







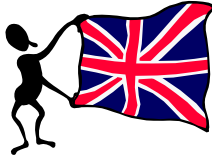

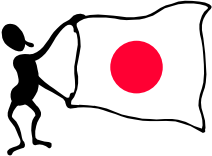


## Communicating Across Cultures

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>BE ACTIVE</u></b></p> <p>Learning implies activity. Learning to communicate cross cultures is not exception. It's not their responsibility to raise your cultural awareness. That is your job, and it calls for some effort on your part.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>LOOK FOR COMMON GROUND</u></b></p> <p>There are many activities that cross culture lines. Getting involved in volunteer work, serving on committees, and joining a support group are a few ways you can find common ground. Activities also will help cultivate friends from other cultures.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>ASSUME DIFFERENCES IN MEANING</u></b></p> <p>We can make a commitment, each day, to act and speak with the awareness that others culture differ. Assume that there may be varying cultural meanings for your words and actions. Avoid assuming that you have been understood or that you fully understand the other person.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>LOOK FOR INDIVIDUALS, NOT GROUPS</u></b></p> <p>Sometimes the way we speak glosses over differences among individuals and reinforces stereotypes. We can avoid assuming one culture is more dominant in certain areas than others. We need to look at everyone as an individual first.</p> 
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>GET INSIDE ANOTHER CULTURE</u></b></p> <p>Consider learning more about another culture. Seek out opportunities to speak with people of that culture. Your knowledge will be an opening to conversation.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>FIND A CULTURE "BROKER"</u></b></p> <p>There are three kinds of people who may help you communicate across cultures. Translators, role models and trained mediators all relate skillfully to people in different cultures. Tap such people to help solve problems in communicating across cultures.</p> 	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>CELEBRATE YOUR OWN CULTURE</u></b></p>  <p>You could gain new appreciation for your own culture. You might see how your own culture's assumptions and customs have shaped your worldview. You might become aware of shortcomings in your own culture.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>ASK FOR HELP</u></b></p>  <p>If you are unsure about how well you are communicating, ask questions. "Is there something else we need to talk about?" "You are not asking questions. Does this mean everything is clear to you, or do you want more explanation?" Questions like these can get cultural differences out in the open in a constructive way.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>POINT OUT DISCRIMINATION</u></b></p> <p>You may see people from another culture being ignored or passed over, or ridiculed by other people. One way to stop these actions is to point them out. Federal civil rights laws and many organization's policies, ban discrimination on racial and ethnic grounds. Be sensitive to organizations to which you belong and notice whether they promote cultural diversity.</p>			

Source: Family Support Network, Facilitator's Guide, Michigan Department of Public Health, Parent Participation Program, 1994