

## Session 4, Activity 1

# Cultural Tea Party

### Objectives:

1. To introduce students to the importance of cultural norms.
2. To challenge students to understand how cultural lenses create evaluation of other cultural norms.

### Procedure:

- 1) Explain to the students that they will be acting out an activity called Cultural Tea Party.
- 2) Have the students help make space in the room for them to be able to interact by clearing away desks and chairs.
- 3) Divide the class into two groups, labeled 1 and 2. Explain that they will be receiving different directions, that they will discuss in their groups quietly, and that it is important that the other group not know their directions.
- 4) Pass out the handouts so that everyone in Group 1 has the directions for Group 1 and everyone in Group 2 has the directions for Group 2. Give each group time to discuss their directions quietly together and answer any questions they may have.
- 5) Ask each group to practice their culture within their own group for one minute.
- 6) After the students have spent a few minutes practicing their culture separately, bring the groups together and let them interact for five minutes.
- 7) Ask the students from Group 1 to describe what happened. Record their responses on a flipchart.
- 8) Ask the students from Group 2 to describe what happened. Record their responses on a flipchart.
- 9) Ask participants to reflect on whether their responses describe what happened or evaluate what happened.
- 10) Discuss the importance of recognizing the difference between describing and evaluating a situation in which there is conflict.
- 11) What created such different experiences of the same events? Each person experiences events, interactions and conflict differently based on their own background, their culture, education etc.
- 12) What role do culture, including religion and faith play in perspective and conflict?

## Cultural Tea Party- Group Descriptions

### Group 1

You are eager to interact with new people from other groups. In your culture there are several ways that you show respect to people you are communicating with.

- You start every conversation by placing your hands together quietly in front of you with your palms touching.
- You keep at least an arm's length distance between you and the person you are talking with, avoiding a lot of physical contact.
- You look to the ground to show that you are listening closely when someone else is speaking.
- When you are asked a question, you wait at least five seconds before you respond to make sure that the other person has finished their thought. You always speak with a soft voice and avoid laughing out loud.
- When you meet new people you show respect by asking many questions about the weather.



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### Group 2

You are eager to interact with new people from other groups. In your culture there are several ways that you show respect to people you are communicating with.

- You start every conversation by clapping your hands together loudly in front of you.
- When speaking to someone you always must be shoulder to shoulder with him/her in order to show that you are listening respectfully.
- You do this by placing your hand on their head or back, holding their hand, rubbing your shoulder against theirs or in some other way. You always maintain direct eye contact when you are communicating and smile and laugh often.
- It is typical to ask lots of questions from someone you are meeting for the first time about their family, home, work, their hopes and dreams, etc.
- You do not like to have silence in conversation as that makes you very uncomfortable.
- Your religious faith is focused on nature, including the weather, and it is considered impolite to talk about these matters in public.