim, "Hear one and understand 10."

- Self-perceived strengths of the accommodation style are an ability to consider alternative interpretations of ambiguous messages and sensitivity to the feelings of the other party.

Some cultural exemplars of the accommodation style are those of Native Americans (United States), Somalians, Mexicans, Japanese, and Thai.

The Dynamic Style

Uses indirect messages to negotiate substantive disagreements along with more emotionally intense and expressive verbal and nonverbal communication.

- This style may use language elements that include strategic exaggeration, repetition of one's position, ambiguousness, stories, metaphors, and humor along with greater reliance on third party intermediaries for resolving an escalating dispute.

Arab proverb, It is good to know the truth, but it is better to speak of palm, trees.

- Individuals with a dynamic style may describe themselves in terms of being comfortable with other people interjecting themselves into a disagreement and offering solutions to the contending parties, skilled at observing behavior, and comfortable with strong emotional displays.

Some dynamic cultures include those of several Arab Middle Eastern countries and Pakistan. Mitchell R. Hammer

What is needed to Shift, Adapt & Bridge?

Mindful Listening: A face-validating skill that requires that special **attention be paid to the culture, personal assumptions being expressed in a conflict interaction.**

Ways to engage in mindful listening include verbal and non-verbal paraphrasing of the content meaning and emotional meaning of the other party's message to check for accurate interpretations.

Mindful Reframing: A creative, mutual face honoring skill that requires the creation of alternative contexts to shape our understanding of the conflict behavior.

Collaborative Dialogue: An exchange of dialogue that is oriented fully in the present moment and builds on Mindful Listening and Mindful Reframing to practice communicating with different linguistic or contextual resources.

Culture-Based Conflict Resolution Steps: A seven-step conflict resolution model that guides cultural teams to **identify the background of a problem, analyze the cultural assumptions and underlying values of a person in a conflict situation**, and promotes ways to achieve harmony and share a common goal.

Citation Intercultural Communication for the Community College by Karen Krumrey-Fulks
Citation Psychology Today: Mindful Listening Using empathy to listen instead of offering advice. , 2017

Processing

Under stress, emotional upset, disagreement, and conflict people tend to revert to their primary cultural patterns and programming.

- Which Developmental Mindset is most difficult for you to understand and interact with?
- What strategies would you use to bridge the differences?
- How would you address conflict with this particular mindset
- How can you express compassion across differences and seek commonalities.

Unpacking the duality of holding your own experiences and development and what is expected of you as a leader and mentor.

- Increasing Self-Awareness, Reflection & Life-long Learning
- The importance of Exploring and Defining your individual Cultural Identity and Lens
- Are you aware of your lens, reactions, experiences and how it may impact others?
- Are you aware that your lens differs from others?
- Are you aware of how others experience you?
- How do you show up in different spaces?