

→ **Biblical Basis: God's Intention for Culture**

- A. God intended for culture to develop naturally as people populated the earth. The development of culture was part of His initial creative plan that the diversity of human culture would reflect the fullness of who God was.
And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiple and fill the earth and subdue it..." (Genesis 1:28, ESV)

- B. Because of our sin, what God intended to reflect the fullness of His glory, He actually used to break human pride and stubbornness.
Come let us go down and confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech. (Genesis 11:7, ESV)

- C. One of God's first acts at Pentecost was to reverse the curse of Babel and to restore culture ethnicity to God's original intent. The revealing of the Spirit of God was done so in a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual setting.
And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 2:4, ESV)

→ **What is Culture?**

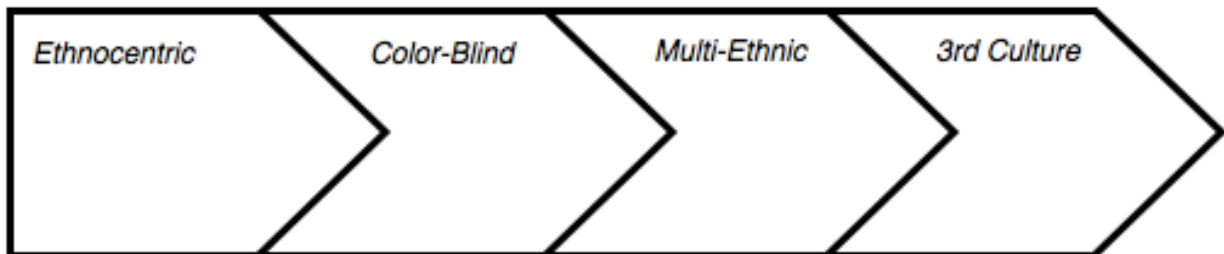
- A. Culture is a shared set of belief, values, and ethos
 - 1. Beliefs- What we find to be true.
 - 2. Values- What we find to be important.
 - 3. Ethos- What we find to be familiar and comfortable.

- B. Some questions to consider:
 - 1. Why are cross-cultural situations so difficult?
 - 2. What is an example of a difficult cross-cultural encounter that you had.

→ **My Multi-Ethnic Journey**

- A. Becoming a cross-cultural witness begins with identifying where you are in your own multi-ethnic journey.

- B. Every person goes on a similar journey which generally includes these 4 stages:



- C. Our goal as Christians is to ultimately become 3rd culture. It is not enough to simply embrace other cultures on our terms but we must be able to enter into another culture on their terms.

- D. Some questions to consider:
- Where are you in your multi-ethnic journey?
 - What does a 3rd culture witness actually look like?

→ **When Cultures Clash**

- A. According to the missions training tool named “Entry Posture Diagram” on the next page, there are two distinct ways to enter into a cross-cultural situation. You can enter into it with suspicion, fear, superiority, or prejudice, which will ultimately lead to alienation and withdrawal. On the other hand, you can enter in with a posture of openness, acceptance, trust, and adaptability, which will result in trust and empathy. In both cases, there is usually dissonance that occurs as cultures clash.
- B. For those of us in IV, the entry postures are probably a little more nuanced. Because those of us in the majority culture are often conditioned to see the world as colorblind, the biggest temptation we have in crossing cultures is to be ignorant of the fact that there are actually differences in our cultures! Often due to our ignorance, we assume that our cultural ways of doing things are right and better. Instead of building understanding, we try to shape them into our cultural mold.
- C. The reality is that many of in the minority feel a sense of dissonance when they fellowship with us. Because of this reality, it is not enough to just be open and accepting, but those of us in the majority culture must look out for those who are of different cultures and actively seek to observe, inquire, and listen toward trust.

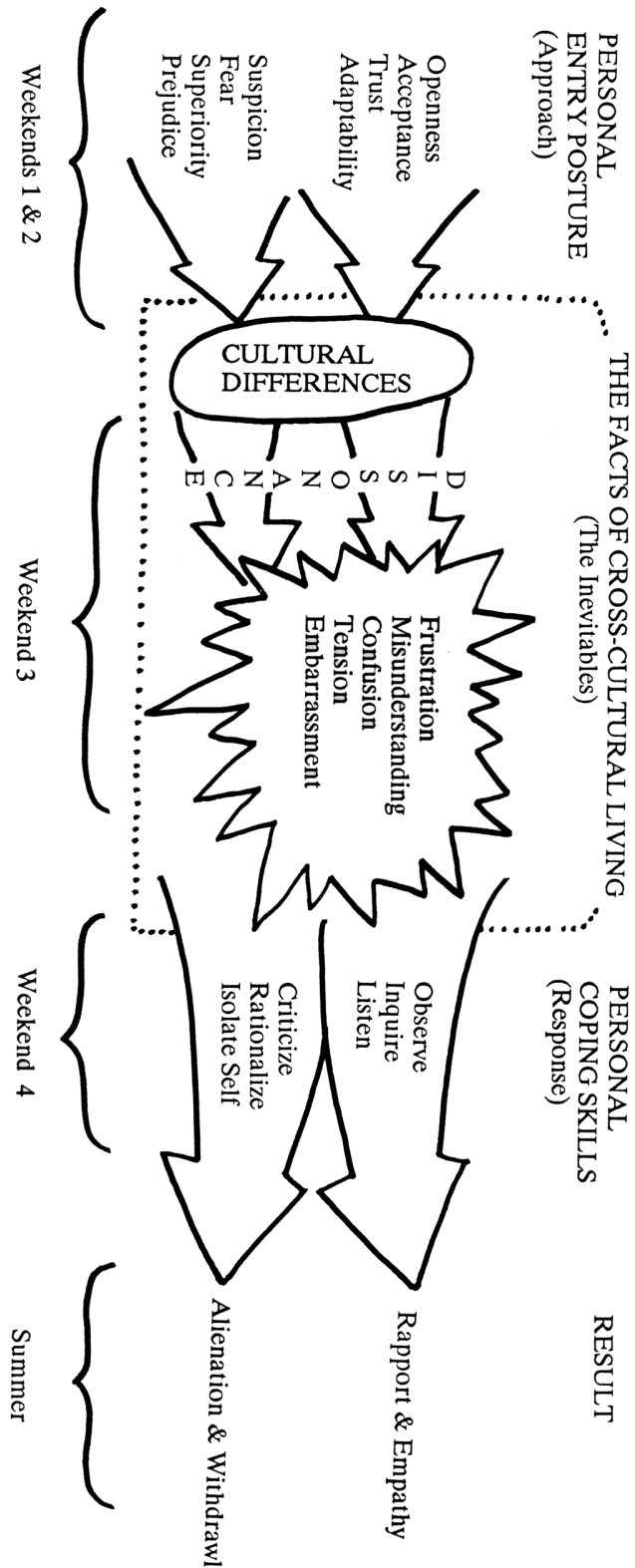
→ **Tips for Actively Building Cross Cultural Relationships**

- Listen first and respond to what is said.
- Be willing to first be a student and a learner- especially if you are majority culture.
- Don’t assume that you understand their culture or that they understand yours. Also, don’t assume that your cultures are the same!
- Translate everything!- Not just language. Remember that culture encapsulates so much more than just language.
- Remember that your beliefs and values are shaped by your culture. Seek to understand another’s beliefs and values before trying to convince them of yours.
- Be willing to be uncomfortable and share in the others cultural experience.
- Leadership is being willing to be the first to engage. Be the servant and initiate.

→ **Workshop Time:**

- A. What are some examples of cross-cultural places in our fellowship that could create a sense of dissonance for those in the minority?
- B. What are ways that we as leaders can help bridge the gap for those in the minority?
- C. What are specific ways in your leadership team that you can actively work to build trust and empathy for those who are of different culture with you?

ENTRY POSTURE DIAGRAM



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