

Exploring Culture: Part 2

This activity is designed to be completed after Exploring Culture: Part 1

OBJECTIVE

To understand that we all have a culture and that our culture influences the way we look at and interpret the world around us.

GROUP AGREEMENTS

Remind participants of the [Group Agreements](#)

INTRODUCTION (2-3 minutes)

Let participants know that you're going to continue the discussion around culture. Remind participants that culture is the lens through which we view the world around us, that we all have a culture and that it influences how we act and how we interpret the actions of others. Re-introduce the [Iceberg Concept of Culture](#)¹ visual. Acknowledge that we often view culture in terms of what is visible or what lies above the surface: the food, festivals, music, dress, behaviors, customs etc., but we really show up and live out of that deep culture. Our culture shapes our values, beliefs, ways of being and interacting, and our priorities. Though often invisible to our own eyes, we live out our lives in this deep culture.

WARM-UP ACTIVITY (10-20 minutes)

Hand each participant a sticky note and ask them to jot down examples of what they do to communicate respect or what makes them feel respected. Give participants a couple minutes to write down their responses and then invite them to share if comfortable. After participants have shared, ask:

1. Do you think respect is communicated in the same way across all cultures and subcultures? If participants struggle with an answer, provide some examples. The idea to communicate is that deep culture supplies the meaning for surface culture.
 - a. In some cultures it is respectful to arrive on time whereas in other cultures it is disrespectful to start before everyone has arrived.
 - b. In some communities or parts of our country it might be respectful for children to call adults Mr. or Mrs. Johnson for example, whereas in other places, "John" and "Mary" would be just fine.
 - c. In some cultures eye contact communicates respect whereas in other

cultures it could be disrespectful.

2. While respect might be universally valued, how that looks is influenced by our individual cultures. What implications does this understanding hold for us in how we interact with others?

EXPLORING OUR OWN CULTURE ACTIVITY (15-20 minutes)

Materials needed: pencil and [Elements of Culture](#)² handout for each participant.

Instructions:

1. Distribute the handouts and have participants work independently to fill in each column for the different elements of culture listed. If time is short, you may ask participants to choose two columns to fill in for each element of culture.

Reflection Questions

- Were there any Ah-ha moments when filling out the Elements of Culture worksheet?
- Did anyone find that their values now are different from what they were growing up? What caused the change?
- How do you navigate situations where your values/the program's values clash with the values of a family you are working with?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Valuing Diversity: Developing a Deeper Understanding of All Young Children's Behavior:<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/dec2019/valuing-diversity-developing-understanding-behavior>
- Family Engagement and Cultural Perspectives: Applying Strengths-based Attitudes https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/family_engagement_and_cultural_perspectives-508_2-20-18.pdf
- Understanding the Influence of Culture on Caregiving Practices...From the Inside Out<https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/understanding-the-influence-of-culture-on-caregiving-practices-from-the-inside-out/>

EVALUATION & CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS

1. The Strengthening Diversity Community of Practice would love to hear your thoughts on how well the content supported your learning. Please complete the [PD Mini Feedback Form](#). A link to the training certificate will be made available upon submission. Facilitators are encouraged to provide participants with the link to the feedback form.
2. Participants who are a part of the Wisconsin Registry can receive credit for completing a PD Mini. Refer to the [Registry Credit Instruction Document](#) for further details.

FACILITATOR SUGGESTIONS

1. When using the Elements of Culture worksheet, feel free to add in or change the elements of culture listed to individualize the activity for your group. For example, if you are in the health field you might want to include cultural elements around cleanliness & personal hygiene, modesty, nutrition, decision-making and gender roles.
2. Spend some time thinking about your own answers to these questions ahead of time and be prepared to share your own examples if needed. If individuals have not spent a lot of time thinking about their own culture sometimes they may struggle in answering the questions at first.
3. If there is a lot (or perhaps too little) conversation, consider asking individuals to pick an article for further reading and come prepared to share one take-away at the next meeting.

Sources:

1. PBS Learning Media: Iceberg Concept of Culture Images and PDFs
<https://thinktv.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/a353a4ba-cd56-4999-97dd-0e40e11a7211/iceberg-concept-of-culture-images-and-pdfs/>
2. [Pyramid Model Consortium](#): Elements of Culture Handout
(Zion, S. (n.d.) Center for Advancing Practice, Education, and Research; University of Colorado Denver. Adapted by R. Allen 2017)