

# Teachers Training course

## Intercultural learning in education

# My intercultural self

# WHAT'S CULTURE ?

In 1871, E.B. Tylor defined culture as

*'that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and many other capabilities and habits acquired by ...{members} of society'*



**Hofstede, 1991.**



## The iceberg concept of culture

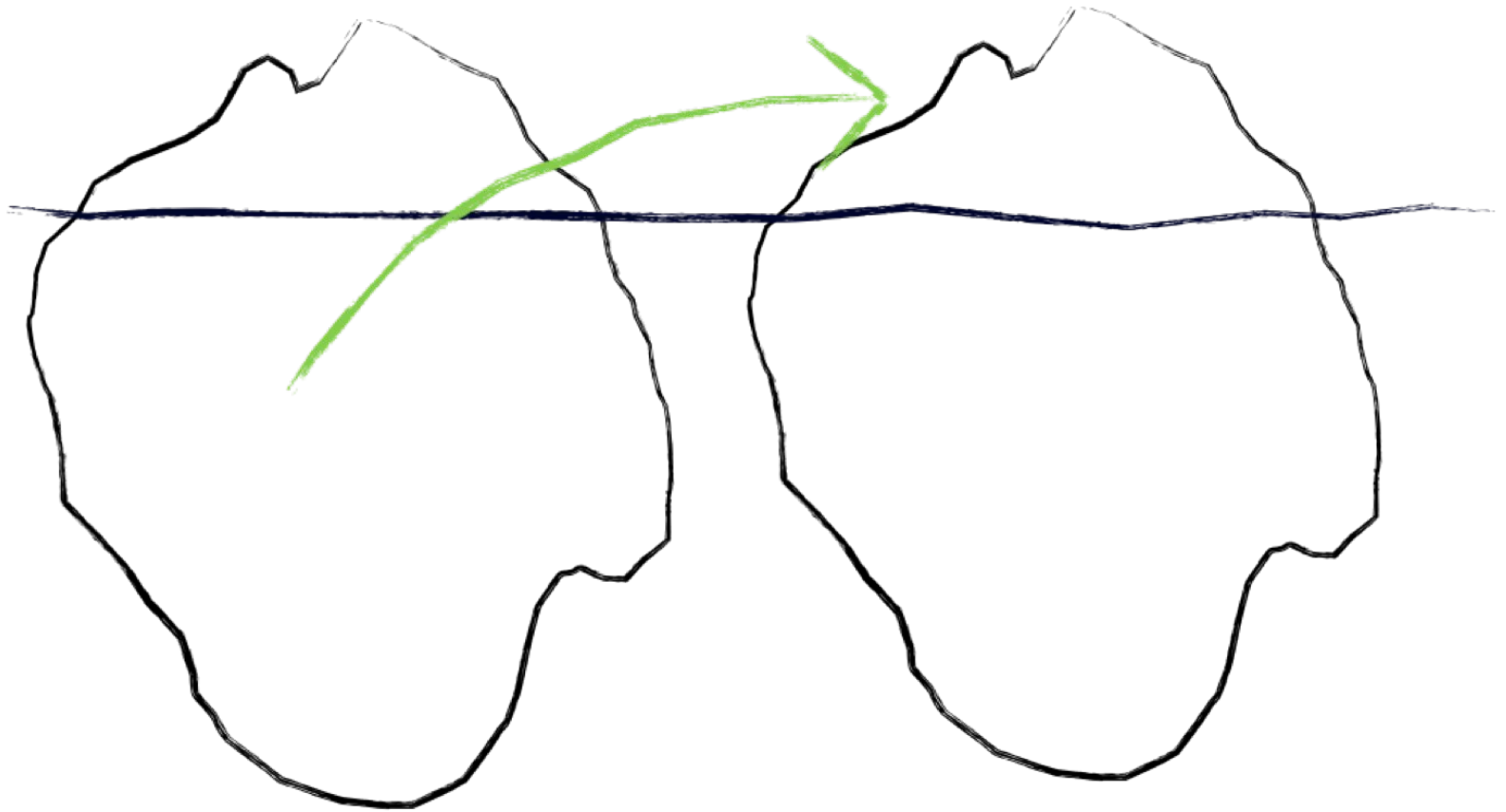
*Primarily in awareness*

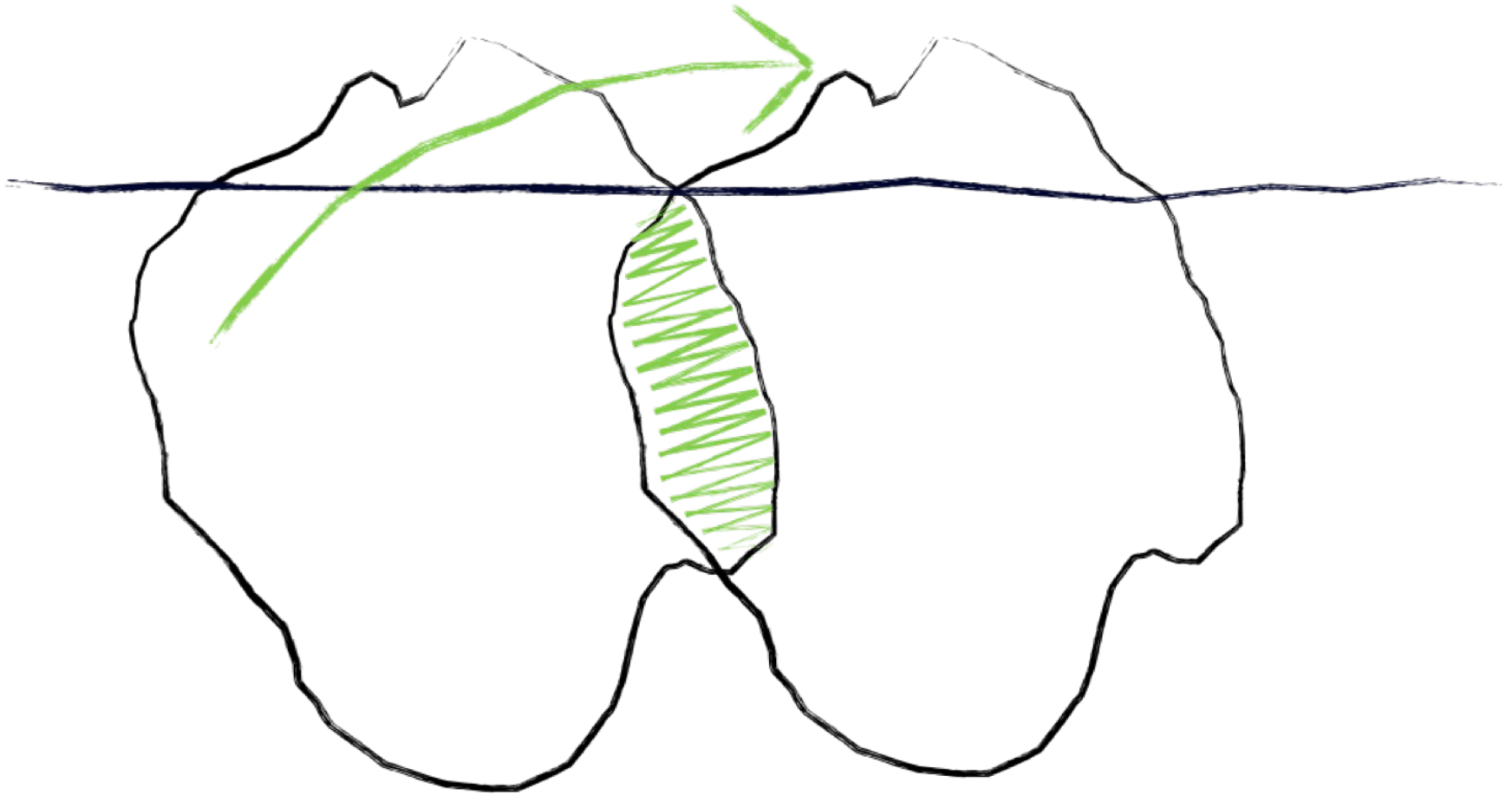
Fine arts Literature  
Drama Classical music Popular music  
Folk-dancing Games Cooking Dress

*Primarily out of awareness*

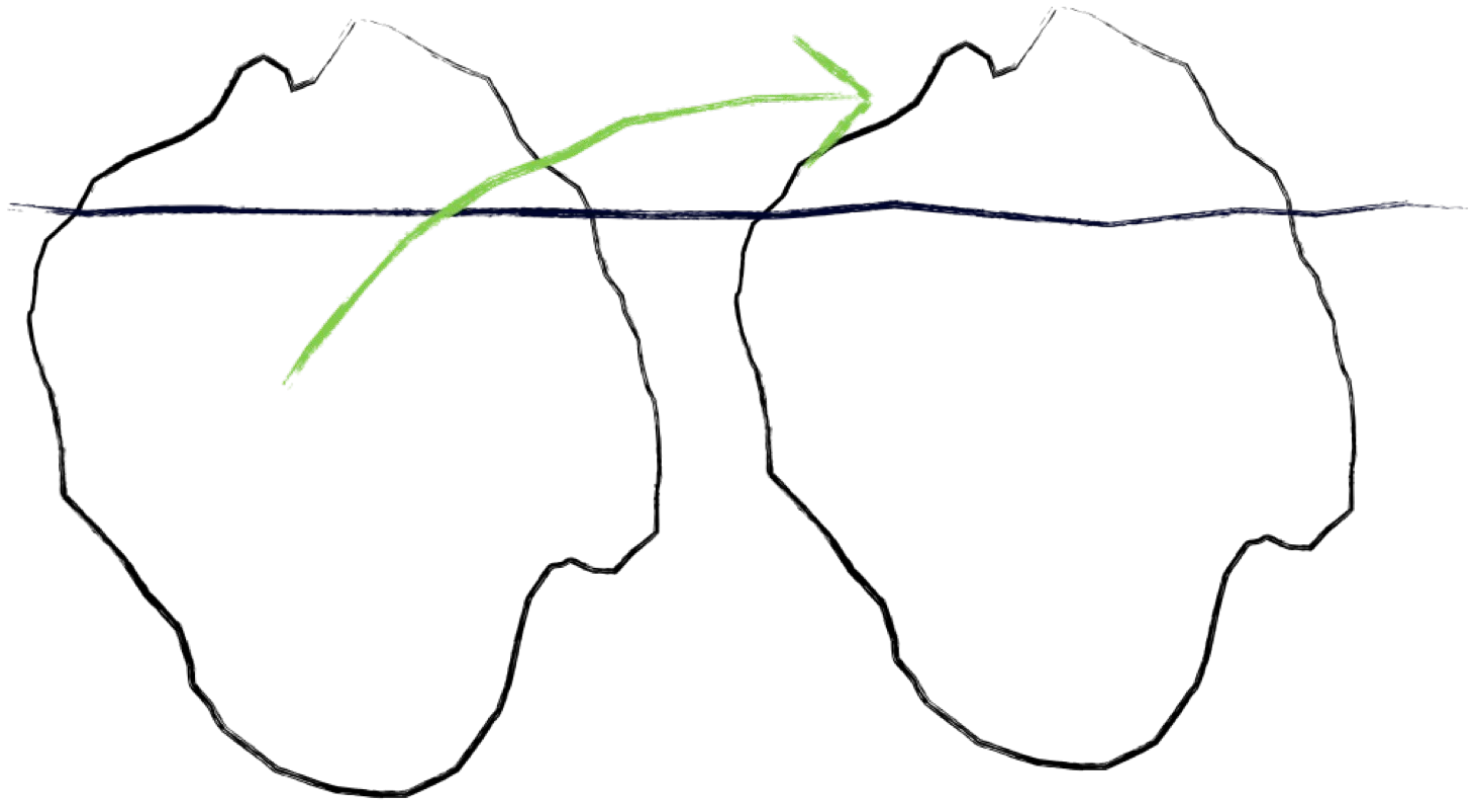
Notions of modesty Conception of beauty  
Ideals governing child raising Rules of descent Cosmology  
Relationship to animals Patterns of superior/subordinate relations  
Definition of sin Courtship practices Conception of justice Incentives to work  
Notions of leadership Tempo of work Patterns of group decision-making  
Conception of cleanliness Attitudes to the dependent Theory of disease  
Approaches to problem solving Conception of status mobility Eye behaviour  
Roles in relation to status by age, sex, class, occupation, kinship, etc. Definition of insanity  
Nature of friendship Conception of "self" Patterns of visual perception Body language  
Facial expressions Notions about logic and validity Patterns of handling emotions  
Conversational patterns in various social contexts Conception of past and future Ordering of time  
Preference for competition or co-operation Social interaction rate Notions of adolescence  
Arrangement of physical space Etc.

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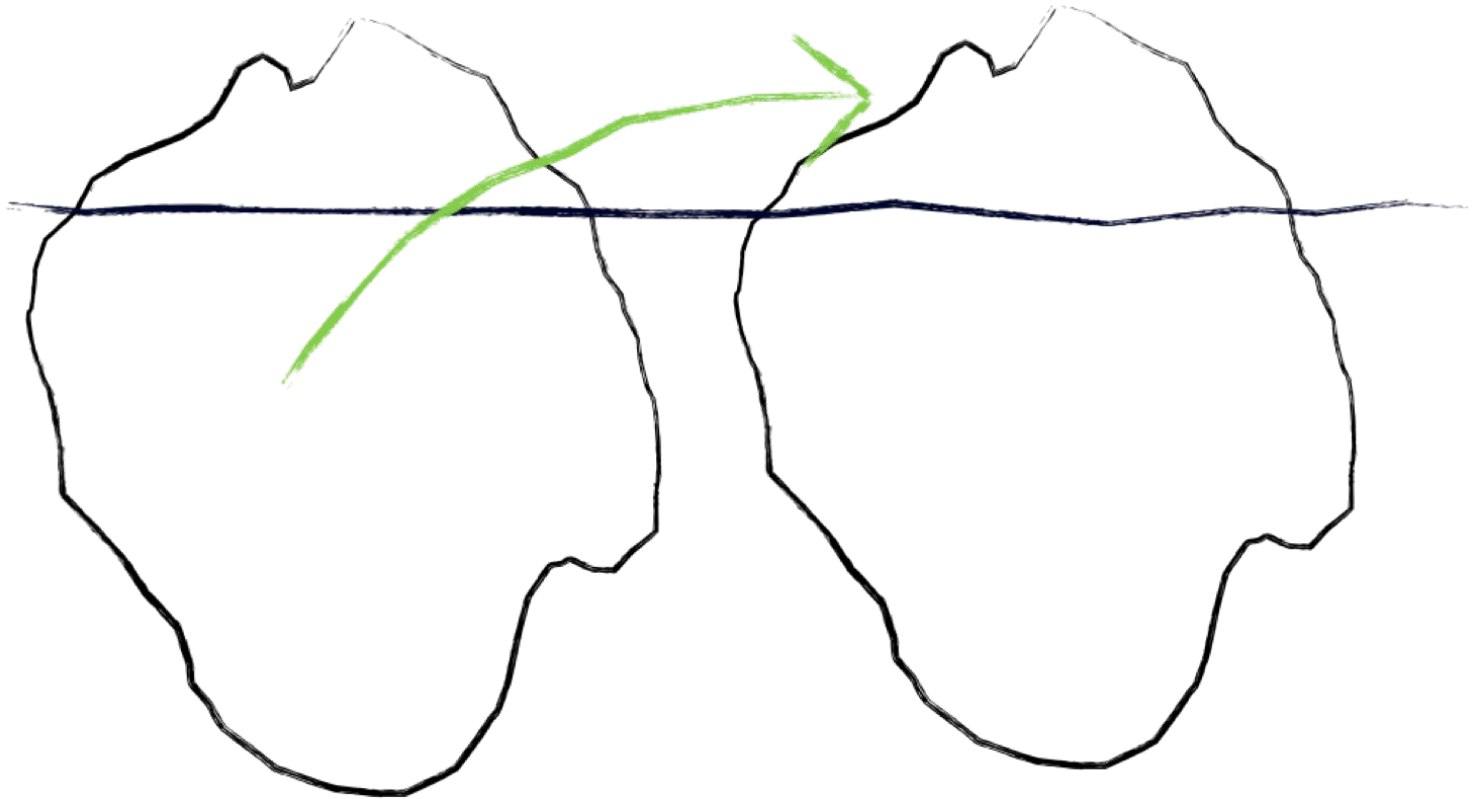
# DIFFERENT BEHAVIOURS



# SAME VALUE



# SAME BEHAVIOUR



# DIFFERENT VALUES

for example

[HOME](#)

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[EVENTS](#)

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### **PARLEZ NOUS GLOBAL A PROJECT FINANCED BY EUROPEAID**

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### **SPIRAL – A PROJECT ON INTERCULTURAL LEARNING AND LANGUAGES FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

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## AFS Perspectives: Helping the world learn to live together

Written by AFS experts from around the world, this blog champions diverse perspectives about culture and education, inspiring readers to become intercultural leaders of their communities.

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## Connect: Intercultural Insights for Global Citizens

This digital magazine explores intercultural and global citizenship education, voluntarism and social impact, through articles, interviews, and learning tools created by respected thought leaders and experts.

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## Intercultural Learning (ICL) for AFS & Friends

Series of insightful and concise essays on key intercultural concepts based on research and practical experiences. The series is produced by AFS education experts for anyone studying about or working with intercultural topics.

[Access the series](#)

AFS INTERCULTURAL LEARNING Program ICL for AFS & Friends

### Tools to Suspend Judgment

How do you best proceed in a cross-cultural setting? "This situation feels strange" or "I'm not sure how to react; what's going on right now?" The **Describe, Interpret, Verify, Evaluate** (D.I.V.E.) or **Describe, Interpret, Verify, Evaluate** (D.I.V.E.) model are practical tools you can use when confronted with unfamiliar situations or situations or in any other unclear or ambiguous circumstances. These models can help you shift our frame of reference, foster curiosity, suspend judgment, and possibly respond more effectively and appropriately during an intercultural interaction. Within AFS, the D.I.V.E. tool is especially useful to support our exchange students and host families to cope with intercultural interactions that may involve a time difference, miscommunication, and/or confusion.

**DESCRIPTION, INTERPRETATION, VERIFICATION, EVALUATION (D.I.V.E.) MODEL**

**ORIGINS**  
Jesse Bennett, executive director of the Intercultural Communication Institute, and Nicole Bennett, founding chair for and CEO of the Intercultural Development Research Institute created the **Describe, Interpret, Verify, Evaluate** (D.I.V.E.) model in the 1970s while working in a group of intercultural workplace facilitators at the University of Minnesota. Their goal was to assist participants how to suspend judgment when interacting across cultures. Since then, the D.I.V.E. model has become one of the most widely used intercultural interaction models.

AFS has adapted the D.I.V.E. model for setting a foundation "I" for "Verbalization" in intercultural situations that our students, host families or participants are presented. It is helpful to work with someone who knows the culture better than you do. If possible, **cultural references** or situation stories can assist the accuracy of your interpretation to the new culture.

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### OVERVIEW OF AFS RESEARCH

Since AFS exchanges began returning from the Soviet Union the transformed AFS has a long history of supporting intercultural programs. AFS has supported intercultural programs for over 60 years and continues to expand efforts that are focused on enhancing a deeper understanding of the needs of our exchange programs. The ongoing commitment to research enables AFS to provide students, host families and educators with highly effective learning experiences through our programs.

AFS has a long-standing history of significant contributions to the field of intercultural education, often starting in partnership with leading universities and research agencies. By spanning a wide range of research topics—from the most technical aspects of cultural adaptation to the most cutting-edge research—AFS research has addressed a variety of factors related to intercultural learning.

**IMPACT STUDY (2005)**

One of the earliest studies on the impact of culture exchange programs conducted by AFS began in 1988 and continued in 1990. Thousands of AFS students were interviewed at different points during their exchange program, to measure their learning and personal growth across 11 different variables:

1. Acquisition of Language
2. Self-Confidence
3. Self-Esteem
4. Communication Skills
5. Cultural Interest
6. Intercultural Understanding
7. Self-Confidence
8. Self-Esteem
9. High Academic Achievement
10. Academic Achievement
11. Academic Achievement
12. Academic Achievement
13. Academic Achievement
14. Academic Achievement
15. Academic Achievement
16. Academic Achievement
17. Academic Achievement
18. Academic Achievement
19. Academic Achievement
20. Academic Achievement

The findings were groundbreaking, as exchange students experienced **greater increases in understanding other cultures, awareness and appreciation of local customs and values, foreign language appreciation and ability, international awareness, and adaptability**. The AFS research also serves to help students become more independent, more responsible in their learning, more aware of their home country and culture, better able to communicate in new settings and to work effectively. It has remained one of the most significant areas of research.

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### Concepts and Theories of Culture

By the early 1950s, the term "culture" (the plural "cultures") originally developed in such a way as to refer to an entire society or group of people. Each of these societies or groups had its own set of beliefs and its own set of practices, which were different from those of other societies. The word "culture" has since been used to refer to the beliefs, values, and customs of a particular society, but it has also been used to refer to the entire society. Culture is a complex and multifaceted concept that is difficult to define, but it is one of the most important factors in determining how we interact with one another.

According to Jesse Bennett, an intercultural communication theorist and AFS Executive Director, there are three ways to define culture: **observable, shared, and learned**. **Observable** refers to the things that we can see and touch, such as buildings, clothing, and food. **Shared** refers to the things that we all have in common, such as language, values, and customs. **Learned** refers to the things that we learn from our parents, teachers, and friends.

The definition of culture involves a variety of different aspects and is constantly in flux. It is important to note that the concept of culture does not change through the use of models, but it does evolve.

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### Debriefing Experiential Learning

**Experiential learning can occur during a structured activity or in describing the** process. An experiential learning cycle involves a series of steps that allow students to learn by doing. The cycle begins with a concrete experience, followed by a reflective observation, then an abstract conceptualization, and finally an active experimentation. This cycle is repeated over and over again, allowing students to learn from their own experiences.

**EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE AS THE FOUNDATION**

In order to understand the structure and design of the debriefing process, it is essential to review the experiential learning cycle. The experiential learning cycle is a four-step process that allows students to learn by doing. The cycle begins with a concrete experience, followed by a reflective observation, then an abstract conceptualization, and finally an active experimentation. This cycle is repeated over and over again, allowing students to learn from their own experiences.

**DEBRIEFING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN FIVE STEPS**

**Experiencing:** The experiential cycle is the first step in the experiential learning cycle. It involves a concrete experience that allows students to learn by doing. This step is often the most challenging for students, as they are often asked to step outside of their comfort zone and engage in a new activity. However, this step is essential for the learning process, as it provides students with a first-hand experience of the situation they are learning about.

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### Tools to Suspend Judgment

English

### Overview of AFS Research

English

### Concepts and Theories of Culture

English

Spanish

Portuguese (BR)

Danish

Turkish

### Debriefing Experiential Learning

English

Spanish

German

Portuguese (BR)

<https://woca.afs.org/education/p/icl-for-afs-and-friends>

# Think of a critical incident\* ...



*\* To be critical, the incident must have resulted in a conflict, in some sort of learning, and be rooted in an intercultural misunderstanding*

- When and where did the incident happen ?
- Who was involved? How did it begin?
- Who does what? Who says what? What's the problem?
- How does the story end ? What follow up is there?

Need to be more competent ?

What is Intercultural Competence (IC) ?

How can you learn to be more competent ?

# Intercultural Competence (IC)

Darla K. Deardorff (2006): “the ability to communicate **effectively and appropriately** in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural **knowledge, skills and attitudes**.”

Martyn Barrett (2011): *Intercultural competence is the set of **attitudes, skills, knowledge and behaviours** which are required for **appropriate and effective interaction** and communication with people who are perceived to be from a different cultural background from oneself.*

Spitzberg and Changnon (2009): “**appropriate and effective** management of **interaction** between people who, to some degree or another, represent different or divergent **affective, cognitive, behavioural** orientations to the world”

Fantini & Termizzi (2006) “a complex of abilities needed to perform **effectively and appropriately** when **interacting** with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself”

CoE “Democratic and intercultural competence is defined as the ability to mobilise and deploy relevant **values, attitudes, skills, knowledge** and/ or **understanding** in order to respond **appropriately and effectively** to the demands, challenges and opportunities that are presented by democratic and intercultural situations. Competence is treated as a dynamic process in which a competent individual mobilises and deploys clusters of psychological resources in an active and adaptive manner in order to respond to new circumstances as these arise”

# Intercultural learning is...

....a **lifelong learning** process which brings best results  
through **conscious, planned, and facilitated experiential  
learning**

D. Kolb, *Experiential Learning*, 1984