

# Settling In

## A Guide to Transition and Enculturation

Introduction:

Going to live and work in a new culture is a wonderful experience

- new foods, new buildings, new scenery, new behaviors, new music and more!

For most of you the main reason you're going to another country is because of work. In this country you'll encounter a different culture and people from many different cultures. While this is exciting it is also challenging and presents some very real barriers to health and well-being. But God did not stay behind in the country you left. You are in a country where there are people who he loves.

In order to live and work effectively here in Switzerland we need to establish relationships and develop the ability to live in another culture. To do this you will need to adapt and integrate into the new culture. This cultural adaptation involves:

- deparochialization (broadening your views and outlook through gaining new perspectives),
- developing communicative competence (being able to use a use language effectively) overcoming monolingual myopia and lathrophobic aphasia
- becoming a cross-culturally competent person who is ethno-relative and transcultural.
- becoming capable of "bi- passing" relationships with people in the culture. Bi-passing is where access is gained to an insider's world by an outsider, and the outsider gives access to an insider.

Along the way we go through

- transition
- culture stress/shock

I. Going through Transition successfully  
(see the Transition models handouts)

II. Enculturation- Adapting to the a new Culture (Play Culture Game)

A. What is culture - see Cultural iceberg handout

Overt  
behaviors  
words  
customs  
traditions  
beliefs

Covert  
values  
assumptions  
thought process  
knowledge

B. In adapting it is very helpful to know



initially not met in the same ways that they were in our home environment.

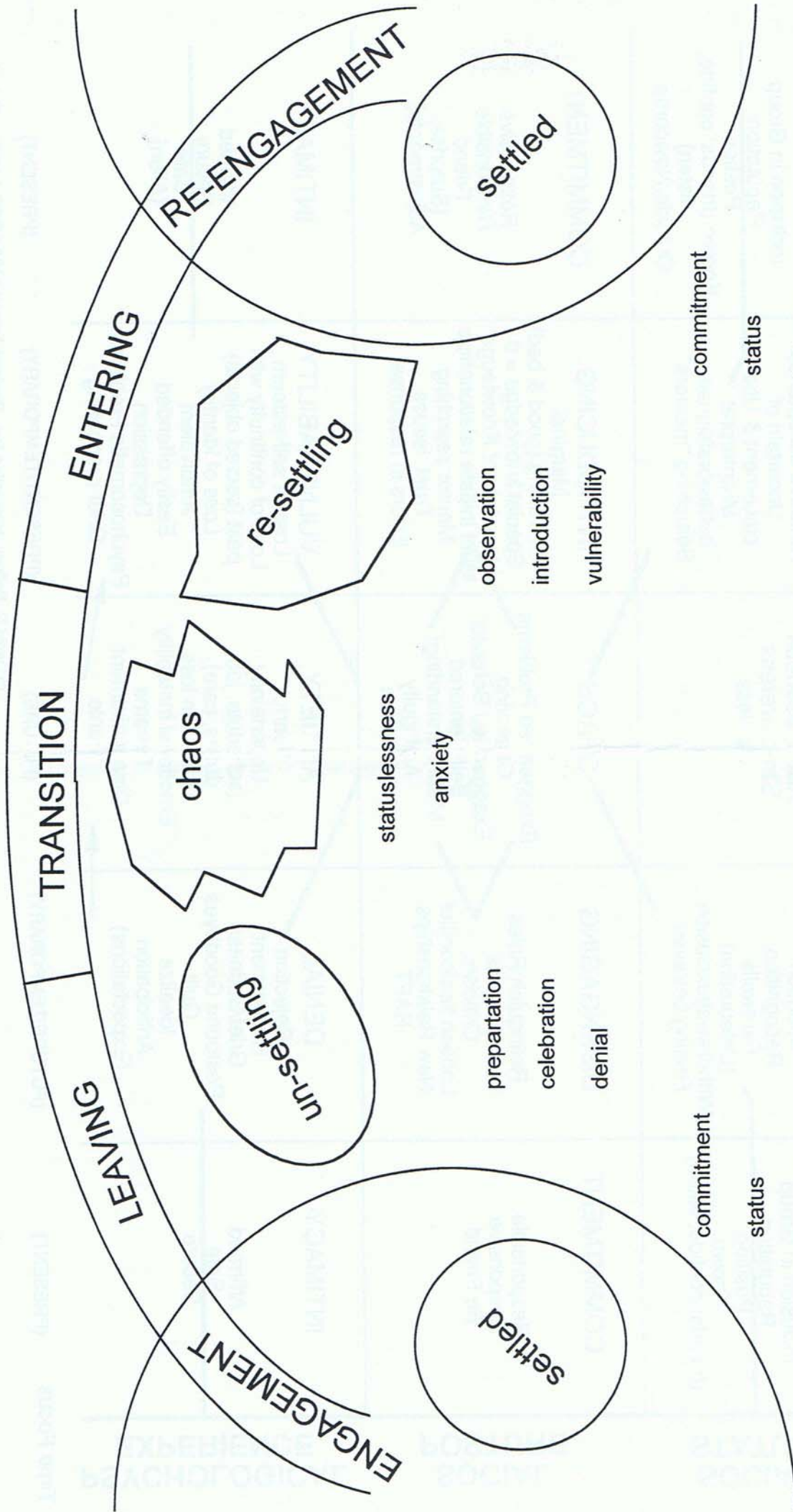
We lack

- 1) the people,
    - a) groups,
    - b) individuals
    - c) God (your normal way of thinking about God)
  - 2) the knowledge
    - a) how to get around
    - b) how to accomplish simple mundane tasks
  - 3) competency
2. The symptoms of culture shock or culture stress
- a. Home sickness
  - b. Depression because we feel loss
  - c. Frustration and Anger
  - d. Helplessness because of lack of competence
  - e. Loneliness because of lack of intimacy
  - f. Loss of self-esteem because of "loss" of competency
  - g. We seek new ways of getting our needs filled
3. Passing through culture shock (see "Culture Stress" handout)  
As we pass through transition, we pass through culture shock  
Fun → Flight → Fight → Fit
- To avoid becoming "chops" in the clutches of wolves, use the CHOPS Inventory to help you manage your stress. (see CHOPS handout).
4. Decreasing Cross-cultural barriers (see "How to Decrease..." handout)
5. Other practical thoughts
- a. maintain contact with others at home
  - b. keep your sense of humor
  - c. be flexible
  - d. remember to enjoy yourself
  - e. stay close to the Lord and let him be your counselor as you verbalize honestly all, both positive and negative, your thought and feelings

Conclusion:

Going to a new culture is fun and rewarding. But in order to have well-being in all areas of life we need will to successfully go through transition and become enculturated. If we will become learners of the language and of the culture striving to overcome our ethnocentric tendencies and deparochialize our attitudes, while managing well our culture shock and stress we will become transcultural people with cross-cultural competency who form mutually satisfying relationships with those in our host country.

Paul Luedtke, 2006



# The TRANSITION EXPERIENCE

- A Normal Process -

© INTERACTION

# THE TRANSITION EXPERIENCE

	INVOLVEMENT	LEAVING	TRANSITION	ENTERING	REINVOLVMENT
<b>SOCIAL STATUS</b>	<b>BELONGING</b> Inclusion in Group Reputation Position Known (friends: confide, listen)	<b>SEPARATION</b> Attention Recognition Farewells (Celebration) Withdrawal/exclusion Feeling betrayed	<b>UNKNOWN</b> Statuslessness Structureless Clueless	<b>MARGINAL</b> Superficiality Tentative acceptance placement & Use Misinterpret behaviors/signals Searching "mentors"	<b>BELONGING</b> Inclusion in Group Reputation Position Known (friends: confide, listen) Outside/Newcomer
<b>SOCIAL POSTURE</b>	<b>COMMITMENT</b> Responsible Responsible Be Friend	<b>DISENGAGING</b> Relinquish Roles Distance Criticism Loosen ties/conflict New Relationships RAFT	<b>CHAOS</b> Exaggerated Problems Observing Exaggerated Behavior Self-Centered Misunderstanding/Ambiguity Isolation	<b>INTRODUCING</b> Marginal Risk Taking (good & bad) Special knowledge = 0 Uncertain of Knowledge Must initiate relationships Mentor searching Trust issues Errors in response	<b>COMMITMENT</b> Responsive Responsible Friend (Surprise Adjustments)
<b>PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>INTIMACY</b> Affirmed Safe Secure	<b>DENIAL</b> Rejection Resentment Grief/Sadness Postpone Goodbyes Guilt Idealize Anticipation (Expectations)	<b>ANXIETY</b> Fearful Uncertainty (schedule, job, duties, care) Grief from loss Emotional instability Dreams Disappointment Panic	<b>VULNERABILITY</b> Loss of self-esteem Loss of continuity with past (sacred objects) Loss of identity Ambivalent Easily offended Depression Psychosomatic Problems Grief processing	<b>INTIMACY</b> Affirmed Secure Safe (Alien)

Time Focus (PRESENT) (PRESENT) (FUTURE) (FUTURE) (PRESENT/TEMPORARY) (PRESENT/TEMPORARY) (PRESENT)

# How to Decrease Cross-Cultural Barriers

Here are some ways that may help you decrease cross-cultural communication barriers.

## 1. Language

- a. Learn the language.
- b. Find someone who can speak the language.
- c. Ask for clarification if you are not sure what the person said.

## 2. Non-verbal Communication

- a. do not assume you understand any non-verbal communication unless you are familiar with the culture.
- b. If the non-verbal communicate is insulting in your culture, do not take it personally.
- c. Develop an awareness of your own non-verbal communication which might be insulting in certain cultures.

## 3. Preconceptions and stereotypes

- a. Make every effort to increase awareness of your own preconceptions and stereotypes you encounter.
- b. With this awareness, reinterpret their behavior from their cultural perspective.
- c. Be willing to test, adapt, and change your own stereotypes to fit your new experiences.

## 4. Evaluation

- a. Maintain objectivity.
- b. Recognize that you cannot change a person's culture overnight.
- c. Do not judge someone from another culture by your cultural values until you have come to know them and their cultural values first.

## 5. Stress

Cross-cultural situations are often ambiguous and result in stress because you are not sure what others expect of you or what you can expect of them. As cross-cultural barriers are reduced, you can expect the level of stress to diminish.

# A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

## Ethnocentric States

- I. Denial of Difference
  - A. No recognition of cultural difference because of insulation or intentional separation.
  - B. Attribution of deficiency in intelligence or personality to culturally deviant behavior.
  - C. Tendency to dehumanize outsiders.
- II. Defense against Difference
  - A. Recognition of cultural difference coupled with negative evaluation of most variations from native culture — the greater the difference, the more negative the evaluation.
  - B. Evolutionary view of cultural development with native culture at the acme.
  - C. A tendency towards social/cultural proselytizing of "underdeveloped cultures."
  - D. Reversal- A tendency to see another culture as superior while denigrating one's own.
- III. Minimization of Difference
  - A. Recognition and acceptance of superficial cultural difference such as eating, etc. while holding that all human beings are essentially the same.
  - B. Emphasis on the similarity of people and communality of basic values.
  - C. Tendency to define the basis of communality in ethnocentric terms (i.e. everyone is essentially like us.)
    - a. Physical Universalism - Emphasis on commonality of human beings in terms of physiological similarity.
    - b. Transcendent Universalism - Emphasis on commonality of human beings as subordinate to a particular supernatural being, religion or social philosophy.

## Ethnorelative States

- IV. Acceptance of Difference
  - A. Recognition and appreciation of cultural differences in behavior and values.
  - B. Acceptance of cultural differences as viable alternative solutions to the organization of human existence-Cultural relativity.
- V. Adaptation to Difference
  - A. The development of communication skills that enable intercultural communication.
  - B. Effective use of empathy, or frame of reference shifting, to understand and be understood across cultural boundaries.
- VI. Integration of Difference
  - A. The internalization of bi-cultural or multicultural frames of reference.
  - B. Maintaining a definition of identity that is "marginal " to any particular culture.

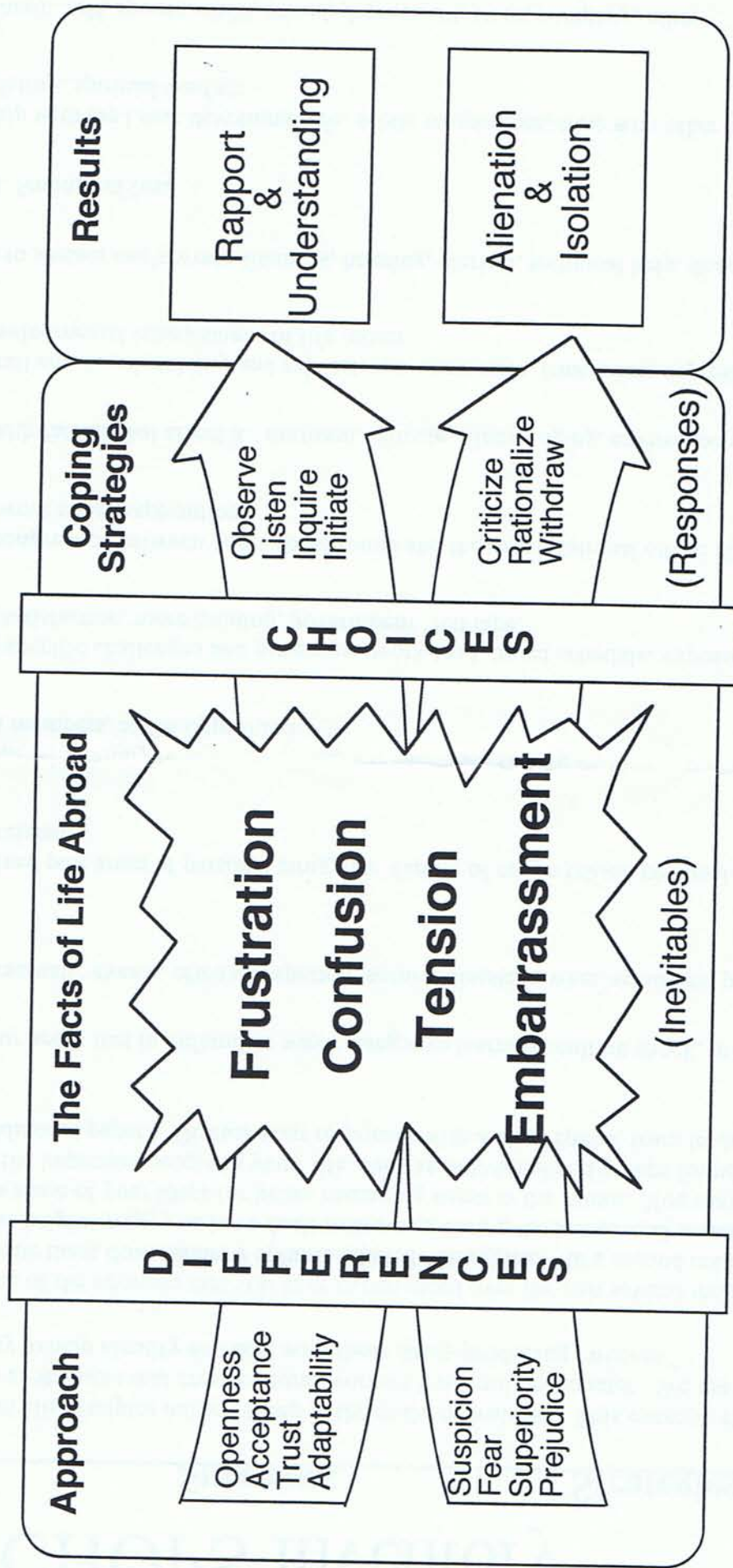
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from Bennett, Milton J. "A Developmental Approach to Training Intercultural Sensitivity." International Journal of Intercultural Relations, Vol. 10 (2). Summer, 1986.

For a more complete discussion of this model, see also the lead chapter in: Paige, Michael (Ed.), Cross-cultural Orientation: New Conceptualization and Applications. University Press. Lanham, Maryland, 1986.

Living overseas requires ...

# Coping with Cultural Differences



# CHOPS Inventory

## Struggles

## Successes

## Strategies

In Matthew 10:16, Jesus sent His disciples out as “sheep in the midst of wolves.” This exercise explores ten “wolves” which we refer to as stressors that cross-cultural workers frequently encounter. We use the acronym “CHOPS” as a way to help identify and deal with these stress-producing “wolves.”

**Directions:** Reflect on some of the stressors that you have experienced over the past several months. Using a separate piece of paper, write these down under a column labeled “Struggles.” In a second column, “Successes”, list some of the helpful ways you have dealt with stress during the last several months. Finally, under “Strategies” jot down some of your ideas for better managing stress in the future. You may also want to do the same for some of the important people in your life, such as individual and groups found at the bottom of this page (use additional paper.) Discuss your responses with a close friend, team leader and/or a counselor.

**C**ultural - getting your needs met in unfamiliar ways: language learning, culture shock, re-entry.

**C**risis - potentially traumatic events, often unexpected: natural disasters, wars, accidents, political instability

**H**istorical - unresolved past areas of personal struggles: family of origin issues, personal weaknesses, work related.

**H**uman - relationships with family members, colleagues, nationals, raising children, couple conflict, struggles with team members, social opposition.

**O**ccupational - job-specific challenges and pressures: work load, travel schedule, exposure to people with problems, job satisfaction, more training, government “red tape.”

**O**rganizational (incongruence between one’s background and the organizational ethos: differing with company policies, work style, expectations.

**P**hysical - overall health factors that affect it: nutrition, climate, illness, aging, environment.

**P**sychological - overall emotional stability and self-esteem: loneliness, frustration, depression, unwanted habits, developmental issues/stages of life issues

**S**upport - resources to sustain one’s work: finances, housing, clerical, technical help, donor contact

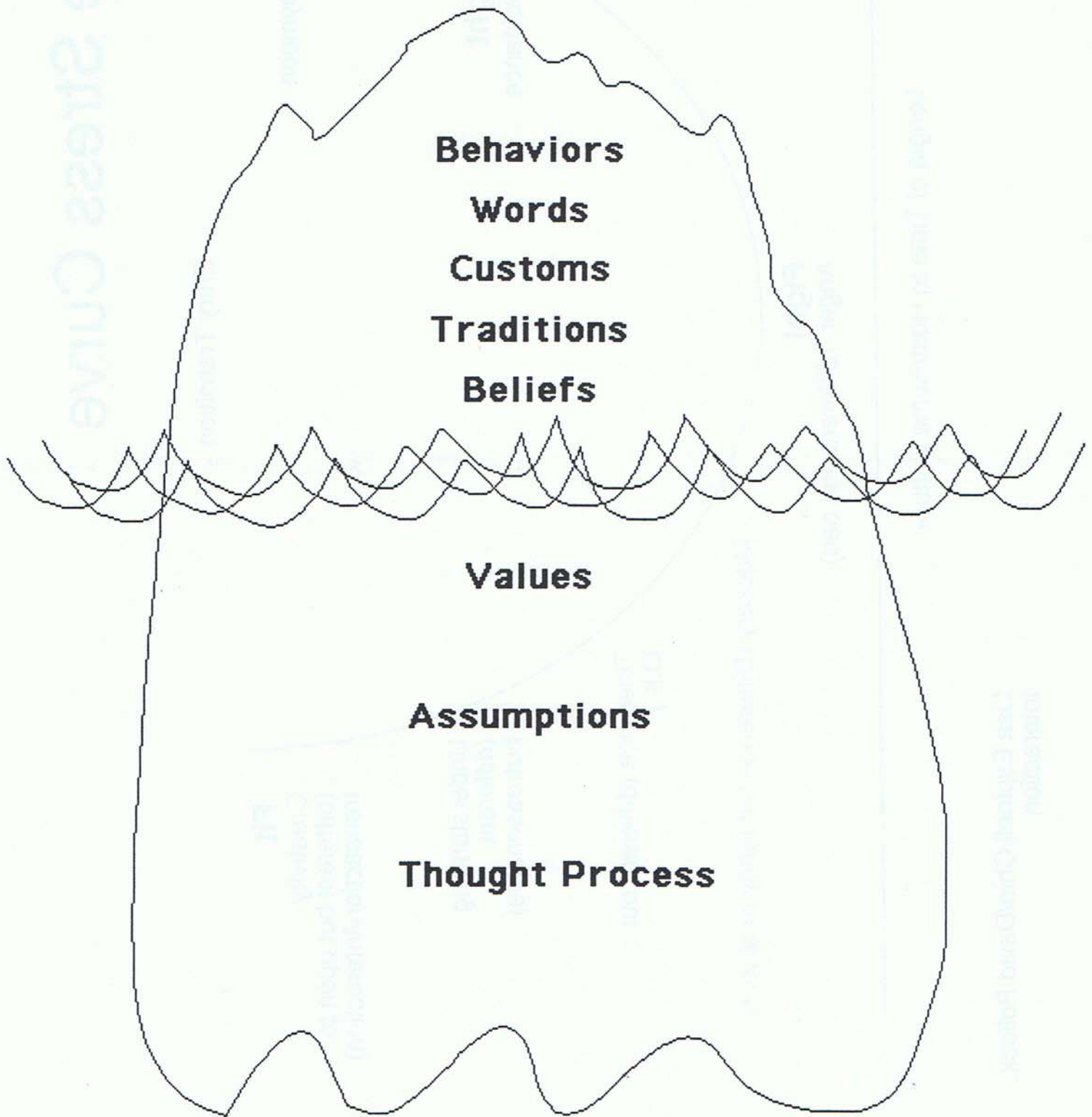
**S**exual - harassment, feelings of lust

**S**piritual - relationship with the Lord: devotional life, subtle temptations, time with other believers, sense of failure or victory, spiritual warfare

Answers apply to (circle one): self, spouse, child, friend, department, team, company, other

# The Model

Overt and Covert Aspects of Any Culture  
(Warning: Iceberg !!!)



Robert Kohls

## 1 CORINTHIANS 13 FOR CROSS-CULTURAL WORKERS

If I speak with the tongue of a national, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal.

If I wear the national dress and understand the culture and all forms of etiquette, and if I copy all mannerisms so that I could pass for a national but have not love, I am nothing.

If I give all I possess to the poor, and if I spend my energy without reserve, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love endures long hours of language study, and is kind to those who mock his accent; love does not envy those who stayed home; love does not exalt his home culture, is not proud of his national superiority,

Does not boast about the way we do it back home, does not seek his own ways, is not easily provoked into telling about the beauty of his home country, does not think evil about this culture;

Love bears all criticism about his home culture, believes all good things about this new culture, confidently anticipates being at home in this place, endures all inconveniences.

Love never fails: but where there is cultural anthropology, it will fail; where there is contextualization it will lead to syncretism; where there is linguistics, it will change.

For we know only part of the culture and we minister to only part.

But when Christ is reproduced in this culture, then our inadequacies will be insignificant.

When I was in America I spoke as an American, I understood as an American, I thought as an American; but when I left America I put away American things.

Now we adapt to this culture awkwardly; but He will live in it intimately: now I speak with a strange accent, but He will speak to the heart.

And now these three remain: cultural adaptation, language study, and love.

But the greatest of these is love.