

Improving Relationships Through Understanding One Another NCERA 216

Dr. Debra Bolton
Extension Specialist
Kansas State University

Purpose

- Define cultural patterns
- Cultural patterns and their affect on communication
- Self-Identification of biases that interfere with communication
- Helps to improve comfort in building cross-cultural relationships

What's In Your Name

- Pick your first, middle, or last name
- Does it have a story?
- How does it relate to your identity?
- Tell us about it.

What is Diversity?

- Difference
- Human
- Physical
- Belief Systems
- Geography
- Intellectual
- Language

Remember:

There is more difference
between members of any
ONE groups that there is
across any two groups.

What is Culture?

- Lens through which we see the world
- Lets us know how to act within that realm
- Human identity
- All humans belong to a culture
- Belief systems
- Historical allegiances
- **Name a cultural practice from ancestor**

What is your culture?

Please share...

BIZARRO

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Yes, Tonto, I agree that it is yet another Hollywood-perpetuated Native American stereotype — but **WHAT DOES IT SAY?**



The Questions of Cultural Patterns

1. Human nature?
2. Humankind to nature?
3. Time orientation?
4. Value placed on activity?
5. Relationship of people to each other?

Across Cultures – Human Nature

Basically Evil

- Intrinsically Evil
- Puritan Ancestry
- Have moved toward good/evil
- Extreme: humans can't be trusted...

Mixture of Good/Evil

- Taoists (yin/yang)
- Cannot eliminate: natural part of world
- Dual approach

Basically Good

- Extreme: Buddhism/Confucianism
- People are good: culture makes evil
- Fate vs. intellect

Across Cultures: Humans & Nature

Subjugated

- Powerful forces outside of control
- Stoically accept
- “not that it matters”

Harmony

- Part of life
- Not a hostile force
- American Indn
- “mother earth”
- “All things connect

Master of Nature

- Conquer/direct to our advantage
- “Tame it”
- Clear separation from nature?
- Dominance of space
- Structuring of Markets
- Buyer influence

Across Cultures: Time Orientation

Past:

- History
- Traditions
- Religion
- Ancestors
- Guide future

Present:

- Future is vague
- “We don’t know the future/not that interested in the past”
- Real exists here and now

Future:

- U.S. Dominant
- What is going to happen
- Control future?

Across Cultures: Activity Orientation

Being:

- People/events/ideas flow spontaneously
- Work for the moment
- Simple act of conversation

Being-in-Becoming:

- Development & growth
- Spiritual life
- Emotional vitality

Doing:

- Accomplishments measured
- Activity & Action
- Dominant in U.S.
- Not as much patience to “sit & talk”
- Life in constant motion

Across Cultures: Social

Authoritarian:

- “Born to lead”
- Others must follow
- **Widespread perception that it is the “norm”**

Collective:

- Group most important
- Often passive
- “Don’t draw attention to oneself”

Individual:

- U.S. Constitution
- “equal rights”
- Control over one’s destiny
- All else “violates will of God”

What else does this mean?

- Semantics
- Geographical Regions
- Culture (ethnic, socio-economic, religion, etc.)
- Gender
- Mother tongue
- Discipline (job)
- Family



What are your cultural patterns?

Personal Biases

- We like what we know
- We judge the world around us based on what we know
- We can look at difference as “wrong”
- We can take it “personally.”
- “It’s hard to look at others objectively.”

Tolerance Scale

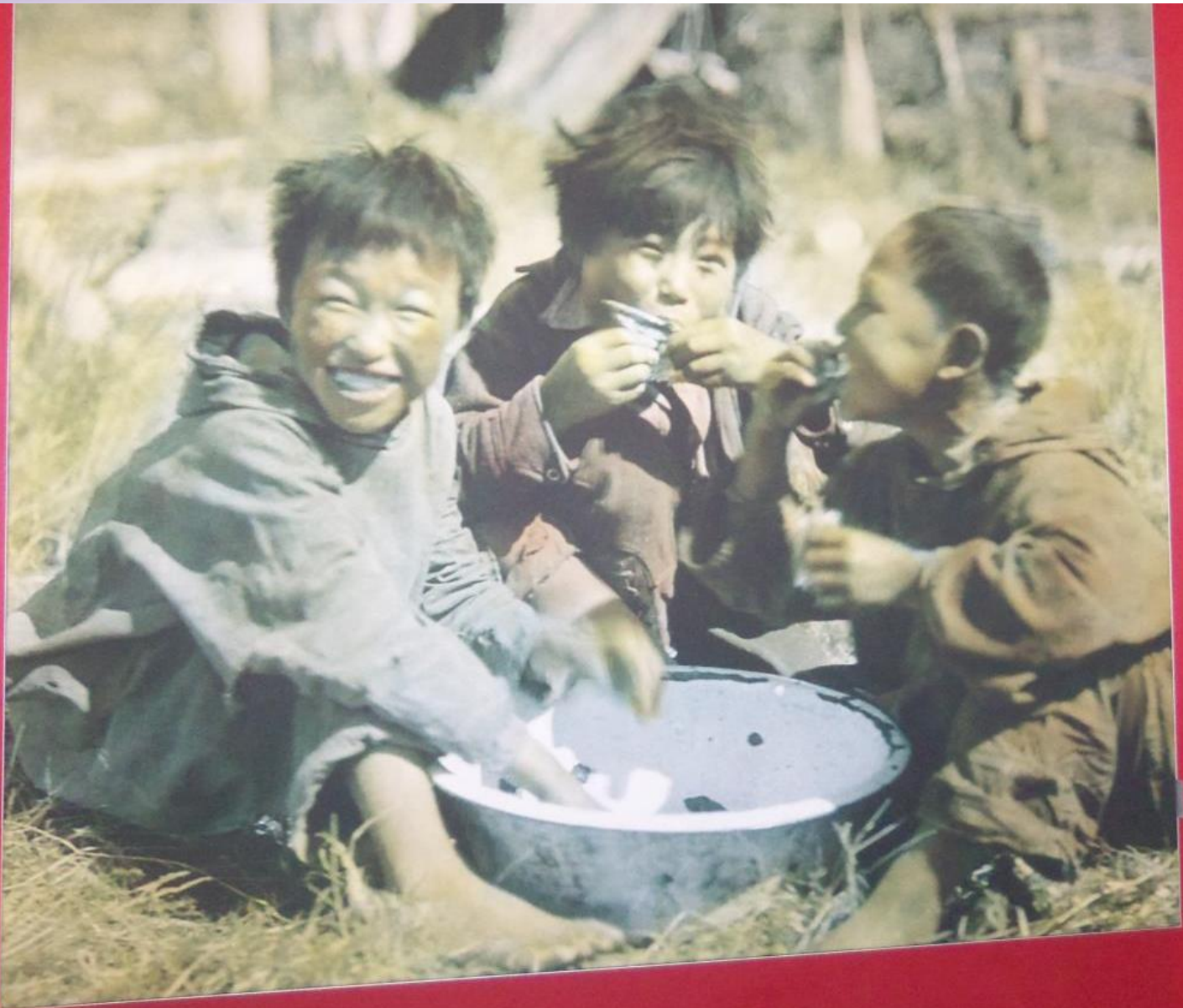
- Appreciation
 - Acceptance
 - Tolerance
 - Avoidance
 - Repulsion
- (Marofsky, 2008)



So, there was this American Indian, Syrian, Sudanese, Turk, and Iraqi riding around in the Middle East...

Judgment Language

- “They are not like us.”
- “They don’t have our values.”
- “We invited them, but they’re not interested, so they don’t come.”
- “They just don’t care about doing better.”
- “We need to show them how it’s done.”



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“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”

-- George Bernard Shaw,
Irish Playwright and Likable Curmudgeon

Cross-Cultural Communication

- “Did you say what I think you said?”
- Generational
- “How do you ‘hear’ me?”
- What factors might impede communication?
 - Let’s discuss...

New words in Lexicon

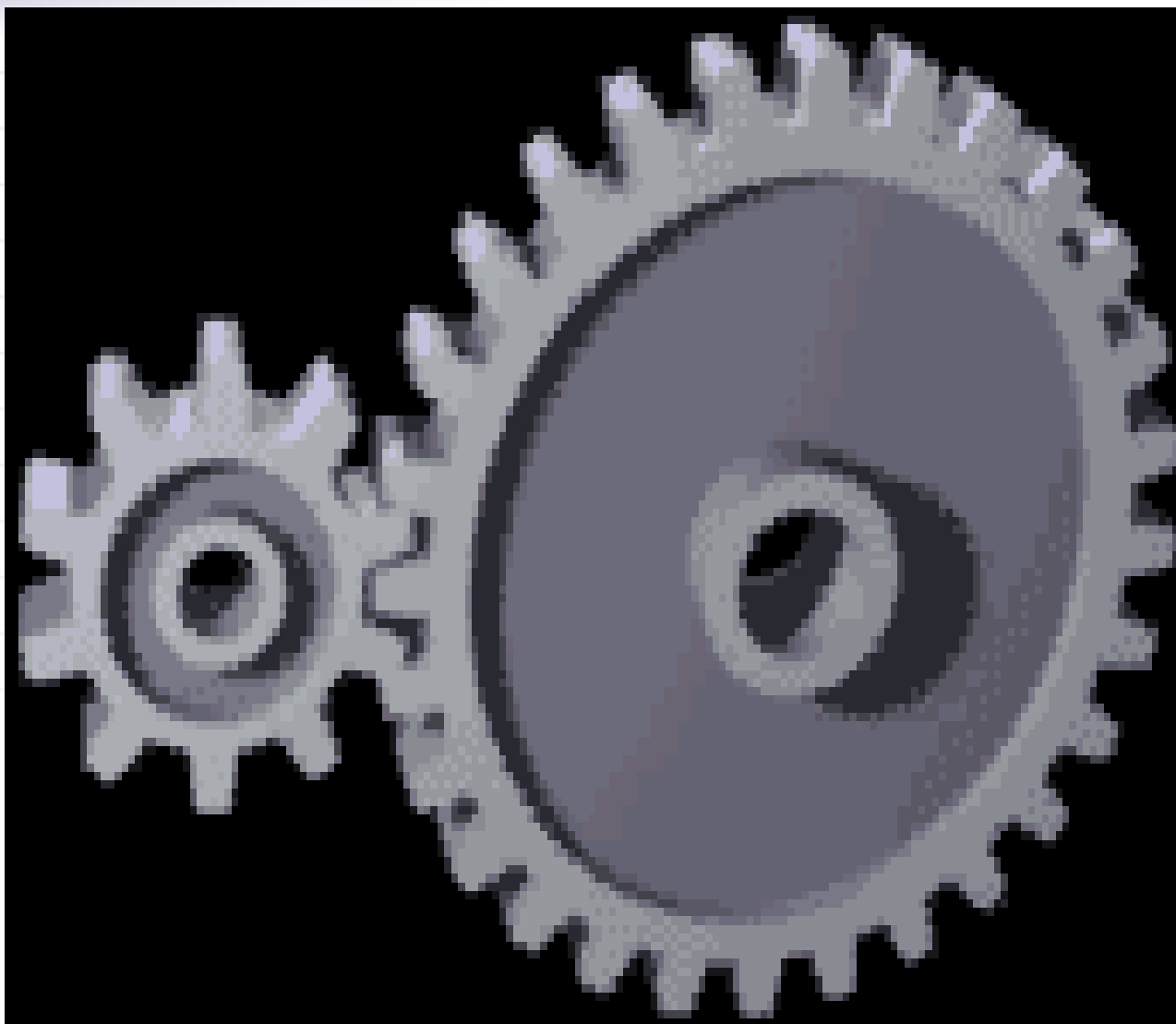


What are the challenges?

- Do you understand yourself?
- Do you try to make others' ideas fit with yours?
- How does that work?
- What can we do to make it better?
- Let's discuss some ideas

Advantages

- Cultural pluralism
- Integration
- Cohesive communities



Build Relationships

- Volunteer your time
- Be deliberate about learning from others
- Put a human face on those you don't understand or fear
- Be an empiricist
- Remember that difference is just difference
- Observe *mindful* value comparisons

It's the *mindful* value comparisons...



Questions?



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mdeen@wsu.edu

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