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literacy

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WINTER CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 17 - FEBRUARY 21, 2025



WINTER CONFERENCE

Integrating Cultural Humility into English Teaching

Karin Bates, Intercambio



Integrating Cultural Humility into English Teaching

Karin Bates, Intercambio TESOL Specialist

At the end of this presentation, there will be a link for you to give feedback and later receive a PDF of this presentation.



Agenda

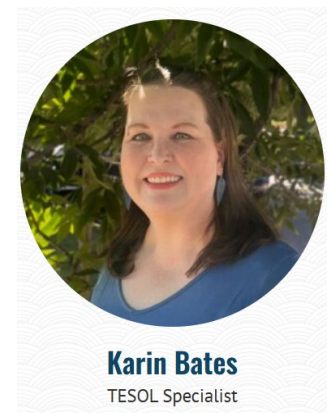
1. Introductions and Context
2. Creating a “brave space”
3. Connecting with one another: What brings you here?
4. Challenges
5. Important Words and Concepts
6. Cultural Competence vs. Cultural Humility
7. Practicing and Modeling Cultural Humility
8. Exploring other tools to help with noticing judging and bias
9. Building Belonging
10. Your next steps



Who am I and how am I qualified?

Karin Bates, TESOL Specialist

karin@intercambio.org



- Started tutoring MLLs in the late 80s
- Taught in P.R. China 1990-1991
- Graduated with an M.A. in Curriculum & Instruction for TESOL in 1995, CU Denver
- Received Colorado Dept. of Ed. Adult Basic Education Authorization, 2019
- Have worked in every aspect from working in TEFL to public school settings, IEPs and business English: Kindergarteners to adults in their upper 70s
- Most recently, before joining Intercambio in January 2022, worked at an immigrant and refugee center for five years
- Received multiple trainings in cultural sensitivity over the past 5 years





Our Mission:

To bring English learners and community volunteers together in language classes and gatherings to *build skills, confidence, and life-changing connections*

A cluster of overlapping geometric shapes in teal, yellow, and olive green, located in the top right corner of the slide.

TEACHING
ENGLISH
—❤—
CONNECTING
PEOPLE
intercambio
UNITING COMMUNITIES



intercambio

UNITING COMMUNITIES

2001

Program founded in Boulder, Colorado



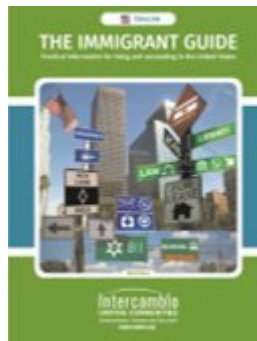
2019

Confidence and Connections curriculum released



2008-2010

First curriculum is released and 1st editions of *The Immigrant Guide* and *Pronunciation Fun With Pictures* created



2020-2025

National Partnership Network started, currently 120+ members



Intercambio's Programs

**Boulder
County Group
and One-on-
One Classes:
In Person**



**CC English:
Intercambio
Online**



**Product
Sales and
National
Network**

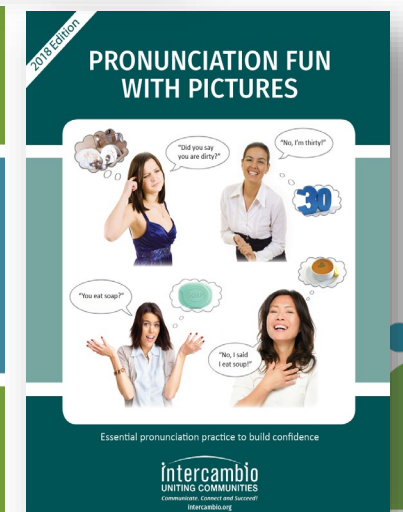
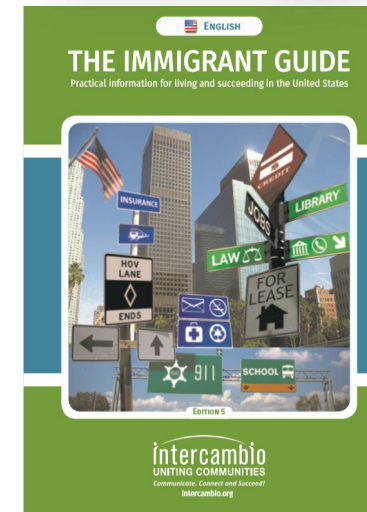


Relationship-Based ESOL centered on mutual learning.



Intercambio Provides:

- Affordable **curriculum** that can be successfully taught by volunteers
- **Support** for starting or running a volunteer-based program
- Opportunities for **connection and collaboration** with other ESOL organizations (like Wisconsin Literacy!
*We have 32 Wisconsin members in our network and 2/3 are renewed for the year already!)



Learning Objectives

- Reflect on your cultural lens
(What are my biases and how do I identify them?)
- Gain tools and practice shifting biases
(How can I view others with a fresh lens?)
- Better engage with people who are different...in any situation!
(How can I learn to observe others without judging?)
- Increase confidence and courage to continue these important conversations
(How can I overcome fears or barriers to continue?)
- Help create a classroom that nurtures belonging to overcome cultural gaps.
(How can I create a classroom that connects people more effectively?)



Hopes for this Presentation

What I hope this presentation will do is **build capacity** to accelerate your ongoing cultural learning.

We all need to do our own **ongoing work**.

“In order to practice true cultural humility, a person must also be **aware of and sensitive to historic realities** like legacies of violence and oppression against certain groups of people.”

- Julia Sufrin, Hogg Blog

Quote Source: <https://hogg.utexas.edu/3-things-to-know-cultural-humility>



Creating a “Brave Space”

- Let's begin with a poem designed to open us up and create a “brave space”: a space that is not only safe, but safe to be brave enough to speak up.
- When we talk about race or culture, it's important to create an environment of openness and courage. Opening with this poem or with agreements/expectations made by the class or group can help to create that environment.

Creating a “Brave Space”

There is no such thing as a “safe space” —
We exist in the real world.
We all carry scars and have caused wounds.
This space
seeks to turn down the volume of the world outside,
and amplify voices that have to fight to be heard elsewhere,
This space will not be perfect.
It will not always be what we wish it to be
But
It will be our space together,
and we will work on it side by side.

~ **Beth Strano**



What brought you here?



Chat or
reflection

1. Why did you join this session?
2. Where are you in your journey of understanding cultural humility?
3. What do you hope to learn?

https://bit.ly/Cultural_Humility_Resources



Challenges





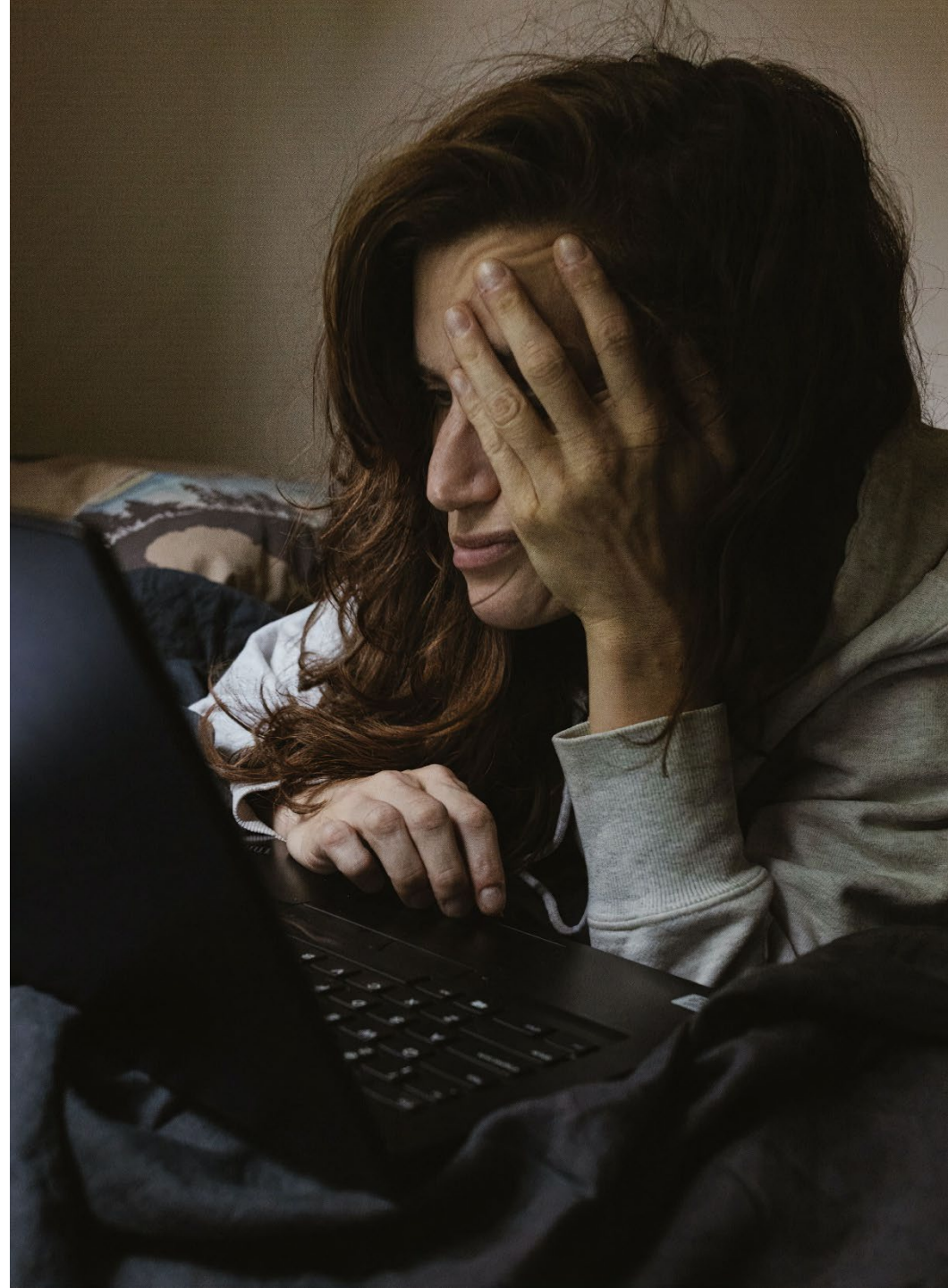
Who participates in our programs?

- Learners are from diverse backgrounds
 - nationality
 - age
 - socioeconomic status
 - academic background
 - religion
 - gender, etc.



What are some of the challenges for students?

- ✓ Having low confidence, low self-esteem about learning English
- ✓ Fear of failure
- ✓ Cultural differences/divides
- ✓ Feeling judged or feeling stupid
- ✓ They don't feel belonging



Important Words and Concepts





Why do we avoid conversations about culture?

- People are afraid to say the wrong thing.
- We are ashamed about how much we don't know.
- We need **brave** containers to ask questions and offer suggestions.
- Other reasons?

How can we create an environment for courageous conversations?



- Create a brave space
- Set ground rules
- Stay engaged
- Speak your truth (“I” statements)
- Experience discomfort
- Accept non-closure
- Listen, reflect, and have share-time
- Use inclusive language



Agree or Disagree?

- It's okay to ask people you meet, "What do you do for work?"
- All meetings should start and end on time.
- I am okay with silence during a conversation.
- It is rude to interrupt someone while they are talking.
- One invitation is a real invitation.
- It's polite to say "thank you" if someone opens a door for me.
- Saying "hi" to strangers is important for the community.
- Making direct eye contact shows that you are paying attention.
- If I am late for a class, I will enter the class quietly.



Agree or Disagree?

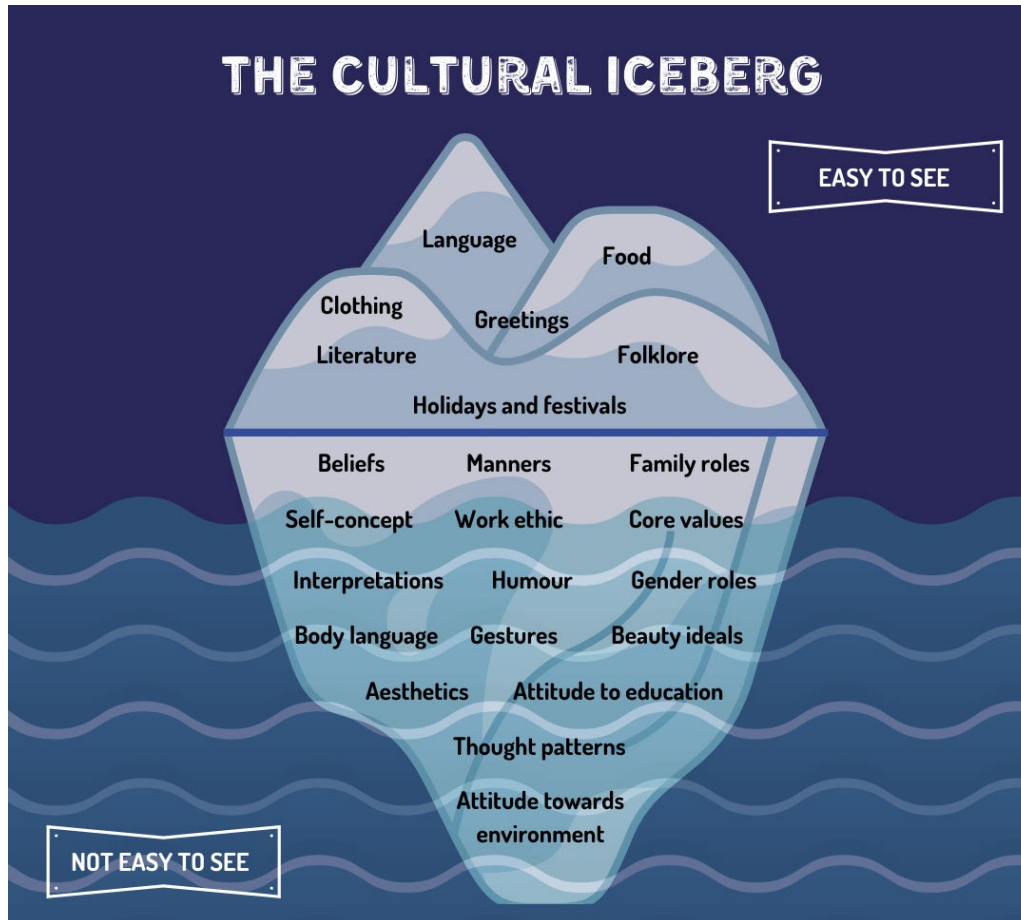
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Chat or
reflection

- How did it feel to quickly answer these?
- What did you notice about your responses?
- Thoughts on any of these?

What is culture?



"Culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet visitors, how we behave with loved ones, and a million other things"

Cristina De Rossi



“Cultural differences *should not separate* us from each other, but rather cultural diversity *brings a collective strength* that can benefit all of humanity”

Robert Alan Aurthur – writer and filmmaker (“All That Jazz,”
“Carry Me Back to Morningside Heights”)



Photo by [Hugo Kruij](#) on [Unsplash](#)



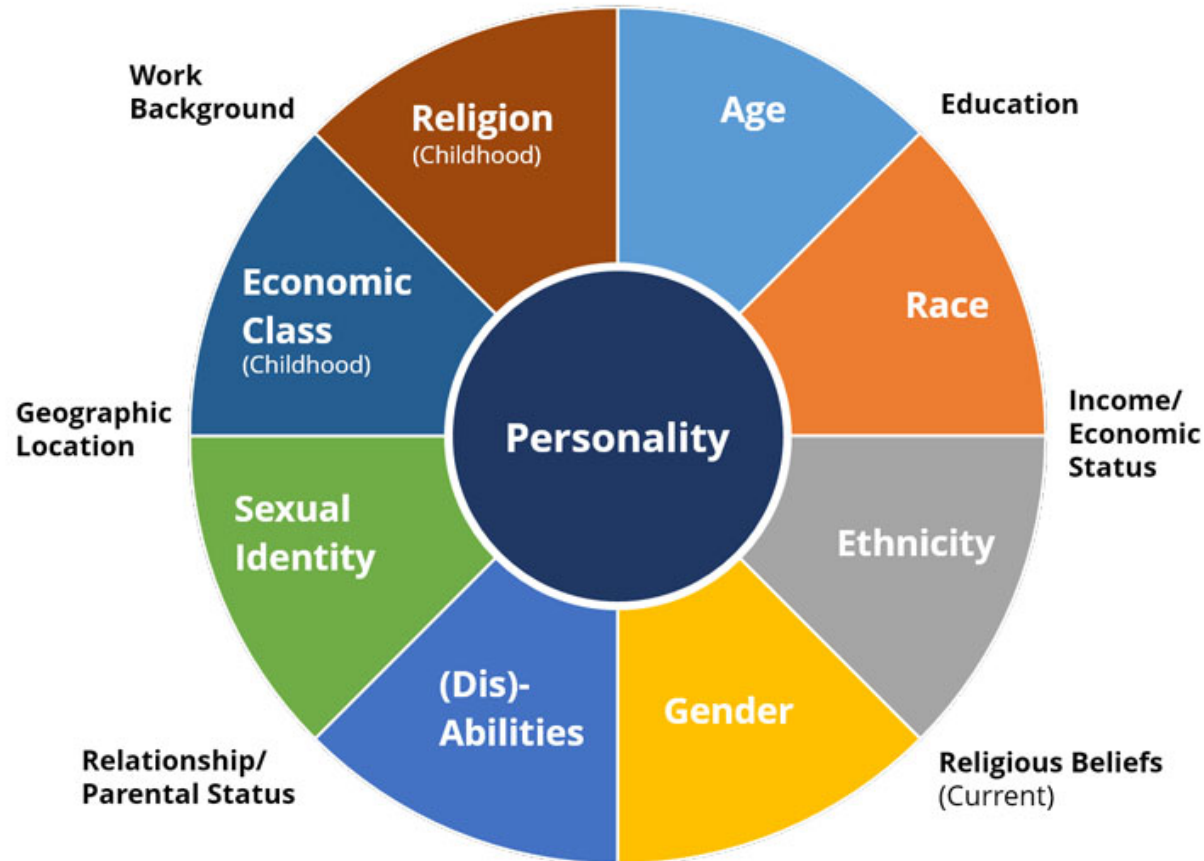
Reflecting on Our Cultural Lens



Dimensions of Individual Culture

Identifying Individual Culture(s):

Dimensions of Diversity



WHO ARE YOU?

How Do Your Dimensions of Diversity Influence Your:

Experiences?
Values and Beliefs?
Attitudes and Behaviors?



Chat or reflection

What dimensions of individual culture do you most identify with?



Questions for Reflection



Chat or
reflection

- *When did I start to notice* the different groups that I belong to? (e.g., race, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, gender)
- *What kind of experiences did I have* growing up with people who are different from me?
- *How do my personal and social identities influence* my thoughts, beliefs, and worldview?
- *How are my identities different from* those of my students and colleagues? How do these differences affect our interactions?

Adapted from Muñiz, J. (2020) *Culturally Responsive Teaching: A Reflection Guide*, page 6

<https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/culturally-responsive-teaching-competencies/>





“What’s that like in *your culture?*”

- People are individuals, not the sole representatives of a dimension of culture or people, so to ask, “*What’s that like in your culture?*” is putting that person on the spot to be a voice for something they maybe don’t identify with.
- Cultures are not monoliths (they are not linear; they are multifaceted).

Your culture?

- Other ways to ask, *“What’s that like in your culture?”*
 - What is your experience with this [cultural difference]?
 - How is this where you grew up?
 - How is this similar or different from your home when you were growing up?
 - What is this like in your family?
 - Other ideas?

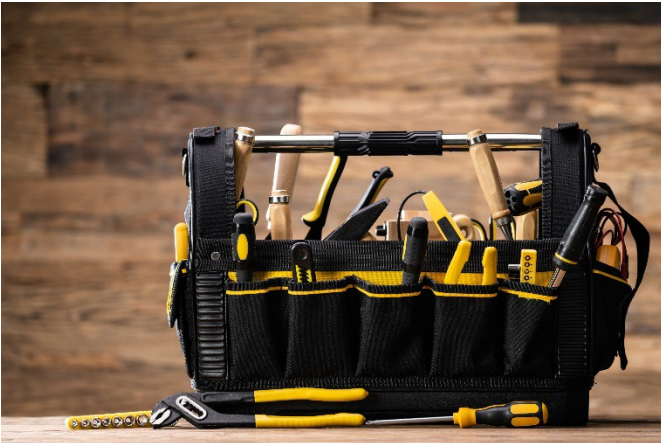


Cultural Competence vs Cultural Humility



Cultural Competence

“... the ability to understand, appreciate and interact with people from cultures or belief systems different from one's own...”



Examples:

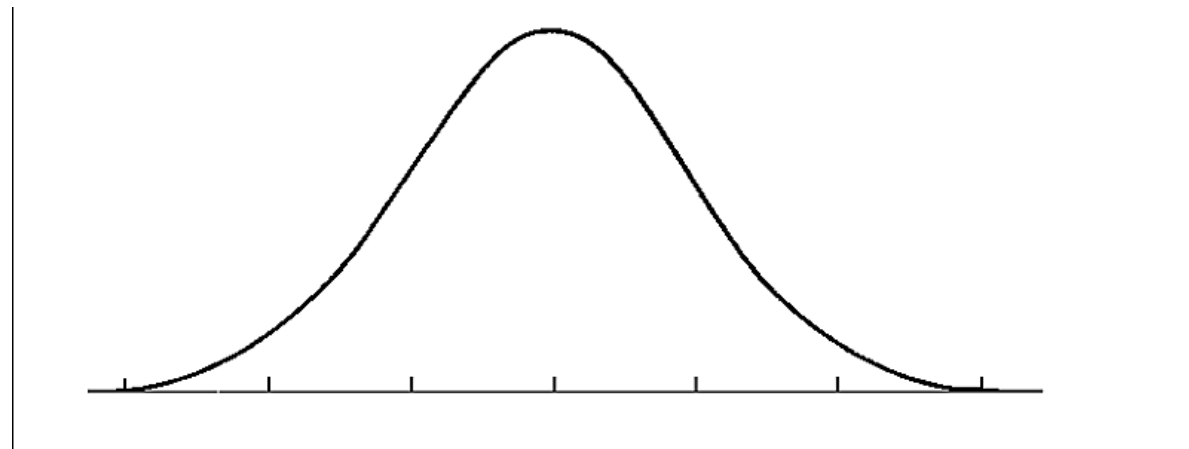
- speaking a few words of another language when visiting a country
- reading travel books to understand “dos and don’ts” of a particular country
- learning about communication styles and cultural practices from other cultures
- knowing what actions in a particular culture are rude
- knowing what gestures in a particular culture are offensive
- focusing on social norms and lifestyles



Cultural Competence

*The goal of cultural competency sounds ideal, **but it may lead us to generalize** rather than recognize uniqueness of everyone. And it's not realistic. – Psych Hub*

Generalization



Steps to Practice and Model Cultural Humility

1. Understand what it is
2. Reflect, explore power dynamics, biases, and judgements
3. Prepare and open doors for honest dialogues
4. Model/show what it is

Students don't need to know the term "cultural humility."
Just show it.



1. What is Cultural Humility?

- Cultural Competency is a goal. Cultural Humility is a mindset.
- Continuous reflection on your biases on how you treat and understand others.
- Being aware of power imbalances.
- Recognizing that no culture is superior or inferior.
- Being curious
- Continued learning about other cultures.
- Being honest and open about what you haven't learned yet.



Alyssa Sieb <https://nappy.co/photo/3560>

Psych Hub –on YouTube:
[*What is Cultural Humility?*](#)



2. Self-reflect and consider power dynamics and bias

Self-Reflection

- What are your biases or assumptions? What do you instinctually consider wrong or rude?
 - Why is interrupting rude?
 - Why is punctuality good?
 - Why is it polite to say thank you?
- What dimensions of *your* individual culture might play a role in the perspective you have developed?
- Consider how *power imbalances, oppression, racism, history, etc.* may play a role. Talk about it if you feel equipped to. Do research first if that'd be helpful.



3. Have the open, honest dialogues

- Share experiences and mistakes you have made in different cultural settings and self-reflection that led you to shift perspectives.
- Ask questions like “What has your experience been with that?”
- Listen without judgement or taking a stance on what is *wrong, right, good, bad, polite or rude*.
- Be honest and open about what you haven't learned yet.



4. Model It

Let's look at practicing and modeling/demonstrating cultural humility.



Practicing and Modeling Cultural Humility



Case Study Practice – What could you say/do to model cultural humility in these scenarios?

1. You are presenting a culture tip about saying “thank you” when people open a door for someone in public.



Small Group
Discussion

2. A student in your upper-level class makes a comment like “I have noticed that African Americans in the U.S. use bad grammar”.

3. You invite your students on a field trip to the library. Six of them say they will be there, but only three show up.



Exploring other tools to help notice judging and bias



We tell ourselves stories

- We create stories / narratives about behaviors we see
- Sometimes they are wrong
- We need to see facts and observe behaviors with patience
- We are often quick to interpret based on what we *think* we see
- We need to step down and look at the facts we observe that lead us to judgements



Photo by [Some Tale](#) on [Unsplash](#)



Judging or Noticing? Facts or Explanations?

Are the following statements observations or interpretations?

1.
 - a. They are disorganized and disrespectful of other people's time.
 - b. They always show up 10 minutes after meetings start.

2.
 - a. They are angry.
 - b. They are speaking in a loud voice and using lots of arm gestures.

3.
 - a. They don't speak up in meetings.
 - b. They don't have strong opinions.



The Ladder of Inference

a powerful tool to help us slow down, reduce our biases, and question our instinctual judgments



The Ladder of Inference Senge, P., Kliener, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R., & Smith, B. (1994)

Examples

Actions	We take actions based on our beliefs.
Beliefs	We adopt beliefs about the world.
Conclusions	We draw conclusions from the assumptions.
Assumptions	We make assumptions based on meanings.
Meanings	We add personal and cultural meanings.
Data	We select from observations.

- A woman is not participating in the meeting, she is looking down, has her arms crossed and keeps checking her phone.
- A man gets free food at the food bank and was driving a new SUV.



Practicing with the Ladder

- Think of an example of something that happened to you that thought was “rude.”
- Or think of a situation when you didn’t have all the facts, you made assumptions and then jumped to conclusions.

Here are other statements to reflect on:

- All meetings should start and end on time.
- Making direct eye contact shows that you are paying attention.
- It’s important to spend time with coworkers outside of work to build strong relationships.



Individual
journaling
and
sharing



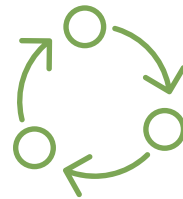
Building Belonging



When the helping and learning is multi-directional

We enhance **belonging and confidence** by opening doors for students to share experiences, knowledge, and perspectives.

Teachers become learners;
Students become teachers.



It's critical to language acquisition!



Eight Steps to Build Belonging



Photo by [Claudio Schwarz](#) on [Unsplash](#)

1. Spark conversations about experiences and perspectives
2. Have learners ask YOU questions
3. Open doors for multi-directional learning
4. Create judgment-free, belonging zones
5. Engage patience (and kindness)
6. Provide concrete (and specific) encouragement
7. Speak in a way that learners understand you
8. Create the right space



1. How can we spark conversations about experiences and perspectives?

Through structure. When it's in a book, it feels safer.

Incorporate explorations as a normal part of class.



CULTURE TIP

In the US, many children leave home to live on their own soon after they graduate from high school. Why do you think they do this? What do you think it means? Is this the same in your native country? What are some different conclusions someone could have about this?



from Intercambio's® *Confidence and Connections*™ curriculum series



CONNECT WITH CONVERSATION

Get to know a partner. Talk about:

- Their favorite holiday and why.
- What they did on their favorite holiday last year.
- What they are thankful for.
- What they did the last time they spent time with their family or got together with friends.

2. Why have learners ask YOU questions?

- It humanizes you
- Practice asking questions
- You can model cultural humility and courage to respond



CONNECT WITH CONVERSATION

Get to know a partner. Talk about:

- activities that are most important to them in a community
- what they like to do in their community
- activities they went to in their community in the past year
- activities they're going to do in their community this year



from Intercambio's® *Confidence and Connections*™ curriculum series



CONNECT WITH CONVERSATION

Get to know a partner. Talk about:

- an event or place they went to and what it was like
- how they feel about visiting family, going to the doctor, coming to English class
- what's exciting or interesting in their life right now
- what makes them frustrated

3. *The Immigrant Guide* opens doors for multi-directional learning

What Every Immigrant Needs to Know

I-4

The Law and the Role of Police

Laws and police make our communities safe. Police are *strict* and follow the law as it is written. Never *bribe* a police officer. It is your responsibility to understand and follow the laws. Always talk to police officers with respect.

1) Calling 911

- 911 responds fast to emergency calls. Dial 911 to:
 - Report a fire.
 - Report a crime while it is happening.
 - Report a car accident.
 - Get an ambulance for an emergency.
- Be prepared to give your address and information about the emergency. If you do not speak English, you can ask for an interpreter.
- Do not call 911 for something that is not an emergency.

2) Alcohol & Drugs

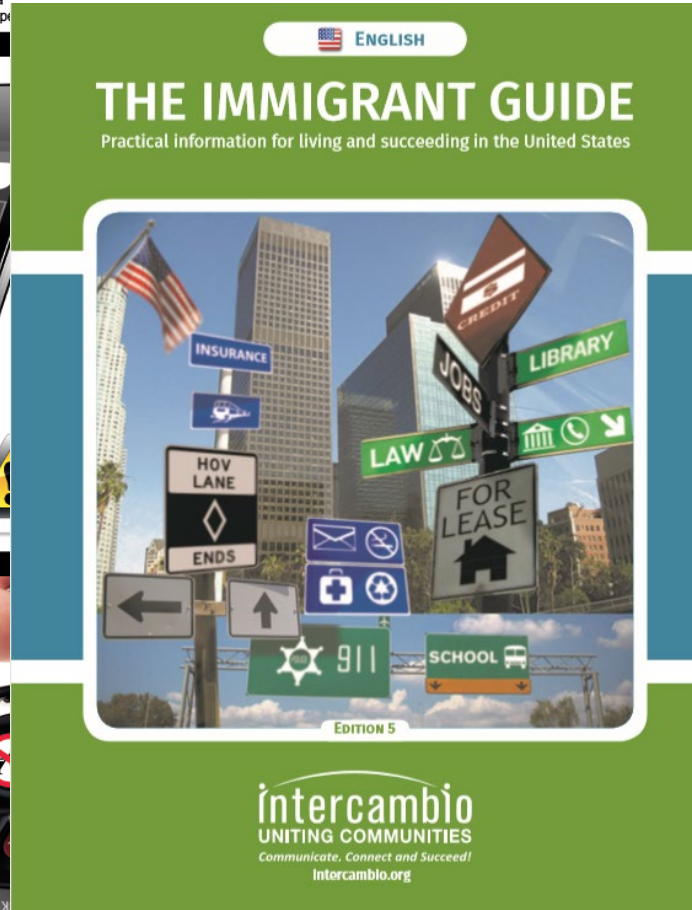
- Drinking alcohol is only legal for adults over 21 years old. You will be asked for proof of your age when buying alcohol or entering bars.
- There are penalties for providing alcohol to people under the age of 21.
- It is usually illegal to drink alcohol on the street or outdoors.
- You can get arrested or deported for selling or having illegal drugs.
- Using drugs around children can be considered child abuse.
- If you or someone you know has a problem with drugs or alcohol, you can contact rehabilitation programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA).

3) Drinking and Driving

- Driving after drinking alcohol can cause serious accidents and problems.
- Driving after having one or two drinks can get you arrested.
- Legal drinking limits for driving are different in different states.

4) Know Your Rights

- Laws and police make our communities safe. You have rights when talking with police.
- If a police or immigration officer asks you questions, you have the right to remain silent and not answer the questions.
- You can request to speak with an *attorney* before answering questions or signing documents.
- If you do not have an attorney, the government provides an attorney for you.
- You only have to let law enforcement officers into your house if they have a *warrant*.



- ✓ Scams
- ✓ Laws
- ✓ Rights
- ✓ Norms
- ✓ Jobs
- ✓ Housing
- ✓ Finances
- ✓ Health
- ✓ Education system



4. Create judgment-free, belonging zones

Set expectations to make class feel safer:

- ✓ Let students opt out of sharing
- ✓ Encourage them to take risks
- ✓ Encourage speaking without fear of mistakes or judgment
- ✓ Be open to differences
- ✓ Be clear about policies (e.g., What should students do if they enter late?)



Photo by [kazuend](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Create a *mantra*!

What is your
mantra**?

Take risks
Make mistakes
I will practice
No judgment
Have fun
I can do it!

** a statement or slogan
repeated frequently



5. Engage patience (and kindness)

Patience, patience, patience!

- ✓ Have realistic expectations
- ✓ Don't let frustration show!
- ✓ Wait time: waiting for 6-7 seconds to give students an opportunity to formulate a response
- ✓ Be strict, but *kind*

Intercambio.org
Resource Hub

[Teacher Tip – How to handle student tardiness](#)

Reference Sheet: Common Irregular Past Tense Verbs in English	Teacher Tips: Keeping Students Engaged
PRONUNCIATION, SPEAKING AND CONVERSATION	GRAMMAR, SPEAKING AND CONVERSATION, WORKSHEETS
Reference Sheet: The Consonant Sounds in English	Extra Practice Worksheet: Making Questions (Level 1)
GRAMMAR, WORKSHEETS	Teacher Tip – How to handle student tardiness:
Extra Practice Worksheet: -ED or -ING?	
WORKSHEETS	PRONUNCIATION
Extra Practice Worksheet: What, Where or Who?	Consonant Sounds in English

6. Provide concrete (and specific) encouragement

Saying, “Great job!” is good.

Saying, “*You can speak well in the past tense now!*” is GREAT!



7. Speak in a way that learners understand you

Some guidelines and reminders:

1. Speak clearly. Not with too much exaggeration nor patronizingly.
2. Slow down a little bit. Pause.
3. Use fewer words and short sentences.
4. Avoid metaphors, idioms and acronyms.
5. Limit the use of 2-word phrasal verbs and words with multiple meanings.



You need
to kick
back more.



We need
to catch
up!



Feeling
under the
weather?



8. Create the right space

- ✓ Everyone should see one another's faces, if possible
 - Use circle or horseshoe seating arrangements in physical classrooms
 - For online classes, pay attention to lighting
- ✓ Other ideas for creating a welcoming environment?



Final Note – Engage in reflective teaching practice

Before class:

➤ Ask yourself what you hope to learn and how will you encourage your students to teach you something new.

After class:

➤ Ask yourself what you learned?
What emerged for you?



Review



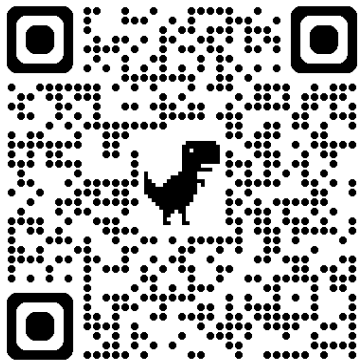
- What is one takeaway from this training?
- What have you learned about your own lens?



Intercambio offers a 6-module course on Cultural Humility

- Designed to take place over a series of several meetings
- Designed to be self-facilitated by your organization

(includes interactivities and facilitation materials)



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UNITING COMMUNITIES

< Go to Dashboard

Understanding and Modeling Cultural Humility

- Preparing for the Introduction
TEXT
- Introduction to the Understanding and Modeling Cultural Humility Course
VIDEO · 14 MIN · FREE PREVIEW
- Module 1: Culture and Inclusion
VIDEO · 19 MIN
- Module 2: Cultural Humility
VIDEO · 22 MIN
- Module 3: Reflection and Practice
VIDEO · 18 MIN
- Module 4: Facts vs. Assumptions and Interpretations
VIDEO · 15 MIN
- Module 5: Communication Styles, Microaggressions, and Self-Assessment
VIDEO · 17 MIN
- Module 6: Commitment to Action
VIDEO · 5 MIN



Ideal for educators, community leaders, HR professionals, and anyone interested in building a more connected and compassionate world!

Q & A

Thank you for joining today!

Check us out at
intercambio.org

For more information about our programs,
contact:

resources@intercambio.org

Presenter:

Karin Bates

karin@intercambio.org



Help us know how we did today.
Please fill out our feedback form and
you'll receive a PDF of the

<https://form.jotform.com/221086211271141>



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The *Intercultural Development Continuum*™ developed by IDI, LLC

<https://idiinventory.com/generalinformation/the-intercultural-development-continuum-idc/>

<https://idiinventory.com/about-us/>





WINTER CONFERENCE

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and register for sessions:



Join us for The Big Share on March 4th