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Meeting Cultures

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International Coordinator

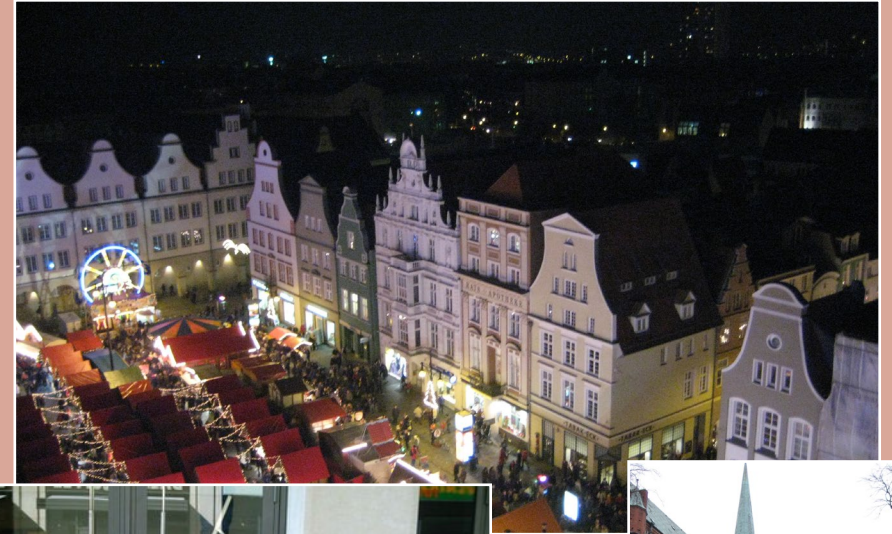


Minnesota, USA



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Germany





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Intercultural Communication

Culture *noun*

The way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time

Intercultural *adjective*

Relating to or involving more than one culture

Cambridge Dictionary (2019)



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The Iceberg Analogy of Culture



Surface Culture

10% is what we can see

Food, fashion, art, language, dance,
etc.

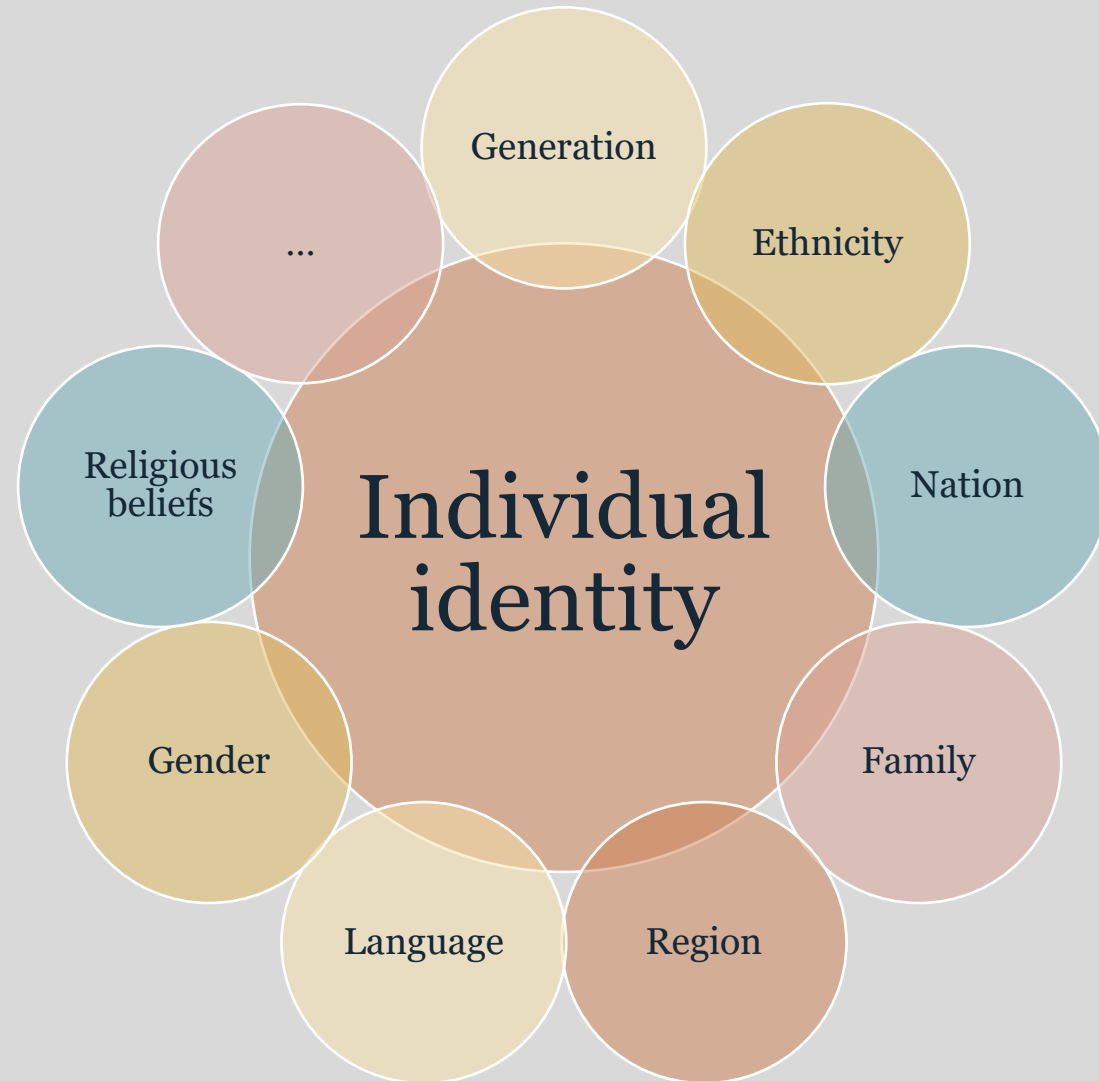
Deep Culture

90% is what we cannot see

Attitudes, beliefs, history,
communication styles and rules, etc.



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(some) Core Cultural Values

Individualism

Equality

Polychronic

Directness

Formality

Change



VS

Collectivism

Hierarchy

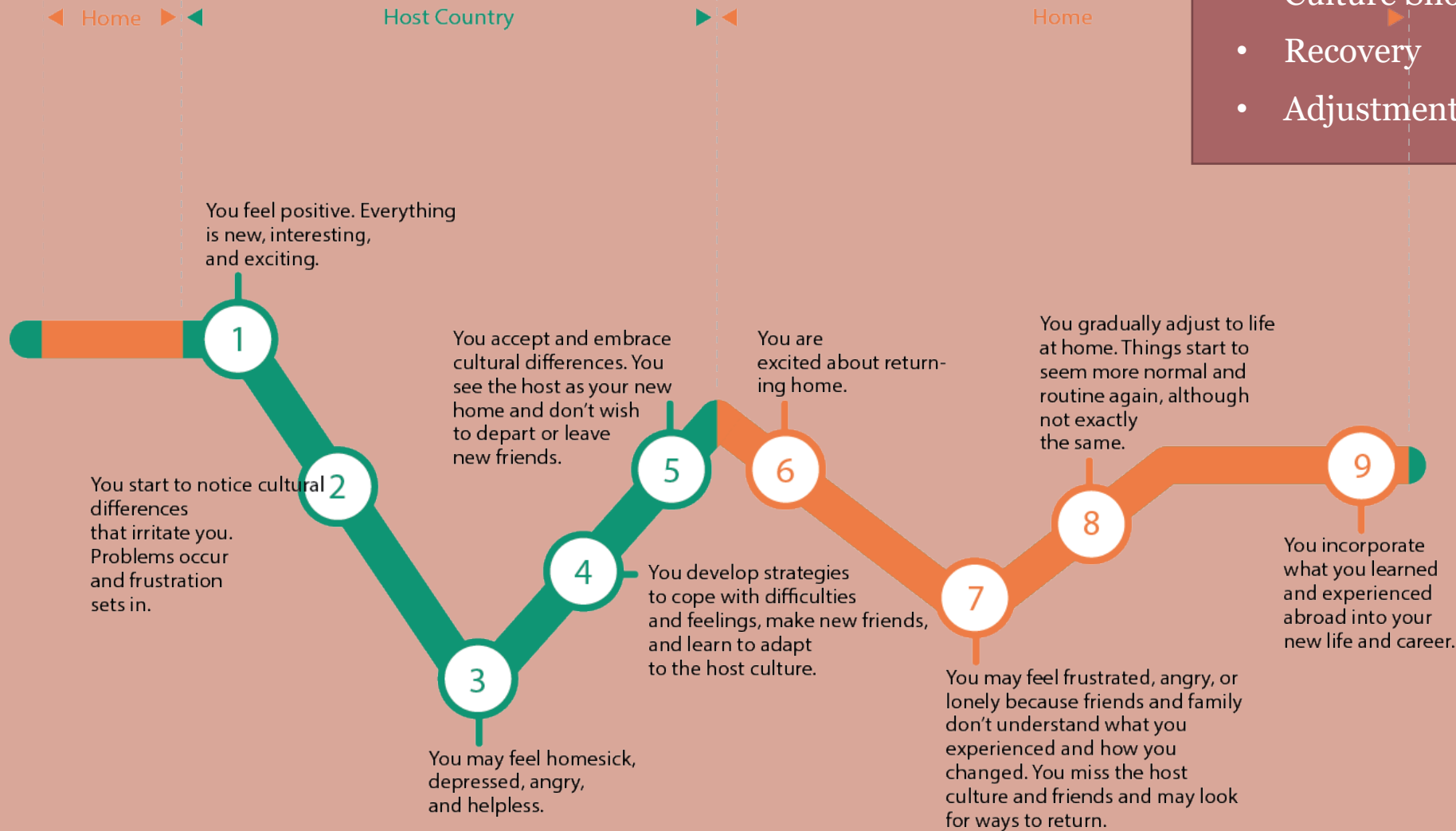
Monochronic Time

Indirectness

Informality

Stability

The W-Curve Model



Different Phases while Abroad

- Honey Moon
- Culture Shock
- Recovery
- Adjustment/Adaptation



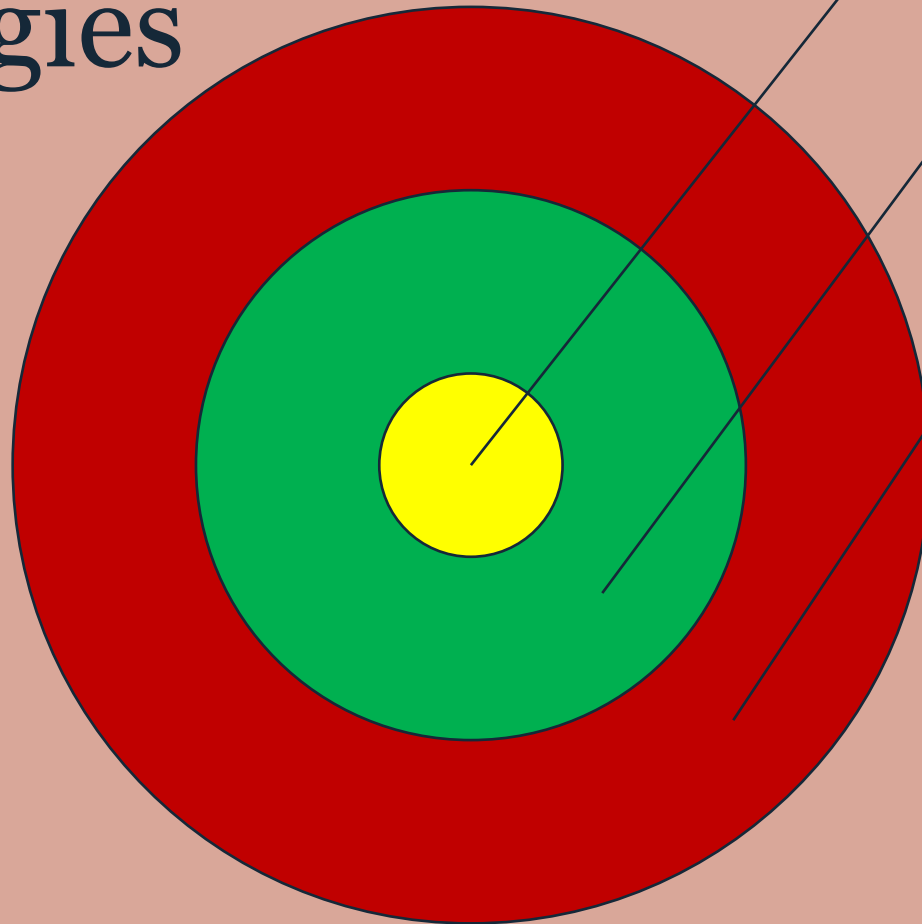
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In-country Strategies

- Flexibility and tolerance
- Patience and respect, both with others and yourself
- Non-judgmental attitudes
- A willingness to make mistakes, including language mistakes
- Consider your own cultural biases when trying to understand another culture
- Be observant
- Have reasonable expectations
- Keep a journal or diary
- Build relations with the local people
- Network with other expatriates

Source: Paige, R. M., et al. (2002). *Maximizing Study Abroad: A Students' Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use.*

In-country Strategies



Comfort
zone

Learning
zone

Panic
zone

The D.I.V.E model

During your exchange you will meet with new and sometimes confusing experiences. One method for handling difficult situations in an intercultural context is known as the D.I.V.E model:



- Describe – describe in an objective way
- Interpret – interpret the situation; what do you think may have happened?
- Verify – verify with others what they think; are there several different interpretations?
- Evaluate – evaluate the situation based on your results



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The D.I.V.E.
model:
Example 1 – the
gasping librarian

- **Describe**
- **Interpret**
- **Verify**
- **Evaluate**





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The D.I.V.E.
model:
Example 2 – the
foreign visitor

- **Describe**
- **Interpret**
- **Verify**
- **Evaluate**





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Good luck and enjoy
your intercultural
journeys!

