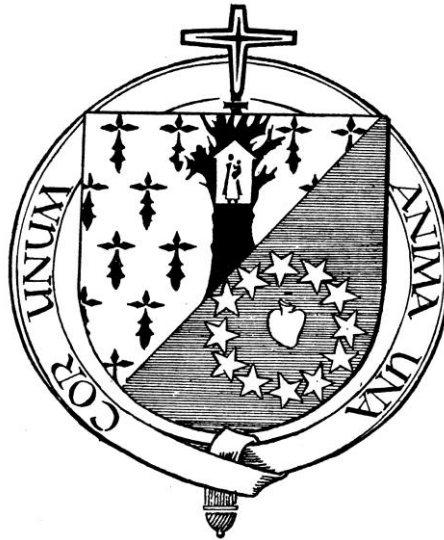Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Guidelines for Multicultural Living in CICM

Roma 2010

Abbreviations:

Const.   Article of CICM Constitutions, 1988

Com. Const.   CICM Constitutions, Commentary,
                  Second Edition, 2007

Gen. Dir.   CICM General Directory, 1988

MFS   Mission in Frontier Situations.
                  Acts of the 12th General Chapter, 1999

OHOS   One Heart and One Soul.
                  CICM General Conference 1978

RI   Revitalizing Our Identity.
                  Acts of the 13th CICM General Chapter, 2005

Presentation

Our Congregation has existed for almost 150 years. Founded in Belgium, it now has members from 19 different nationalities and even more different cultures. Its members are present in 25 different countries.

With the rapid changes in the means of communication in the world today, the effects of globalization are felt everywhere, with encounters between cultures being one of the consequences.

Many of our General Chapters have discussed the topic of internationality. The 13th General Chapter of 2005 affirmed that "*our multicultural character has become an integral element in the identity of CICM and that we should receive this as a gift and make every effort to integrate ourselves into this reality of the Congregation*".

The present document will be, I hope, a tool that will help all the confreres to live better this gift of multicultural character in our dear Congregation. It is also a response to the 1st Decree of the 13th General Chapter of 2005: "*The General Government will draw up Guidelines for Multicultural Living in CICM*".

I take this occasion to thank all of the confreres who, whether from close by or from far away, have contributed to these reflections and the writing of these Guidelines.

May the Lord continue to accompany us in the call that He made to each of us to be members of this Congregation and to contribute to His mission of uniting all the dispersed children of God into one family.

May this document be a useful tool that inspires our life and work.

May it be one of those documents, which, with the grace of God, help us to live faithfully our commitment to follow Jesus as CICM.

Rome, June 29, 2010
Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul

Rev. Edouard Tsimba, cicm
Superior General

See, I am doing something new... do you not perceive it?
(Is 43:19)

Chapter I

An Historical Overview

In 1864, an article published in *De Godsdienstvriend* emphasized the Belgian character of Theophile Verbist's new foundations so much, that several Dutch readers protested against this "exclusivist attitude". Verbist denied that the Missionary Institute he intended to found was an exclusively Belgian organization, although he did affirm the usefulness of the Belgian national sentiment at that time for harnessing the needed support for the Congregation's difficult beginnings. Later, he would declare more categorically, *"Nationality matters little to me."* (Letter 533, Th. Verbist to J. Bax, Sept. 1867, Verhelst, et al. Vol. II B, p. 1562) In the summer of 1864, the Founder visited Diocesan Seminaries in the Netherlands to recruit missionaries for China. A few Dutch priests joined him and thenceforth, several Dutch priests entered CICM each year. In May 1898, the first General Chapter accepted in principle the admission of Chinese priests and brothers into CICM. In 1904 Philippus Wang-Yuan-Chih, a seminarian from Kan-Su, arrived in Scheut to start his Novitiate. He pronounced his first vows in 1905. On December 25, 1927, a Novitiate was erected in Tientsin with two Chinese novices. They took their first vows on December 26, 1928. Finally, in June 1930, the 3rd General Chapter decided to open Novitiates at Nijmegen (1934) and Jambes (1935) for Dutch and Walloon candidates.

With the closing of World War II, the world underwent some dramatic changes. Colonialism was slowly coming to an end, large numbers of peoples were immigrating to other countries, there was a new openness to peoples of different culture, and mission was no longer seen as simply sending missionaries from the First to the Third World. In this new environment, the 5th General Chapter in 1947 foresaw the possibility of accepting candidates from regions where the Congregation was working and of opening Novitiates there. However, it urged caution and insisted on strict conditions for

the acceptance of candidates: they were to become religious and they must remain in their country of origin to serve the mission there. The Chapter declared, *"While each of you should try to have as large a number of native students as possible, you must also make it your aim to fashion and develop in them sacerdotal sanctity and such an apostolic spirit and zeal for the salvation of their own people that they may be ready to lay down their lives for their fellow-tribesmen and fellow countrymen."* (Art. 7) This declaration sparked much debate. Some felt that these confreres were being denied the right to be full missionaries in the sense of leaving their own country. Others thought that the Congregation should work to build the local clergy, and still others felt that the Congregation should remain an exclusively Belgian institute. As a result of this decision, Novitiates were opened in the Philippines (1953), the Congo (1954) and the United States (1958). Other Novitiates were opened much later in Haiti (1981), Indonesia and Brazil (1982), Dominican Republic (1987) and Taiwan (1988). In addition, the "Collegio Internazionale CICM" opened in 1964 in Rome with the first international community for Belgian, Dutch, North American, Filipino, and Congolese theology students.

The 7th General Chapter in 1967 was the Chapter which wrote the Constitutions "Ad Experimentum" after the Second Vatican Council. Article 4 of these Constitutions declared that *"The Congregation unites in one community of life both priests and brothers. Coming from many different countries and brought together by the unifying power of the Holy Spirit, we make ourselves with all the graces and talents we have received totally available for the mission entrusted to the Congregation."* Article 152 stated that *"In our houses of training, particularly where confreres of various nationalities live together; there is an absolute need for an open and international spirit."* In response to the questions as to whether all candidates were to be sent *Ad Extra*, the Chapter stated that "*All candidates must be ready to be committed to missionary apostolate in foreign countries for a life-long term and must live their missionary vocation in a religious way."* (Decreta, Declaration no. 3.3, p. 54)

The contribution of this Chapter to the process of internationalization is its clarification of its motivation. Along with the desire for an increase in personnel, the Congregation wished to be at the service of the young Churches and desired that they should participate as soon as possible in the universal mission of the Church by sending out their own missionaries. The Chapter declared that internationalization makes the Congregation a clearer sign of the universality of the Church. The living and working together of members from different cultures favors a broadening of mentality and promotes integration into a new life and work environment. The transfer of the CICM Generalate from Belgium to Rome was seen by many as a sign of the Congregation's desire to be truly international.

In the summer of 1970, separate meetings of Filipino and Congolese confreres were held in Baguio City and in Kinshasa. These meetings discussed issues like the difficult integration of a small minority into a larger majority, the appreciation of Filipino and Congolese values and identities, and a less westernized approach to Initial Formation. During these meetings, proposals like that in which the Filipino members would consider leaving CICM and become members of a Philippine Mission Society, or that a special Province be established for the Congolese members failed to gain widespread approval (D. Verhelst & N. Pycke, *C.I.C.M. Missionaries Past and Present 1862-1987*, p. 432 - 434).

The 8th General Chapter in 1974 was the first Chapter to have non-European confreres among the delegates. There were five of them. Hailed as "a Chapter of reflection" it focused on the international character of the Congregation. CICM is international because its members come from diverse nations and because it carries on its missionary activities in many countries. This international character enables the Congregation to better express its missionary nature. The Internationality of the Congregation can grow only from faith in the living Christ who unites us for his kingdom regardless of race, origin or culture. It makes the Congregation a better sign and instrument of the Kingdom of God on earth, the kingdom which summons all to brotherhood and unity. The Chapter also hinted at the consequence of this realization, the building of international communities. Our international character

must develop and grow into international CICM communities if it is to express our missionary witness. If we truly want to live our international character, we must gradually remove all obstacles to true integration.

While the motivations for internationalization which were given in the Chapters of 1947 and 1967 remained on the level of human aspirations, the members of the 1974 Chapter, in a spirit of faith, understood that internationalization is an answer to a call from the Lord. It is not simply something that the Congregation wants to realize as a point of its agenda, but rather it is first and foremost an invitation and a calling from God; a call which CICM preaches to others and which it needs to practice and live itself. Thus, internationalization belongs to our identity, an identity which is being discovered slowly, throughout our history, under the guidance of the Spirit. The Chapter of 1974 probably constitutes the most important turning point in the evolution of internationalization in CICM. (D. Verhelst & N. Pycke, *C.I.C.M. Missionaries Past and Present 1862-1987*, p. 447 - 449)

The General Conference of 1978 again took up the theme of our vocation to universal brotherhood. The statistics of the recent admissions of candidates and of ordinations clearly showed a progressive internationalization of our Congregation. This evolution was welcomed by many confreres. Others found it difficult to accept or were completely indifferent. Many confreres had an honest difficulty with the international character of CICM. They could not understand why they should give up the relative comfort of a homogeneous community of culture and language. On the other hand, where international communities have been in existence for some time, most confreres reported that they experienced the internationalization of CICM as an enriching and meaningful challenge. "*The idea of forming international communities, particularly during the formation years, was affirmed once more. The idea of such communities was not new. It was already present at the various Regional Meetings of the last two years, i.e. those of Hong Kong, Kinshasa and Guatemala. The decisive breakthrough came at the General Conference. It was due in great part to the theme of universal brotherhood. If the Congregation takes the idea of*

universal brotherhood seriously, then this must be made clear from the time of formation." (OHOS 1978, p. 27)

At the 9th General Chapter of 1981, the ideal of internationalization was explicitly joined to the idea of integration. As missionaries of different countries and cultures, the CICM missionaries meet each other within the culture of the people among whom they live. Such an integration, which implies that the CICM missionaries meet other people as brothers, is the indispensable condition for achieving internationalization and brotherhood within CICM. In a world divided by barriers of a cultural, racial and socio-economic nature, our Congregation proposes universal brotherhood as an alternative to be realized.

A proposal was discussed to make a declaration on the cultural identity of each member and to accept the existence of institutionalized cultural groups within the Congregation which would permit the different cultures to have some specific structures without creating a series of parallel branches within the Congregation. The Chapter did not judge this an acceptable proposal. Rather it looked toward a more genuine integration of all CICM communities into the reality of the people whom they serve. The creation of institutionalized cultural groups within the Congregation would run the risk of reducing our Congregation to a confederation of Provinces and of national groups, a result which the Chapter found undesirable. The Chapter confirmed that the Congregation should be directed towards true internationalization.

The 10th General Chapter of 1987 confirmed the orientations of CICM missionary presence as declared by the previous Chapter and the internationalization of the Congregation, its Provinces, and its Autonomous Districts. It also confirmed the position of the previous Chapter which held that it is inappropriate to create institutionalized cultural groups within the Institute in order to guarantee the cultural identity of confreres. Instead, it recommended that information be made available to all confreres regarding the specific values, traditions and customs of the different cultural groups within the Congregation, and that encounters, both spontaneous and

organized, be promoted on all levels in order to facilitate dialogue among confreres of different cultural backgrounds.

With the publication of the *CICM Constitutions* and *General Directory* in 1988, the results of some twenty years of evolution toward internationalization were brought together and clearly expressed. The main elements were reaffirmed: integration into the local community, use of the two official languages, the forming of international communities and the internationalization of the Provinces and Autonomous Districts.

The 11th General Chapter of 1993 noted that the center of gravity in the Congregation was shifting more and more from the northern to the southern hemisphere. This evolution was seen as a promise as well as a challenge. Cultural diversity was giving a new face to the Congregation and making universal brotherhood more visible. During the Chapter, a proposal was made to constitute a study group to examine alternative structures for the Institute which would allow more autonomy to cultural groups. This proposal was rejected, reaffirming the position taken by the Chapters of 1981, and 1987 which held it to be inappropriate to create institutionalized cultural groups within the Institute in order to guarantee the cultural identity of confreres. Internationalization was not to be seen as a problem, but as a gift from God and a grace for the mission of CICM and its witness of international fraternal communion in a world marked by racism and the marginalization of minorities.

During the 12th General Chapter of 1999, internationality was discussed as a separate topic of the agenda. This discussion resulted in a lot of tension in the Assembly. At one point, the facilitator of the Chapter made the following intervention: *"You are facing a threat to your unity and your future. But at the same time you are facing an opportunity. The opportunity to show the way towards a multi-racial and international Church, nearer to the poor... The opportunity to show that the love that is in you can heal deep fractures and be a hope for a broken world. The opportunity to show that you can let go of your preoccupation with power, status quo, security and control. The opportunity to restore trust without which no relationship can endure at any level."* (MFS 1999, p. 14)

Although Internationality is a gift from God and a grace for the mission of CICM, the process itself is fraught with a multiplicity of difficulties. The ability of confreres to live and work in international teams presupposes that they are comfortable with their own cultural identities.

The Chapter's final document included the following cautionary remarks, reminding us that *"the process of internationalization is a very complicated human enterprise that requires maturity and careful preparation".* (MFS 1999, p. 28)

In 2002, thirty-eight, mostly Filipino, confreres decided to separate from the Congregation after their proposal for an alternative structure within the Congregation was rejected by the General Government. This separation was brought about by, among other things, difficulties related to the issues of internationalization.

The 13th General Chapter of 2005 affirmed once again that the multicultural character of the Congregation is a gift from God and the fruit of the missionaries who went before us. *"It is a gift that can enable us to do mission today in a better way"* (RI 2005 p. 17). The Chapter asked the confreres to value this gift and to integrate themselves into this reality of the Congregation. The Chapter also expressed its expectations that *"new candidates to CICM will be young men who are disposed to living their mission in a culture other than their own, and who are able to live happily in multicultural communities"* (RI 2005, p. 17). Finally, the Chapter asked that the General Government draw up guidelines for multicultural living in CICM (RI 2005 Decree 1, p. 17).

For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord,
plans for your welfare, not for woe!
Plans to give you a future full of hope.
(Jer 29:11)

Chapter II

Spiritual Foundations of our Multiculturalism

The spiritual foundations of our multiculturalism are the very same foundations that strengthen and support our lives as religious and as missionaries who seek to integrate themselves into another culture and to dialogue with the people among whom we are living. Thus, our multiculturalism does not call for a change or a revision of our spirituality, but rather a deepening of that spirituality as we strive to live what we already are as religious missionaries.

An important part of our witness as religious missionaries is our life in community. Article 48 of our *Constitutions* states that *"As brothers in the same Institute, we foster a special bond among us that goes beyond all differences"* and Article 49 says that *"As missionaries, we live our fraternal communion in the midst of the people to whom we are sent. Their concrete reality is the reference point which determines how we live out our communion"*.

Some of the key elements of the spirituality necessary to our multicultural living include: experiencing it as a call, seeing it as a mission, emptying ourselves, and reconciliation.

Come and follow me. (Lk 18:22)

Multiculturalism as a Call

Our vocation as religious missionaries cannot make sense if we do not experience it as a call from God to collaborate in God's mission of love to the world. So too, our living together in multicultural communities will have little sense if we do not experience it as a part of that same call to witness to our world today. Living together in

multicultural communities requires that *"we foster a bond among us that goes beyond all differences".* (*Cont.,* 48) This bond arises from our commitment to Jesus Christ and his mission. *"It is the love and call of Christ which has gathered us together. We experience a deep bond because each of us loves Christ and is loved by him."* (*Com. Const.* p. 90) Living together in multicultural communities goes beyond what comes naturally to us. It is not considered a normal way of living. But, just as it is Jesus' invitation to leave all things for the sake of the Kingdom and to follow him that enables us to embrace chastity, poverty, and obedience, we can really embrace living in multicultural communities when we experience it as an invitation from God that is being extended to our Congregation and to each and every confrere.

See how they love one another. (Tertullian)

Multiculturalism as Mission

We are called as missionaries *Ad Gentes.* But, in a certain sense, we are also missionaries to one another. The Gospel, that gives meaning to our vocation and that we are called to proclaim to others, must first be lived within our own communities. We preach, not so much by words, as by the example of our lives. *"The witness of an authentic Christian life is always at the heart of the proclamation of God's Kingdom."* (*Const.,* 5) Our multicultural communities strive to give visible expression to the Gospel of love and to Jesus' desire *"that all may be one".* (Jn 17:21) What better witness can we offer to the world today than the witness of a community where *"there does not exist Jew or Greek, slave or free … but where each one, out of love, has placed themselves at one another's service"*? (Gal 3:28)

He humbled himself. (Phil 2:8)

Multiculturalism as "Kenosis"

Following Jesus means following him in his gift of self. Jesus invites us to deny ourselves by giving up what is most dear for the sake of the Kingdom. Living and working in community with confreres from other cultures, and integrating ourselves into the culture of the people to whom we have been sent, are acts of self-emptying. Like Jesus, who did not *"deem equality with God something to be grasped at, (but) emptied himself and took the form of a slave"* (Phil 2:6-7) we try to put aside our own way of seeing and doing, and try to see and do in new ways that help us to understand and identify with others. This demands sacrifice; a true dying to ourselves. Like Jesus who *"made himself poor to enrich us through his poverty"* (2 Cor 8:9) we too must empty ourselves so as to become *"all things to all men".* (1 Cor 9:22) In doing so, we will *"bear our share of the hardships that the Gospel entails".* (2 Tim 1:8)

Seek his Kingship over you. (Mt 6:33)

Multiculturalism as Conversion and Reconciliation

Our multicultural communities are meant to be a sign of God's Kingdom. From the very beginning of his preaching, Jesus made the connection between conversion and the Kingdom. *"The reign of God is at hand! Reform your lives and believe in the Gospel!"* (Mk 1:15) Conversion and reconciliation are the prerequisites of the Kingdom just as they are also the prerequisites of individuals living together in a community, be it a multicultural community or otherwise. We have each grown up in a particular culture, a culture that has its own richness and positive values, but also its own poverty and sinfulness. Insensitivities, prejudices and discrimination on the bases of color, tribe, geographical region, language, sex, education, etc. have been a part of our upbringing. As men committed to the Gospel, we are invited to *"acquire a fresh spiritual way of thinking"* (Eph 4:23) and *"to be transformed by the renewal of our minds".* (Rm 12:2)

Many of these negative attitudes can be overcome simply by getting to know one another in a more personal way. Others may need a more determined effort: the humble recognition of our sinfulness, prayer for the grace to change, and our participation in ceremonies and acts of reconciliation.

We all learn - and are sometimes transformed –
by encountering differences that challenge
our experiences and assumptions.

Chapter III

Building Cultural Intelligence

Although we may want to treat one another with respect, we may lack the tools to do so. Wrong or culturally inappropriate assumptions can lead to misunderstandings and defensive behavior. While good will and a solid spirituality may be the bases for multicultural living, our success will also depend on the skills we develop to interact appropriately with confreres from other cultures. Those who study multicultural interactions speak of people developing Cultural Intelligence. Cultural Intelligence refers to those abilities that allow us to effectively interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds in all kinds of settings. Three key components in the development of Cultural Intelligence that have been identified are *awareness, knowledge and skills*. As with any human development, these three components do not necessarily follow one another consecutively but are intermingled, with development happening in each of them at the same time.

γνωθι σεαυτόν - Know Thyself.
(Inscription on the Temple of Apollo at Delphi)

Awareness refers to the ability to be mindful of oneself, of others and of the cultural context. When we interact with others, the distance that we keep from others and the volume of our voice are neither good nor bad; they merely represent cultural differences. But if we are unaware of those cultural differences, we may find ourselves constantly stepping back to create more space while our interlocutor is constantly pressing forward to close the gap.

When we disregard the cultural context of our interactions with others, we are likely to misinterpret their intentions or behavior.

Developing awareness means observing objectively what is happening around us. This provides the basis for accurate opinions, attitudes and assumptions. Awareness allows us to compare and contrast alternative viewpoints, to identify opportunities and constraints, and to translate our priorities into a variety of cultural settings. However, it is not enough to be aware of the cultural context of others; we also have to be aware of our own cultural context. It is difficult to see how cultural assumptions influence the behavior of others until we can see how they are influencing our own behavior. Developing awareness allows us to tune into our own cultural preferences and biases. This gives us the freedom to make intentional choices rather than simply reacting out of our own cultural context. Developing a high degree of cultural awareness will allow us to judge a situation both from our own and another culture's viewpoint.

We learn by going from the known to the unknown.

Knowledge refers to the process whereby we deliberately expose ourselves to information about cultural differences and similarities - be it through books, films, travel, meeting people from other cultures, etc. - and then grasping the significance of this information. Knowledge means gathering the factual information that allows us to move beyond awareness toward effective and appropriate interaction. Through facts and information, we strive to understand other cultures from *their* perspective. Together with awareness, knowledge allows us to understand the behavior and expectations of people from other cultures more accurately.

I see and I forget. I hear and I remember. I do and I understand.
(Chinese Proverb)

Skills provide us with the capacity to build on our awareness and to apply our knowledge in multicultural interactions. They allow us to do the right thing at the right time in the right way. But we are not born with skills, nor can they be developed in a short period of time. They must be developed through training and experience. This takes work, motivation and constant practice. Building our skills is a

never-ending process. Some of the skills we need to develop for successful multicultural interactions include:

> *A person is a person through other people.*
> *(African Proverb)*

1.   Understanding Our Own Cultural Identity –

The starting point for understanding other cultures is to be aware of our own history with the different cultural influences we have received. We have to know ourselves and be able to listen to the stories of the others. It takes effort to think about our own identity and how it ties in with our cultural background. It is easier to focus on "them" than to focus on "us". Our culture filters what we see and how we make sense of the world around us. Our tendency is to focus on the behavior of others rather than our perception of their behavior. Understanding our own cultural identity makes us more sensitive and less defensive; it requires us to think about the cultural context of our own behavior. As we develop the skill of discovering the cultural influences on our own behavior and identity, we realize that our actions are not more natural or correct than anyone else's actions. As with anyone else, our own actions can only be understood if we look at all of the cultural influences that surround and impact what we do. (see Appendix 3, Iceberg Analogy)

> *Jiang-xin-bi-xin*
> *Imagine that my heart was yours. (Confucius)*

2.   Adjusting Our Cultural Lenses –

Cultural lenses refer to those social influences that shape our vision and evaluation of the world around us. We view other people through various cultural lenses like nationality, religion, gender or family. Our cultural lenses help us to make sense of what we see and of why people do the things they do. On the other hand, however, they also influence what we see and what we fail to see. More often than not, we see what we have been

conditioned to see and do not see what we have not been conditioned to see. For example, if we come from a country that was colonized by another, we may have a tendency to see people from that country as colonizers while they may have the tendency to see us in a paternalistic way. The ability to adjust our cultural lenses is key to building cultural intelligence. It permits us to understand divergent needs, values, behaviors, and communication and teaming styles.

Learning the skill of adjusting our cultural lenses will help us to avoid cultural ethnocentrism. Cultural ethnocentrism is the tendency to evaluate other cultures on the basis of our own cultural standards. When we show cultural ethnocentrism, we believe that our way of doing things is not only right, it is superior. Ethnocentrism can be found in all cultures and restricts our ability to identify, understand, and adjust to different cultural truths.

Treat others as they wish to be treated.
(Modified Golden Rule)

3.   Shifting Perspectives –

Shifting perspectives means putting ourselves into the shoes and the culture of the others. By constantly shifting perspectives and examining the world from different vantage points, we develop empathy. Whenever we interact with others, it is important that we shift our perspective toward the perspective of the other. As we develop this skill, we are better able to relate to each other's expectations and concerns. Shifting perspective requires awareness of our own cultural lenses and openness to learning. The greater the cultural diversity, the more difficult it is to shift perspectives. We tend to gravitate to those experiences, values, and beliefs that seem similar to our own. Thus, we need to put ourselves in situations where we can expand our horizons and meet people from whom we feel very distinct. As we do so we develop our ability to relate and identify with others, and we gain information. Having more information helps us to understand others and to move past our first impressions.

You can buy anything in your own language,
but you need to sell it in their language.
(A Businessman)

4.   Intercultural Communication –

Culture and communication are closely interwoven. Our culture influences the way we view communication, as well as when, where, and how. When done effectively, intercultural communication can build trust, empathy, and respect. When ineffective, it can create misunderstandings, build walls of mistrust, and make group activity more difficult.

Nonverbal communication is an important part of intercultural communication. It embraces all of the ways in which we communicate other than with words and includes eye contact, gestures, stance, facial expressions, use of space, and personal images such as dress or jewelry and it is often symbolic and ambiguous. Because of the subtlety of nonverbal communication, we may not be aware of the messages we are sending or receiving. Thus, as we communicate we should try to see ourselves through the perspective of others and be asking ourselves: What am I communicating? What assumptions are we and others making? What cultural differences might exist in our communication styles?

Cultural misunderstandings can result from a variety of factors that we can control and even correct. These would include: being unaware of differences in communication styles, misreading nonverbal communication, poor listening skills or the inability to receive, process and remember information easily, ethnocentric perceptions or the tendency to assume that a situation we do not understand is strange or wrong rather than just different, and stereotyping which distorts our perception and undermines our ability to connect with others.

In intercultural communication, listening requires more skill than speaking. It requires the discipline to put aside our own initial thoughts and to focus on what the speaker is really

thinking and feeling. Active listening requires diligence and practice. Three specific skills for active listening are:

- *Attending* or using nonverbal behaviors such as facial expressions, posture, and gestures to show that you are listening and are interested,
- *Summarizing* or repeating the essence of what you have heard and being attune to feelings as well as to facts,
- *Clarifying* or using open-ended questions like, "How did you feel when…?" or "Do you have anything to add?" to make sure that you have understood what the speaker is trying to communicate.

It is important to realize that individual and cultural differences do not have to be a source of divisiveness when we communicate. By increasing our skills, we can increase our level of comfort (cf. Appendix 2, Low and High Context Communication Styles).

> *If a man wants to do something more than human*
> *he must have more than human power.*
> *(Native American Proverb)*

5.   Understanding Power Distance –

Power refers to the ability to bring about change. One person can have more power than another for a variety of reasons: personal characteristics, charisma, money, connections, skills, support from others, etc. Power affects the way people view us and relate to us. Power is more than an individual phenomenon. We can only make sense of how power is defined, expressed and distributed by examining our culture. We can ask ourselves: Who is in charge? Who is respected? Who is listened to? Who has the most resources? Who makes the important decisions? Whose experiences are valued the most?

Power distance refers to how much equality or inequality people within a particular society accept or expect. Large power distance societies give people with power tremendous amounts of respect and deference. Small distance power societies expect

relationships to be more equal. In these societies, those in power are more likely to be questioned and given feedback.

Privileges are rights or benefits enjoyed by a particular person or a select group. These can be economic, social or psychological. What we view as privilege reflects our cultural background. Earned privileges are those advantages that reflect effort and achievement. They are a source of motivation. Unearned privileges are advantages that we have due to who we are or to circumstances beyond our control.

Invariably, people think about their minority statuses more than their majority statuses. People with minority status find themselves thinking about this status in situations where they feel left out, devalued, or excluded in some manner. People with majority status tend to be blind to their privileges.

Whenever power and privilege are addressed, stereotyping can be common (cf. Appendix 4 Understanding Power Distance).

> *Working alone is not an expression of the Gospel or of religious life.*
> *(A CICM confrere)*

6.   Multicultural Teaming –

The term *multicultural team* refers to a group of people from various cultural backgrounds who are involved in a cooperative effort. Different cultures approach teamwork in different ways. Some cultures are more orientated toward task behaviors, others toward relationship building behaviors. Task behaviors include defining an objective, gathering and evaluating information, problem solving and networking. Relationship building behaviors include setting ground rules, examining each other's assumptions, collaborating and compromising, determining strengths and weaknesses and showing appreciation. Teams need to find a balance between task behaviors and relationship building behaviors. Team members with one or the other of these orientations are equally committed to the task, but they go about it differently.

Culturally diverse teams have the potential to perform better than homogenous teams as to the generation of new ideas, solving problems, and being creative. Specifically, culturally diverse teams are better able to consider a greater variety of perspectives and alternatives, to question prevailing assumptions, to adapt to changing circumstances and to develop more alternatives. However, these benefits can only be realized when the team members learn to focus on differences as an asset to be utilized rather than a challenge to be overcome. Diversity can only be an asset when team members feel included, understood, and respected. Teams are more apt to achieve their objectives when they consciously focus on their relationships as well as on their tasks. Frequent effective communication builds trust which in turn leads to more open and meaningful communication. Building a team, especially a multicultural team, takes time and effort.

> *There can be no understanding where there is mutual rejection.*
> *(T. Merton)*

7.   Dealing With Bias –

We show bias when we interpret and judge other people and their way of life in terms particular to us and our culture. Bias is an unreasoned tendency or temperament of outlook, often of a prejudicial nature. Bias is universal: it exists in all cultures. Bias wastes time, saps energy, and cuts us off from new ideas, as well as from individuals and groups.

Bias can assume many forms. These include: *Stereotyping* - overgeneralizations about people that do not take individual differences into account, *Prejudice* – irrational and inflexible prejudgments about others, *Discrimination* - the unequal treatment of a group or individuals and *Racism* - the belief that some racial groups are naturally superior or inferior to others.

Because bias can be learned with our culture, we are often unaware of our personal biases. This makes it difficult to accept

responsibility for acting the way we do and to unlearn our biases. However, when we are aware of our biases, and are concerned about them, we have the power to control them.

It is not easy to unlearn bias since it has been reinforced over time and has become ingrained within us. Consequently, it may be more realistic to begin with reducing or managing our bias as opposed to trying to eliminate it. Bias can be reduced significantly when members of racially and culturally mixed groups work together to accomplish common goals. This is particularly true when everyone feels accepted, interacts frequently, and gets to know one another personally. Interactions of this nature have been found to change our thinking about others more effectively than simply studying cultural differences or talking about intolerance. To unlearn bias, we need to engage in a close and personal way with the very people that we might otherwise want to avoid. As research has shown, it is not so much changing our attitudes that changes our behavior as changing our behavior that changes our attitudes.

When confronted with bias in others it is important to remain calm and not to jump to conclusions. In culturally diverse settings, it is important to give the others the benefit of the doubt until more information can be gathered. It is easy to misinterpret comments and actions, so do not jump to conclusions. It helps to have some knowledge of the person who is showing what appears to be bias. Is the behavior in question out of the ordinary or is it part of a pattern? Strive to maintain a dialogue. Respond so as to promote learning and growth. It is important to treat others with respect and understanding even when their thinking or behavior is prejudicial.

Acknowledging the existence of bias and understanding its origins help us to move beyond accusations and guilt to promoting understanding.

You can't escape a fire by hiding it under your coat.
(Russian proverb)

8.   Dealing With Cross-Cultural Conflict –

Dealing with conflict among people from different cultural backgrounds in an effective and constructive manner is one of the most important skills we can develop. It is difficult, if not impossible, to avoid conflict. Conflict is inevitable when people with different agendas, communication styles, languages, and interpersonal skills come together. While conflict is a universal human reality, the way in which we deal with conflict varies from individual to individual and from culture to culture. Thus we need to examine how different cultural backgrounds might provide us with clues as to why the conflict exists and how to respond. In order to make sense of the conflict, we need to examine diverse perspectives, including our own. We might ask, "Did I misinterpret somebody's body language or what he said?" "Is it possible that he misinterpreted my actions or comments?" The socially learned behaviors, norms, values, beliefs, languages, and other components of culture can help us to understand the causes of conflict and how it is being perceived by those involved. Different ways of communicating, leadership styles, methods of getting work done, and orientations toward teaming are a few of the cultural variables we need to consider.

When conflict occurs, we tend to see what *we* want and *our* reasons for wanting it. We have more trouble seeing what others want and why. Dealing with conflict starts with knowing ourselves. How might my values, beliefs, and ability to shift perspective come into play? What groups do I identify with and how might they influence my orientation toward conflict? What are my statuses and roles? Am I aware of the way my position and power influence the way I respond to conflict? During the conflict, we should be asking ourselves: Am I open to looking at things differently? Do I work hard to keep an open mind? Do I explore alternative ways of thinking or doing things? Am I focused on understanding the other person's values and needs as well as my own?

To reach a solution that is agreeable to everyone, those involved in the conflict must:

a. *Start with the right mind set.* A true dialogue in which everyone's perspective is shared, heard, and understood is absolutely necessary.

b. *Relate to each other as equals.* Collaboration involves equal respect for everyone, regardless of position, power, or cultural background.

c. *Shift perspectives and show empathy.* Try to do more listening than defending. Listen for similar concerns and goals.

d. *Question stereotypes.* If your image of the other person is overly simplistic or stereotypical, communication will suffer.

e. *Adapt your communication style.* Respect cultural differences in communication.

f. *Recognize as many solutions as possible.* Brainstorming with others who may or may not be involved in the conflict is likely to generate a greater variety of creative and fair solutions.

g. *Identify and integrate the best plan to resolve the conflict.* Consider what changes are necessary for a mutually beneficial solution.

When conflict occurs, we can choose how we respond. We should avoid quick reactions by suspending judgment and seeking to understand rather than to assign blame. Our minds should shift from whom we can blame to what we can learn. This means trying to understand the other's perspective and then being understood ourselves. When cross-cultural conflict occurs, we should try to:

- Define the conflict. What is it about? What cultural differences help explain it? Be aware of diverse communication styles. Am I demonstrating understanding of others' points of view? Are stereotypical assumptions interfering with communication?

- Come to an understanding. How might cultural differences influence what the parties are willing to do? Are cultural expectations influencing what the parties want to happen?

- Analyze and apply. Was I attuned to cultural differences throughout the process? What did I learn from this

experience that will help me in the future? (see Appendix 5, Learning From Conflict)

Chapter IV

Reminders From Our CICM Documents

Living in a religious community is a lifelong project. We all have our own experiences, both positive ones and less positive ones. Beside the necessary skills presented in this booklet, we also have many beautiful counsels and exhortations in our own CICM documents. We have put them together here, and we ask each of you to consider them with faith and good will. Living in a multicultural community is possible. Do not look at what your neighbor has to change or to do. Look into yourself and think about what **you** can do to improve **your** community.

To Every Confrere

Our multicultural living together is based first of all on a personal spirituality. "*Our mission is the mission of the Lord and apart from him we can do nothing*" (*Const.,* 37). Jesus' way of living, his values such as respect, authenticity, service and forgiveness are the reference for our way of living. But it is only through personal and communitarian prayer that we can attempt to do as He did. Living together is always a risk. It is no longer *me*, but *we*. Each of us has to learn this.

"*Each of us helps to create a climate of mutual respect and trust...*" (*Gen. Dir.,* 50.1). Without any doubt, a good community starts with a special effort on the part of each of us. How do I express my belongingness to the Province and interest in my community? How do I participate in the life of the Province? By being present when there is a celebration, jubilee, death, assembly or recollection, or at least by communicating why I am unable to participate, we show mutual support, especially in moments of pain and difficulties.

When we are together among confreres, we speak a language that is understood by all. In these moments, we feel the need to know the two official languages of the Congregation well. Please, take time to learn them. We should all foster an attitude of listening and dialogue as reflected in Rev. Eric's Laws "*Guidelines for Respectful Communication*" (see Appendix 1).

To consider your confrere as your brother, regardless of his age, color, ministry, education and position, is a CICM tradition. My confrere should always come first, no matter how many other urgent things I need to do.

To live in community presupposes that I am transparent and accountable in what I am doing. Hidden agendas are destructive of community life. If there are difficulties or misunderstandings in the community, it is always better to speak *with* the confrere and to avoid speaking *about* the confrere with others. Do not allow difficulties and misunderstandings to remain unresolved; make time to talk about them.

"*As missionaries, we live our fraternal communion in the midst of the people to whom we are sent. Their concrete reality is the reference point which determines how we live out our communion.*" (*Const.,* 49)

To Every Local Community

The local community, be it a community of two confreres or of several, is the most visible realization of multiculturality in CICM. It is on this level that multicultural living is most intense and has its greatest witness value. Building a happy multicultural community is a project that takes the determination and the effort of all of the members. Our *Constitutions* remind us that having *"a common program of life increases the witnessing power of our word and work"* (*Const.,* 51). It also helps to clarify for each member what is expected of him and what he can expect of the others.

The welcoming of a new member into the local community should be a special concern for all. This is a good occasion for the members to take the time to listen to one another's life stories and to get to know one another in a deeper and more personal way. It is important that we learn to show a real interest in the person of each confrere and not just an interest in his work. This is one of the best ways to create the climate of respect and trust that are the marks of a happy and healthy community life.

As a community, it is important to observe regular days of recollection and relaxation together. These are occasions to share our struggles and difficulties as well as our joys and accomplishments. Community meetings are also important as they provide an opportunity for the members to organize their life and work together and to take personal responsibility for the good functioning of the community. Regular community meetings also provide an opportunity to release tensions that might otherwise build up to an explosion. Confreres should take advantage of these meetings to express their views and concerns in a respectful way and in a spirit of openness and dialogue. Facing and resolving our disagreements together is a way to strengthen our community life.

Times for forgiveness and reconciliation should also be a part of our community life. Being able to live as brothers who come from different nationalities and cultures is a powerful witness to the universal dimension of the Gospel. But, we are simple human beings conditioned by our *cultural shadows.* Sometimes misunderstanding and conflict can breach our fraternal bond. Unless we are ready to forgive and to be reconciled with one another, our multiculturalism will remain a utopian dream and a counter witness. Thus, special moments and ceremonies for the healing of broken relationships should find a place in our living together.

The challenges of community life are many and great. The fact that our communities are multicultural ones can only add to those challenges, but it also adds to the joys and fulfillment of being confreres with a common vocation.

To the Confreres In Leadership

The Provincial Superior and his Council should make it a point that the Statutes of the Province provide clear and consistent guidelines for all the members. The lack of such guidelines can be a source of tensions and lead to all kinds of misinterpretations, thus being detrimental to multicultural living (RI 2005 p. 17).

A clear and a precise vision of mission is important for each Province. It gives direction to the whole provincial missionary project. It is the task of the Provincial Superior and his Council to make this project known to all the members and to see that it is followed by all so as to facilitate participation in our corporate commitment. During his canonical visitation, the Provincial Superior will focus on, among other things, motivating each confrere to know and to own the missionary project, and also to assure it is being evaluated from time to time.

Since we CICM are known as hard workers, we have to be careful not to forget to place the person of each confrere before all else. The Provincial Superior will do his best to visit the confreres regularly, listening to them, dialoguing with each one of them and encouraging them to live according to all the aspects of our CICM life: religious missionary in an international and multicultural Congregation. This will permit the Superior to know each confrere better and in a personal way. This will also certainly facilitate all major decisions regarding the confreres (*Const.,* 85).

Canonical visits are also good occasions to remind and invite the confreres to be faithful to our *Cor Unum et Anima Una* by showing a concern for the person of all our confreres, including the sick and the aged ones (*Const.,* 50 and 53).

During his canonical visitations, the Provincial Superior should also encourage the confreres to keep developing their multicultural skills and encourage them in their Ongoing Formation.

The Provincial Superior should assure that each confrere is given an opportunity to learn the second language of the Congregation. He will also remind all the confreres of their

responsibility to welcome, pray for, accept and accompany any new comers in the Province, especially the interns (*Const.,* 58).

Needless to say, all this is only possible when confreres have a good and deep spiritual life. It is the duty of the Provincial Superior, especially during his canonical visit, to encourage and remind confreres to take care of their spiritual life because everything else depends on that.

To the Confreres In Initial Formation

This is a time for you to learn more about yourselves and to acquire the necessary skills for living with confreres of different nationalities and cultures. Our Initial Formation programs provide you with the opportunities to develop your abilities and your skills for multicultural living from an early stage. It is enriching to allow yourselves to discover the beauty and the joys of learning from one another, the richness of each other's culture and who you are. Do not be afraid to know your shadows, your biases and prejudices. Identify them and learn how to control them rather than letting them control you. Go and meet confreres and other people who are different from you. This will help you to develop the skills you need to live in a multicultural way. Learn to work as a team in your pastoral activities and wherever else there is an opportunity. This will help you to know yourself and to develop your skills.

Evaluate yourselves regularly. This will help both you and the Congregation to see your progress in the different dimensions of the religious missionary life that you have chosen: your human development, spiritual life, community life, missionary-pastoral training and studies. Evaluation is a tool that will help you to grow in your vocation and to recognize certain areas that may need assistance for growth in a multicultural setting. Knowing yourself, your talents and abilities, as well as having learned some skills for living in an international and multicultural environment, it will be easier for you to adapt yourselves into your Province of mission and

to focus yourselves on learning the language and on integrating into the culture of the people to whom you are sent.

During the summer months, it is important that you make use of the opportunities provided to learn more about each other's culture, to study our CICM documents, to learn one of the official languages of our Congregation, and to learn some technical, mechanical and other practical skills which can best prepare you for your mission in a multicultural setting.

For those of you who are on Internship, make an effort to learn the local language well. Know the country and its people, be interested in the culture, and discover the new context where you are and insert yourself into the local reality. Be flexible.

Internship is also the time for you to integrate into your CICM Province of mission, to know its Statutes, its Missionary Project and its history. Participate in CICM activities, visit confreres and their works. Be open and engage for in depth sharing with the members of your community. Integrate well into the local Church. Make contacts with the local clergy and participate in diocesan activities. Observe and gradually participate in a diversity of ministries. Relate and work with lay people. Practice all the skills that you have learned about multicultural interactions and multicultural teaming. As you gradually immerse yourself into the new context in your mission, you will have to continue applying what you have learned about adjusting your cultural lenses and shifting your perspectives. Be aware of the dynamics of intercultural communication. There may be occasions where you will find yourself in conflictual situations. Apply what you have learned about dealing with cross-cultural conflicts. If you have started to make use of these skills for multicultural living at the early stage of your Initial Formation, they will come more naturally and spontaneously to you while doing mission as an intern. Remember, since multicultural living is a lifelong process and involves skills that can be learned, the more you apply these skills, the easier and more rewarding your intercultural interactions will become.

Never forget to keep nurturing your spiritual life. Have spiritual accompaniment regularly. Participate in recollections and retreats. Find the time to nurture your spirit through spiritual reading, meditation and contemplation. Do not neglect community and personal prayer; it can be a challenge to maintain them in the mission. Take an active part in supporting your multicultural community.

May you grow in your religious missionary vocation as a CICM and acquire, as much as possible, the knowledge and skills needed to make your missionary presence in your mission country both relevant and meaningful.

Guidelines for Respectful Communication

From *The Wolf Shall Dwell With The Lamb*
By Rev. Eric Law

Based on the word R E S P E C T

R = Take RESPONSIBILITY for what you say and feel without blaming others. Do this by using the word "I" in your interpersonal communication: I think, I feel, I know… This translates as a mark of respect for yourself and is non-judgmental toward others.

E = Use EMPATHETIC listening. Try to enter into the other person's skin so as to feel and think as they are. We should not interpret the behavior of others according to our own criteria.

S = Be SENSITIVE to differences in communication styles which are an expression of the differences that exist between people and cultures.

P = PONDER what you hear and feel before you speak.

E = EXAMINE your own assumptions and perceptions so as to discover their origin.

C = Keeping CONFIDENTIALITY with personal information as this is the only way we can feel free to share what is in our minds and hearts.

T = TRUST ambiguity because we are NOT here to debate who is right or wrong. Open your hearts to experience new ideas and feelings even when these may make you uncomfortable.

Mutual Invitation

Because of the differences in communication styles between cultures, not everyone may get the opportunity to speak during meetings and sharings. One way to ensure that everyone has a chance to participate is to use the technique of Mutual Invitation.

The leader or a designated confrere will share first. After he has spoken, he then invites another confrere to share. The confrere invited does not need to be the person seated next to the one who just shared; it can be anyone in the group. After the second confrere has spoken, he now has the privilege of inviting someone else, and so on.

If a confrere has something to share but is not yet ready, he says "*pass for now*" and then invites someone else. This confrere should be invited again later on. If the confrere does not want to be invited again, he should simply say, "*pass*". By saying, "*pass*", rather than "*pass for now*", he signals that he does not wish to be invited again.

High and Low Cultures Communication Styles

Based on *Beyond Cultures* by Edward T. Hall

The choice of high-context and low-context as labels has led to unfortunate misunderstandings, since there is an implied ranking in the adjectives. In fact, neither is better or worse than the other. They are simply different. Each has possible pitfalls for cross-cultural communicators.

High context refers to societies in which people have close connections. High-context people are generally defined as:
- Less verbally explicit. Instead, they rely more on indirect verbal interaction and are proficient at reading non-verbal cues.
- Having less written/formal communication. High-context cultures are more interested in fostering trust than in signing contracts.
- Having strong boundaries. They have more clearly defined roles of authority, and differences in status are valued. They rarely call people by their first names.
- Relationship-focused. Decisions and activities are focused around personal, face-to-face relationships.

Low-context refers to societies in which people tend to have many connections but of shorter duration. Low-context people can be generally defined as:
- More accessible. Status/authority is not as valued as experience and knowledge.
- Task-centered. Decisions and activities focus around what needs to be done, and there is more division of responsibilities.
- Informal. Calling people by their first names is not considered disrespectful.
- Direct. They often say what they feel and do not avoid saying "no."

High to Low - An individual from a higher context culture may need to adapt when shifting to a low context culture. A lower context culture demands more independence, and expects many relationships, but fewer intimate ones. A high context individual is more likely to ask questions rather than attempt to work out a solution independently, and the questions are likely to be asked from the same few people. The high context person may be frustrated by people appearing to not want to develop a relationship or continue to help them on an ongoing basis.

Low to High - An individual from a low context culture may need to adapt when shifting to a higher context culture. Higher context cultures expect small close-knit groups, and reliance on that group. Groups can actually be relied upon to support each other, and it may be difficult to get support outside of your group. Professional and personal lives often intertwine. A lower context individual may be more likely to try to work things out on their own and feel there is a lack of self-service support or information, rather than ask questions and take time to develop the relationships needed to accomplish the things that need to be done.

Characteristics of Low- and High-Context Communication Styles:

High Context Communication Styles
- group-oriented
- rely heavily on the physical context or the shared context of the transmitter and receiver; very little is in the coded, explicit, transmitted part of the message.
- spiral logic
- take time for contexting in new situation
- conflict may occur because of violations of collective expectations
- deal with conflict by concealing
- indirect, non-confrontational attitude
- face saving
- focus on relationship
- ambiguous, indirect strategies

Low-Context Communication Styles
- individual-oriented
- rely on explicit coding of information being communicated; less aware of contexts
- linear logic
- adjust to new situation quickly
- conflict may occur because of violations of individual expectations
- deal with conflict by revealing
- direct, confrontational attitude
- fact finding
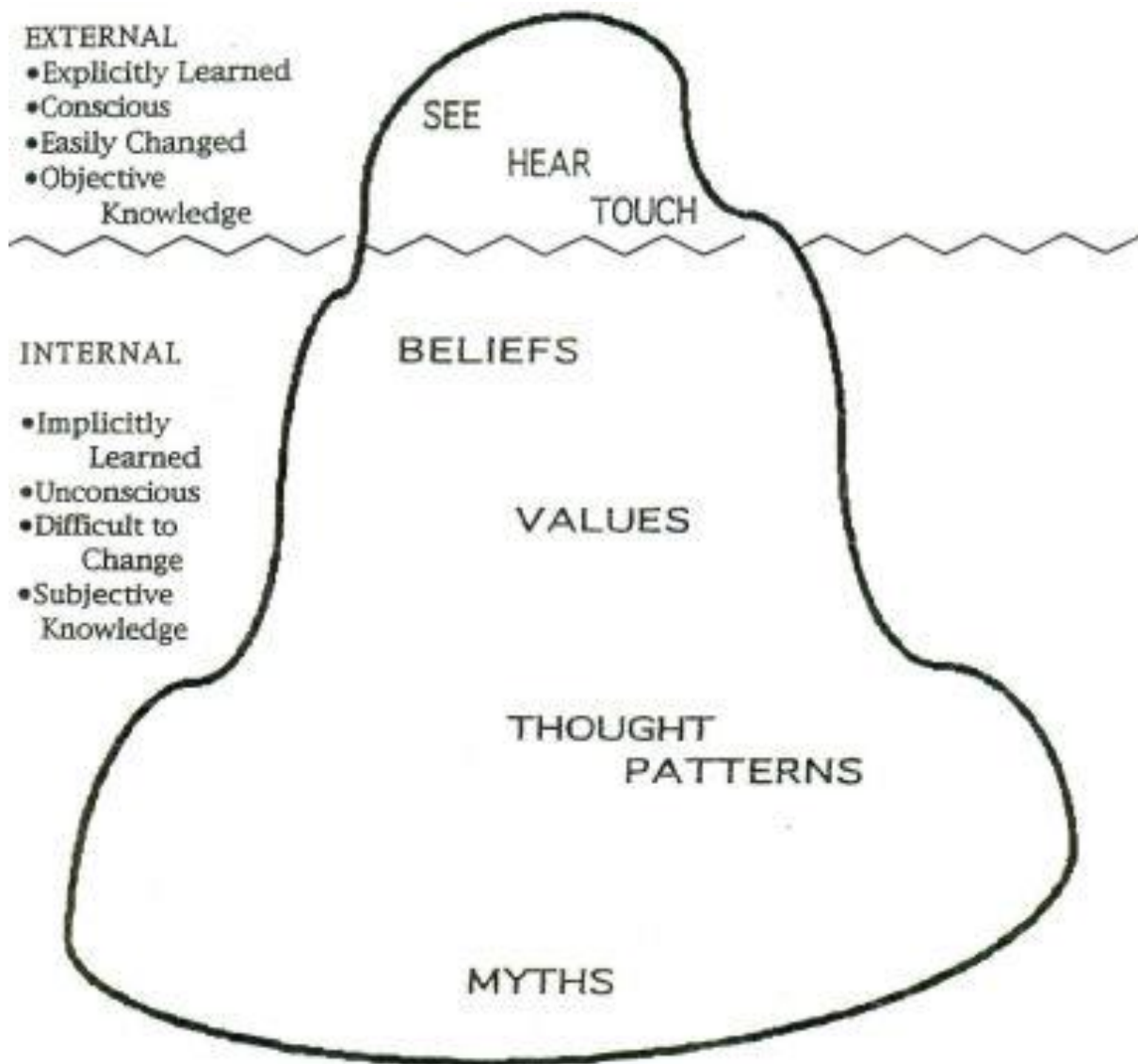- focus on action and solution
- open, direct strategies

Low-context communicators interacting with high-context communicators should be mindful that nonverbal messages and gestures may be as important as what is said; status and identity may be communicated nonverbally and require appropriate acknowledgement; face-saving and tact may be important, and need to be balanced with the desire to communicate fully and frankly; building a good relationship can contribute to effectiveness over time; and indirect routes and creative thinking are important alternatives to problem-solving when blocks are encountered.

High-context communicators interacting with low-context communicators should be mindful that things can be taken at face value rather than as representative of layers of meaning; roles and functions may be decoupled from status and identity; efficiency and effectiveness may be served by a sustained focus on tasks; direct questions and observations are not necessarily meant to offend, but to clarify and advance shared goals; and indirect cues may not be enough to get the other's attention.

Appendix 3

The Iceberg Analogy of Culture

Culture has been compared to an iceberg floating in the ocean. Ten percent of its mass is seen floating above the surface while the other ninety percent lies hidden below the waves. The parts of a culture that are easily accessible are the things we can see, hear and touch. The parts of a culture that are less accessible are the beliefs, values, thought patterns and myths.

EXTERNAL
•Explicitly Learned
•Conscious
•Easily Changed
•Objective
        Knowledge

SEE
        HEAR
                TOUCH

INTERNAL

•Implicitly
        Learned
•Unconscious
•Difficult to
        Change
•Subjective
        Knowledge

BELIEFS

VALUES

THOUGHT
        PATTERNS

MYTHS

The external elements of a culture are:

- Explicitly Learned

- Conscious

- Easily Changed

- Objective Knowledge

The internal elements of a culture are:

- Implicitly Learned

- Unconscious

- Difficult to Change

- Subjective Knowledge

<div align="center">***</div>

Below is an exercise that demonstrates how we can use the external elements of culture to discover the internal elements. This exercise uses a meal, but the same exercise can be repeated using any element of culture that we can see, hear, or touch.

<div align="center">

The Table Exercise

</div>

Picture yourself when you were young (maybe 10 or 12). Recall a scene during meal time on an ordinary day.

OBSERVATION:

What was the shape of the table at which you ate? Draw it.

Who was involved in this scene? What were they doing or saying?

How did you feel? What did you do?

EXPLORATION:

In what ways had the experience of eating at a table of this particular shape affected your perception of:

1. power and authority?

2. male/female roles?

3. hospitality?

CLARIFICATION:

What did you learn from investigating this experience?

Explicitly?

Implicitly?

What values, beliefs, attitudes and assumptions about others did this experience instill in you?

Appendix 4

Power Distance
Based on the work of Geert Hofstede

Power distance refers to how much equality or inequality people within a particular society accept or expect.

High Power Distance cultures (HPD)
…accept that inequalities in power and status are natural or existential. People accept that some among them will have more power and influence than others in the same way they accept that some people are taller than others. Those with power tend to emphasize it, to hold it close and not delegate or share it, and to distinguish themselves as much as possible from those who do not have power. They are, however, expected to accept the responsibilities that go with power, especially that of looking after those beneath them. Subordinates are not expected to take initiative and are closely supervised.

Low Power Distance cultures (LPD)
…see inequalities in power and status as man made and largely artificial; it is not natural, though it may be convenient, that some people have power over others. Those with power, therefore, tend to deemphasize it, to minimize the differences between themselves and subordinates, and to delegate and share power to the extent possible. Subordinates are rewarded for taking initiative and do not like close supervision.

In HPD cultures, stability is established through clear and constantly reinforced hierarchical structures and unspoken rules of personal interaction. Outsiders who fail to follow the rules or undermine the structures are considered rude, ignorant and even dangerous.

Because such cultures are usually concerned with issues of honor and shame, such inappropriate action is not addressed directly, but through subtle and indirect gestures – such as protesting through silence – that the member of the LPD culture is usually incapable of perceiving. Maintaining harmony in relationships is a priority and competition is avoided through communal agreement of a person's place in the hierarchy. A redistribution of power is not valued and is seen as a disruption of the stability and order of society, although people do move into positions of power through accepted channels (e.g., becoming an elder or through inheritance).

In LPD cultures, stability is established through insistence on equality, individual rights and the rule of law. Clarity, reason and directness are tools used to evaluate each situation and mutually agreed upon solutions are sought through open, frank and detailed discussion with all parties. When disagreements cannot be resolved, a vote is taken and the majority rules. Competitiveness is encouraged with the belief that the process is productive. Disputes should not be taken personally and resolution is ultimately possible, even though it produces winners and losers. Redistribution of power is valued and negotiations and struggles are seen as a healthy part of societal interactions. A level playing field, where the entrepreneur or innovator can excel, is considered essential.

Appendix 5

Learning From Conflicts
Based on the work of Rev. Eric Law

One way to learn from conflicts is for all of the parties involved to reflect on the following three questions and to share their answers with one another in an honest and respectful way.

1. What happened?

2. Why did it happen?

3. What can we do so that it does not happen again?

Appendix 6

Definitions

Assimilation – the process by which people lose their cultural differences and blend into the larger society.

Bias - an unreasoned tendency or temperament of outlook, often of a prejudicial nature.

Communication – the process by which we exchange ideas, feelings, and symbols of all kinds in a way that can be understood by others.

Culture refers to a people's way of life that is socially earned, shared, and transmitted from generation to generation. It includes tangible creations – books, clothing, language, etc. and intangible creations – personal values, religious beliefs, ideas about how people should act, etc.

There are an infinite variety of ways in which we and others might be culturally alike and dissimilar. It is important not to overemphasize our differences or our similarities for this can narrow our perspective, restrict our understanding and impair our ability to relate.

Cultural Encapsulation – refers to a lack of contact with various cultures outside of our own.

Cultural Intelligence – those key competencies that allow us to effectively interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds in all kinds of settings. We build Cultural Intelligence through awareness, knowledge and skills.

Cultural Lenses - refer to those social influences that shape our vision and evaluation of the world around us.

Culture of Power - an environment created by those in power that places its members at the cultural center and others at the margins.

Cultural Shock – the disorientation we feel when we encounter a significantly different way of life.

Conflict – the clash between multiple realities or points of view.

Discrimination - the unequal treatment of a group or individual.

Empathy – the ability to understand another person's perspectives, feelings, and beliefs.

Enculturation – immersion in a culture to such an extent that its way of life seems only natural.

Ethical – those standards for determining what conduct is right and wrong.

Ethnicity – one's cultural heritage. It is a cultural construct. Members of an ethnic group constitute a cultural community.

Ethnocentrism – the assumption that our way of doing things is superior to any other.

Generalization - tendencies or patterns.

High Context Cultures – refers to societies in which people have close connections.

High Power Distance Cultures – cultures in which people accept and do not question that power is distributed unequally.

Inclusion – the feeling of belonging and acceptance. Inclusion means moving beyond tolerating or just putting up with diversity and making people feel validation and genuine appreciation.

Low Context Cultures – refers to societies in which people tend to have many connections but of shorter duration.

Low Power Distance Cultures – seek to minimize differences in power as much as possible.

Organizational Culture – the structures, processes, rules, behaviors, and underlying assumptions that characterize an organization.

Power – the ability to bring about change.

Power Distance - how much equality or inequality people within a particular society accept or expect.

Prejudice – an irrational, inflexible prejudgment.

Privileges – rights or benefits enjoyed by a particular person or a select group.

Racism – the belief that some racial groups are naturally superior or inferior to others.

Respect – means rather than keeping diversity at a distance I reflect on it, confront it, and change myself in the process.

Stereotypes - unreliable overgeneralizations about people that do not take individual differences into account.

Symbol – something that carries a particular meaning for members of a group. To interpret symbols correctly, we need to view them as culturally specific.

Team – a relatively small number of people who are committed to achieving certain results for which they hold themselves accountable.

Tolerance – putting up with other people's differences, but without allowing others to enter my world. Tolerance endures difference, but does not necessarily embrace it. In this sense, tolerance can be demeaning to others.

Trust - the feeling within a group that team members can depend on one another and assume their intentions are good.

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