

Learning From Our Differences

Presented by

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Course Description

Have you ever wondered why some people do things so differently from your way? Do you ever want to just tell them how to do things right? Come learn about how our culture affects every aspect of our life, especially our relationships.

Course Objectives

In this class we will learn to:

- Recognize/understand cultural variables
- Identify cultural lenses
- Understand the assimilation process from the insider's and outsider's perspective

Course Outline

1. Defining differences
2. Learning about culture
 - a. Cultural Patterns
 - b. Cultural Variables
3. Cultural Lenses
4. Assimilation into US Culture
5. Our acceptance of others

Learning from Our Differences

Vision New England

Women in Leadership Training

Ann Lawrence
Jean Marrapodi

Exercise Observations

How do you think this relates to our topic?

Principles of Cross Cultural Relationships

- Recognize/understand your own culture
- We must recognize the things in us that we harbor against others
- Recognize underlying fears
- Value others' needs and culture
- Recognize the pitfalls of assigning motivation to behavior

What are some of the differences we encounter between people?

Stereotypes

- Always from outsider's perspective
- Generally restrictive or limiting
- Overgeneralizations
- Often include misattribution

Misattribution:

the process of attributing meaning or motive to someone's behavior based upon one's own culture or experience

(Lane, 2002).

Learning About Culture

Defining Culture

System of _____ and _____ that shape one's _____

Characteristics of Culture and Patterns of Behavior

- Originate in the human mind
- Facilitate human and environmental interactions
- Satisfy basic human needs
- Are cumulative and adjust to changes in the external and internal conditions
- Tend to form a consistent structure
- Are learned and shared by all the members of a society
- Are transmitted to new generations

Learning from Our Differences

Leadership Training for Women In Ministry
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Ethnocentrism

The world is this way!

"MY WAY"

Normal...like at home

Cultural Variables

Objective: Visible

- Eye contact
- Clothing
- Greetings
- Volume
- Initiative
- Time Consciousness
- Food

Subjective: Invisible

- Values
- Feelings
- Assumptions
- Authority roles
- Concept of Truth
- Gender roles
- Motivations

We view things through different lenses: Cultural Lenses

- Context
 - High
 - Low
- Activity
 - Feminine
 - Masculine
- Authority
 - Formal (Hierarchical)
 - Informal (Egalitarian)
- Relationship
 - Collective
 - Individual
- Reality
 - Mystical
 - Scientific
- Temporal
 - Abundant
 - Limited
- Uncertainty Avoidance
 - High
 - Low

Assimilation into US Culture

What adjustments must individuals make when immigrating to the US?

- Language
- ?
- ?
- ?

Four Stages of Adjustment

- Excitement/Euphoria over newness
- Culture Shock
 - Intrusiveness of new culture
 - Desire to stick with familiar
 - Frustration, helplessness
- Culture Stress
 - Mixed feelings
 - Homelessness – don't fit in either
 - Loss of past, fear of future
- Assimilation/Adaptation
 - May not occur until next generation

Four Generations to assimilate

1. Total Ethnic
2. Ethnic American
 - a. 1.5 generation
 - b. May have more in common with one another than family
3. American Ethnic
4. American

Our Acceptance of Others

IMPERCEPTIVE	Ignore	Who are these folk?
	Reject	They are too odd
MODERATELY PERCEPTIVE	Approximate	They are the same as us
	Aware	I know them
PERCEPTIVE	Accept	Their ways are good
	Versatile	I like both cultures equally

Sayler, 1993

You may need to adjust expectations

Making Changes

- Cognitive Changes
 - New Information
 - Awareness
 - Understanding
- Affective Changes
 - feelings
 - emotions
- Skill Development
 - Competence
 - Interpersonal Skills
 - Increased Abilities

Additional Reading

- Bennett, C., I. (1999). *Comprehensive Multicultural Education: Theory and Practice*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
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- Lo, J. (2002) *Intentional Diversity: Creating Cross-Cultural Relationships in Your Church*. Wesleyan Publishing House
- Marrapodi, J. (2004) *Ethics and Multiculturalism*. Online:
<http://www.applestar.org/Literacy/Multicultural%20Ethics.doc>
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- Schmidt, K. (2004, 5/17/2004). Religious Minorities 'Scapegoat': European Study. *Islamonline.net*, p. 1.
- Seelye, H. N. (1996). *Experiential Activities for Intercultural Learning*. Intercultural Press
- Thiagarajan, Sivasailam (aka Thiagi) (2001). *Barnge: A Simulation Game on Cultural Clashes*. Intercultural Press

Homework for “Learning from our Differences”

Choose to do either Part A or B.

A: Review

Answer the following questions to reinforce and personalize your learning.

- List and discuss at least 3 ways your culture affects how you relate with others.
- Examine your community. What types of different cultures are around you?
- What are three things you can do to understand and appreciate other cultures better?
- What are four things your attitudes and actions toward those from other cultures teach you about yourself?
- List four Scriptures that give Biblical instructions for relating to those from other cultures and discuss what they mean for your behavior/attitude.
- Determine three actions you will take to grow in your appreciation of others who are different from you.

B: Application

Complete the following activity.

- Create a strategy to connect with someone from a diverse background from yourself.
- Meet with that person over tea/coffee. Discuss their observations of what they see as “different” in themselves.
- Write a 2-page paper about your discoveries and reflections on the process.

Return your completed assignment with the attached coversheet to:

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Check List for Homework Assignments

Please attach this sheet to the top of materials to be handed in.

Course Title: **Learning From Our Differences**
Instructor (circle): Jean Marrapodi / Ann Lawrence
Date Class Taken:

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No. _____ Email: _____

Note: Make sure you have a copy of your original homework for your files.

Please check to indicate completion.

I have completed and attached my homework. I have selected:

- _____ A: Review Questions (completed and attached)
_____ B: Meeting with someone and reflections paper

(signature)

For Instructor's Use Only

_____ Date Work Received _____ Date Work Reviewed _____ Complete/Incomplete

Comments: