Summary of the Development Continuum: Orientation Perceptions and Developmental Tasks

Orientation	Definition	Characteristics	Developmental Task
Denial	Little recognition of more complex cultural differences	Disinterest in and/or avoidance of cultural difference Insular around cultural difference, e.g. why learn more? Assumes commonalities & little focus on differences Key to understanding: commitment to one's own (monocultural) values and practices	Recognition of cultural differences
Polarization • Defense	Judgmental orientation; us vs. them Uncritical toward own cultural practices; overly critical of others	An overly critical orientation towards cultural commonalities and differences Cultural difference seen as an obstacle to be overcome Feeling under siege from other cultures May exhibit a sense of superiority toward other cultural practices Overemphasizes (mostly negative) differences toward other cultures and underemphasizes commonalities Key to understanding: ability to deal directly difficulties cultural difference	Reduce polarization, equalize criticism, and find common humanity

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Orientation	Definition	Characteristics	Developmental tasks
Polarization (cont.) • Reversal	Overly critical toward own cultural practices; uncritical toward other group cultural practices	Us vs. them polarization where they are good guys and we are the bad May take on the cause of the oppressed group; other cultural practices given special privilege Overemphasizes (mostly positive) differences toward other cultures and underemphasizes commonalities Diversity seen as solution to ethnocentrism Key to understanding: positive evaluation of other cultures and a willingness to be self-critical	Reduce polarization, equalize criticism and find common humanity
Minimization	Highlights cultural commonality that can mask deeper recognition of cultural differences	Early minimization may assume commonalities and not fully recognize cultural difference when present Middle/late minimization may accurately recognize cultural commonalities and differences but may not fully attend to the differences Over estimates own competence around cultural differences and diversity issues, views tolerance as sufficient Overemphasizes (largely accurate) commonalities and underemphasizes differences	Increase cultural self-awareness and increase focus on understanding cultural differences

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Minimization (cont.)		If from a dominant culture group, may lack deeper cultural self awareness If from a non-dominant group, may use Minimization more as a strategy to accommodate to the dominant cultural values and practices Keys to understanding: value both cultural commonalities and differences and see's how differences are relevant	
Acceptance	Recognizes cultural commonality and difference in own and other cultures	Curios and interested in cultural differences Committed to cultural diversity agenda - Talk the talk, but not sure how to walk the walk Acknowledges relevance of cultural context but unclear how to appropriately adapt to cultural difference Keys to understanding: values both cultural commonalities and differences and sees how cultural differences are relevant	Culture general & culture specific frameworks; making ethical judgments and decisions across cultures that are not ethnocentric

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Adaptation	Able to shift cultural perspectives and adapt behavior to cultural context	Increased repertoire of cultural frameworks and behaviors available to effectively bridge cultural commonalities and differences Individuals define their role as demanding intercultural competence Organization encourages development of intercultural competence among all staff Domestic and international cultural differences used as a resource for multicultural teams and organizations as a whole Key to understanding: generally flexible in cultural perspective, deep understanding of at least one other culture, comfortable bridging across culture communities	Attaining bi-cultural and/or multi-cultural adaptation
Cultural disengagement	Sense of disconnection from a primary cultural community	A feeling of being an outsider in your own group May feel comfortable as a contrarian May have difficulty participating in important symbols, events, and activities shared in your community May be related to experiences being rejected in your own group May be related to experiences where one feels between two or more cultural communities	CD is not incorporated in the Developmental continuum Discussion can focus on the ways individuals/group's sense of disconnection from community manifests itself