CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
ENGAGING IN CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH OPEN MINDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Where have I been and where am I going?

When we think of culture, we often thinking about posing the question: “Where are you from? And in asking this question, we assume associating someone’s culture with a country of origin. But is this reasonable? Countries are not absolute. They disappear, they expand, they contract. Countries were only invented 400 years ago.

An example: Afghanistan of south Asia Islamic Republic of Afghanistan vs Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan

Before countries were nations and tribes: Chinese nations, Ottoman, Persian, Mali, Ethiopia, Songhai empire, Benin empire and Oyo empire to name a few.

My family national origins go back to Nigeria in the central African republic. My ancestry dates to Cameroon, Congo, and Western Bantu People of Africa but can I say I am from Nigeria. I have never personally been. And with this, can I even say I am African American?

So, I look to understanding who I am through local acculturation, and in doing so I become more defined. A native southern Californian, of 3rd generation non-slavery. I can look at my US lineage from the perspective of belonging to a family that in each of those generations has served this country (the United States) ever since our arrival. At first under duress and ultimately today out of a desire to serve others through military or civil service.

My experiences are growing up in a heavily populated urban community with very little income but a lot to be thankful for. A single mother raising 3 kids who migrated to California from Texas, were raised on southern Baptist values. Most Sundays were cleaning days, waking up as early as 8 am to the smell of eggs, bacon, grits, and sometimes pancakes in the morning with oldie songs by Patty LaBelle, Smokey Robinson, James Brown and the Famous Flames.

In my childhood neighborhood, we practiced “hood etiquette” where you weren’t allowed to wear certain colors once you crossed a certain street. You had to be home before the lights came on to decrease the likelihood of become a victim of violence. I share all of what seems to be random moments of my life with you to affirm that these moments have shaped my identity. All identity is experience. This is where I have been, and it helps provide a direction of where I want to go.

Diversity Consciousness
CULTURAL DIVERSITY, (ALSO KNOWN AS MULTICULTURALISM) REFERS TO A SOCIETY OR COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE THAT IS MADE UP OF MANY DIFFERENT SOCIAL OR ETHNIC GROUPS.
CULTURE EXIST BOTH ABOVE AND BENEATH THE SURFACE
CULTURE CONSISTS OF YOUR CUSTOMS, BELIEFS, VALUES AND BEHAVIOR.

SOME ASPECTS OF YOUR CULTURE CAN BE SEEN BY STRANGERS, WITH THE MAJORITY REMAINING HIDDEN OR INTERNAL.

VISIBLE CULTURE CONSISTS OF YOUR BEHAVIOR, CUSTOMS, APPEARANCE, AND DRESS. YOUR DEEP, NOT IMPOSSIBLE BUT LESS CHANGEABLE CULTURE INCLUDES YOUR VALUES, ATTITUDES, BELIEFS AND PERCEPTIONS.

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ELEMENTS OF CULTURE

Personal Values & Beliefs
INTRAPERSONAL COMMUNICATION: COMMUNICATION OCCURRING WITHIN ONESELF.

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION: COMMUNICATION OCCURRING BETWEEN PEOPLE.
PEOPLE WE INTERACT WITH, WE TEND TO LABEL.

PEOPLE WE TRANSACT WITH, WE SEE THE TOTALITY OF.
A challenge of living with multiculturalism is cross-cultural misunderstandings. Behaviors and gestures differ widely from place to place, and it is easy to make an assumption based on a gesture or behavior that is incorrect because it means different things in different cultures.

From a business perspective, cross-culture communication refers to how well people from different cultures interact in a business environment.
In which on of these countries is this Likely to be seen as a rude gesture?

Iran
Australia
Canada
Japan
In which of these countries is it common to greet people like this?

New Zealand
Canada
Spain
Korea
In which of these countries is using your left hand likely to be considered rude?

- Germany
- Australia
- Sri Lanka
- Japan
In which of these countries is altering your meal likely to be considered rude?

- Costa Rica
- France
- America
- El Salvador
In which of these communities is looking into a camera a method of robbing a person's sole?

Pelasgian
Buddhist
Tzotzil
Germanic
In which of these cultures is it common for extended family to make critical healthcare decisions for other family members?

Canadian
Australian
African
Irish
In which of these countries does the elder hold the status of venerated prophets of God – with the power to bless or curse you as they see fit?

Republic of Malta
Nigeria
Greece
Samoa
Implicit Bias

Also known as implicit social cognition, implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual’s awareness or intentional control.

Source: Understanding Implicit Bias - The Ohio State University Kirwaninstitute.osu.edu
Affinity Bias

Or similarity bias is the tendency to connect with others who share similar interest, experiences or backgrounds.
Confirmation Bias

When we make conclusions about an individual about a situation or person based on your personal beliefs and prejudices rather than on the unbiased merits.
In an effort to try and make sense of a person's behavior based on prior observations and interactions you've had with that individual that make up your perception of them.
More commonly identified as peer pressure, this bias is demonstrated where people act similar to the people around them regardless of their own personal beliefs or values.
Halo Effect

The effect in which we place a person on a pedestal after learning something impressive about them.
Horns Effect

Viewing someone in a negative manner after learning something unpleasant or negative about them.
Gender Bias

Demonstrating a preference of one gender over another.
Ageism Bias

The tendency to have a negative feeling about another person based on their age.
Name Bias

The practice of judging or preferring people with certain types of names – typically names that are of Anglo origin
A social behavior where people believe that attractive people are more successful, competent and qualified.
Each underrepresented community has a different experience with self-advocacy.
Advocacy as a whole matters

Attribute ideas correctly

Acknowledge accomplishments

Ask probing questions

Those with limited first-language skills or who have a thicker accent are often subject to discrimination, ridicule, and harassment.

Race, gender, age, ability, and other identity-based stereotypes can impact our perception about a person’s competence and ability. This leads to implicit biases we may not even be aware of.

67% of job seekers consider workplace diversity an important factor when considering employment opportunities, and more than 50% of current employees want their workplace to do more to increase diversity.

Source: Glassdoor
WHEN WE MAKE AN EFFORT TO ENGAGE IN CROSS CULTURE COMMUNICATION, WE ARE EXERCISING CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS. THE RESULT? WE RECOGNIZE THAT CULTURE IS NOT A FIXED POINT OR PLACE IN TIME. WE EACH BELONG TO AND ASSIMILATE INTO MANY CULTURES THROUGH EXPERIENCES.

ALL THOSE CULTURAL EXPERIENCES ARE WHO WE BECOME.

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

WHEREVER THAT MAY BE, THAT IS WHO WE WILL BECOME.
OVERCOMING CULTURAL BARRIERS

YOUTUBE: Harbinger Horizon Overcoming Cultural Barriers
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