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**THE ART OF INCLUSIVE
COMMUNICATION**

COMPANION LEARNING GUIDE



**NATIONAL
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BURST VIDEO:

Utilizing Humble Inquiry as a Leader

Written by Dr. Toni Herndon and Lisa Maxwell

REFLECT:

What stood out for you in the video?

JOURNAL: *Consider all the sources of social power that you have. How do you use your power to empower?*

DIALOGUE WITH A TRUSTED COLLEAGUE:
How do we tap into our referent power more successfully? What questions demonstrate an open attitude and curiosity?

The ART of Inclusive Communication



We will do all we can to create a psychologically safe space for you so that you can comfortably share your experiences and perspective.

We also ask that you consider the work of Dr. Carol Dweck of Stanford University in taking the approach of a growth mindset as you participate in the sessions. While each of you is an expert, there is always more to learn!

There will be a series of four sessions.

1. **The ARTful Conversation:** You'll learn how to effectively handle challenging one-on-one conversations. This foundational course lays the groundwork for all subsequent sessions.
2. **The Art of Inclusive Communication:** You'll explore strategies and techniques to embrace and promote inclusivity.
3. **The Bystander Challenge:** You'll learn what to do when you observe microaggressions and how to empower others at your workplace to become thoughtful upstanders.
4. **The Exchange:** You'll learn a conflict resolution process that helps you lead a problem-solving conversation, focused on collaboration and future success.



The quote by Roger Wilkins is more than a feel-good notion; it is a profound statement that addresses the importance of an inclusive atmosphere. Though studies show that it takes longer to solve problems in diverse teams, the problem solving is more creative and effective than in monocultural environments.

REFLECT

How do you *harness the diversity, the energy, and the creativity* of employees to creatively solve problems?

Learning Outcomes



The ART of Inclusive Communication

introduces the essential element of culture into how we communicate. We will not only look at a few ways cultural background impacts communication, we also will reflect on our own journeys of becoming more culturally fluent.

We will consider how to interact with effectively with others at different levels of cultural awareness.

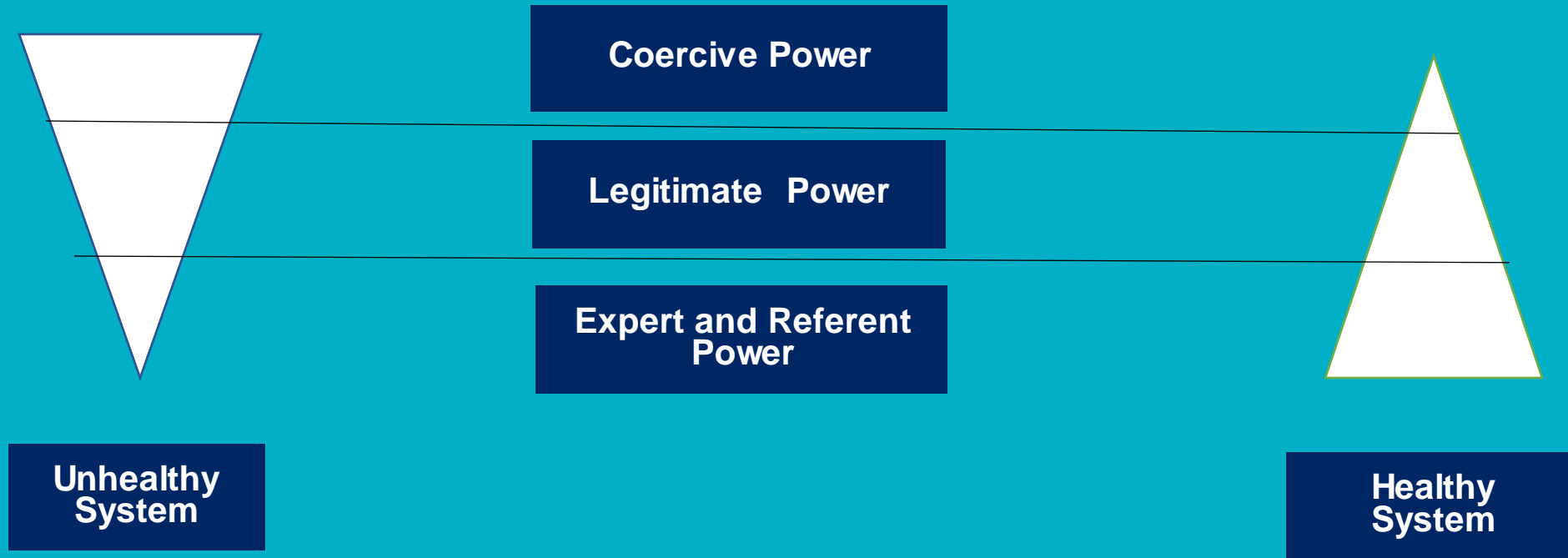
The ART skills are relevant in creating a human-centered approach in managing all conversations, but especially sensitive conversations around identity, culture, and race.

FURTHER LEARNING

Inclusive language is key in successful communication in a diverse work environment. To educate oneself further in this regard, the [Inclusive Language Guide](#) is especially helpful.

Power Dynamics in the Workplace

FURTHER LEARNING



In the burst video, we refer to a leader's sources of power.
[Learn more about types of social power here](#)

Breakout Discussion

HUMBLE INQUIRY

Humble inquiry is the fine art of drawing someone out, of asking questions to which you do not already know the answer, of building a relationship based on curiosity and interest in the other person.

Edgar Schein



BREAKOUT

- What stood out for you about a leader's sources of power?
- How does humble inquiry relate to being an inclusive leader?



Humble Inquiry: Types of Questions

May I ask you for an example to help me understand?

Just for my understanding, could you tell me more about _____?

Can you share with me any worries you may have about risks or concerns related to _____?

Could you please talk me through the pros and cons of your next steps?

You will have an opportunity to discuss the burst learning video in a small group.

Consider your sources of power and the use of humble inquiry.

FURTHER LEARNING

[Highlights of Edgar Schein's Book on Humble Inquiry](#)

Cultural Humility

A lifelong process of **continuing to learn** about, **be open** to, and **be respectful** of the **cultures** and **values** of others.

Cultural humility gives us a **greater understanding** of cultures that are different from our own and helps us **recognize** each person's **unique cultural experiences** and **expression**.

BREAKOUT

- Identify one aspect of your life experience/identity/history that will help you maintain cultural humility.
- Identify one aspect of your life experience/identity/history that will challenge you to be culturally humble.

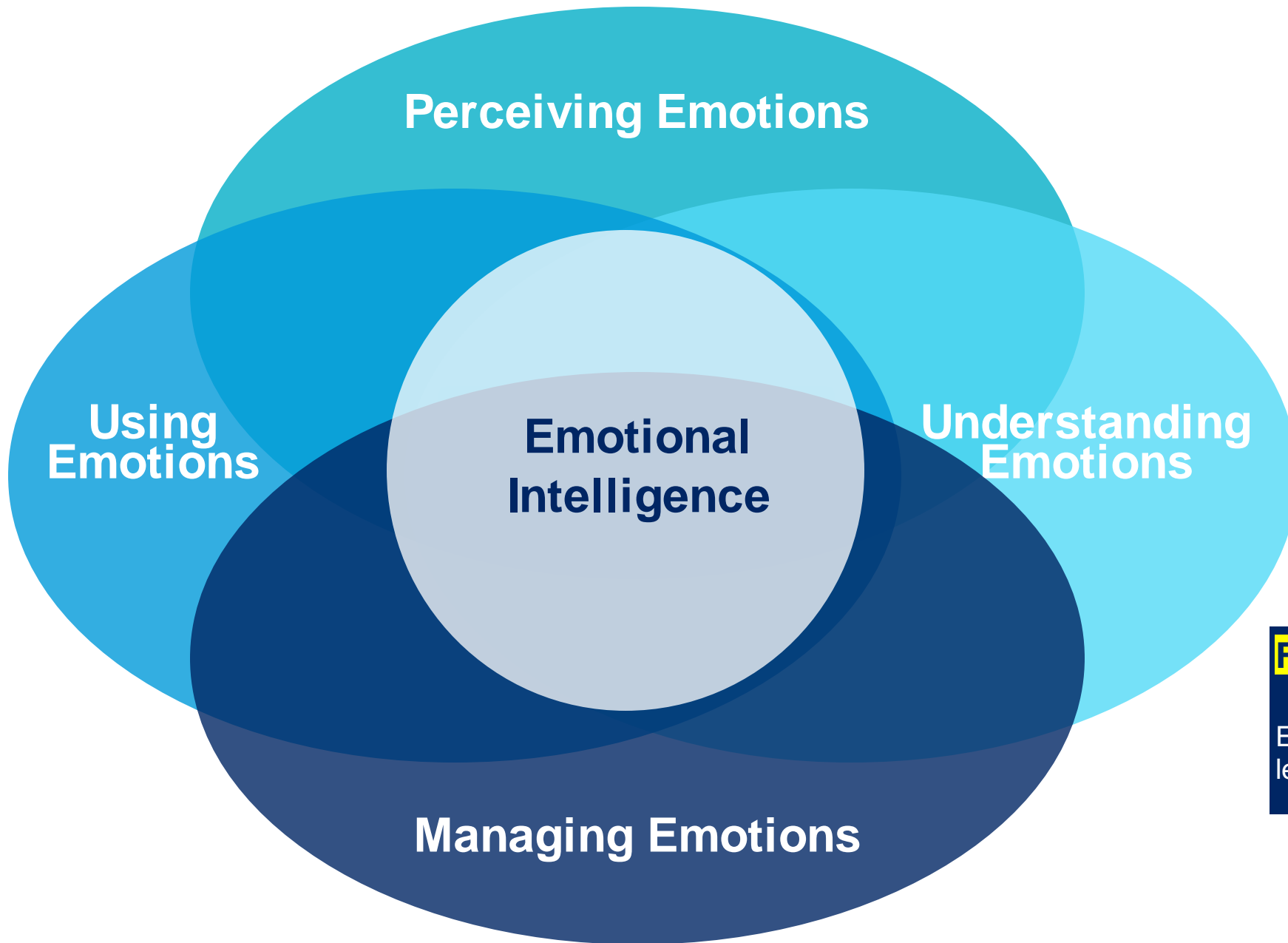


Cultural Humility There is an increased awareness of the need for cultural humility as we interact with others. It began with social workers and clinicians realizing that they have a responsibility to their clients/patients to treat them and their cultural values with respect. It has now spread to the way to think about being inclusive. If one does not have cultural humility, how can one truly treat others with dignity? Leaders who display cultural humility **create more inclusive teams**.

Cultural humility entails a combination of awareness, attitude, skills, practice, and last, embodiment. Taken from a culturally humble perspective, the ART of Inclusive Communication helps us to be more aware of our interactions with others. We build skills to communicate and listen better, and, with practice, we can embody cultural humility.

FURTHER LEARNING

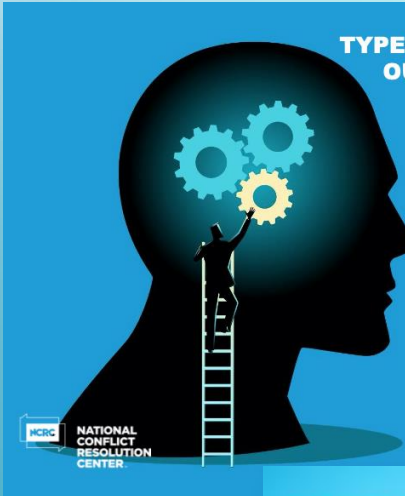
Cultural fluency means familiarity with cultures: their natures, how they work, and ways they intertwine with our relationships in times of conflict and harmony. Cultural fluency means awareness of several dimensions of culture, including communication. Inclusive leaders have competency in these three areas: Emotional Intelligence (see next page), Cognitive Agility, Cultural Fluency



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

FURTHER LEARNING

Emotional Intelligence is key to inclusive leadership. [Learn more here.](#)



TYPES OF COGNITIVE BIASES THAT BLOCK OUR ABILITY TO LEAD INCLUSIVELY

In-Group Bias
is the tendency to favor one's own group, particularly in reference to other groups. (Dictionary of Psychology)

Confirmation Bias
is the tendency to look for information that supports, rather than rejects, one's preconceptions, typically by interpreting evidence to confirm existing beliefs while rejecting or ignoring any conflicting data. (American Psychological Association)

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OVERCOMING THE IMPACT OF BIAS

What is the benefit of being aware of your biases as a workplace leader?

What can you do to overcome the impact of in-group bias and confirmation bias?

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A workshop on inclusive communication would be incomplete without covering some aspect of bias in our presentation.

Considering confirmation bias will help us minimize preconceptions and assumptions in our work. In-group bias can prevent us from being truly inclusive with those whose cultural experiences are different than our own.

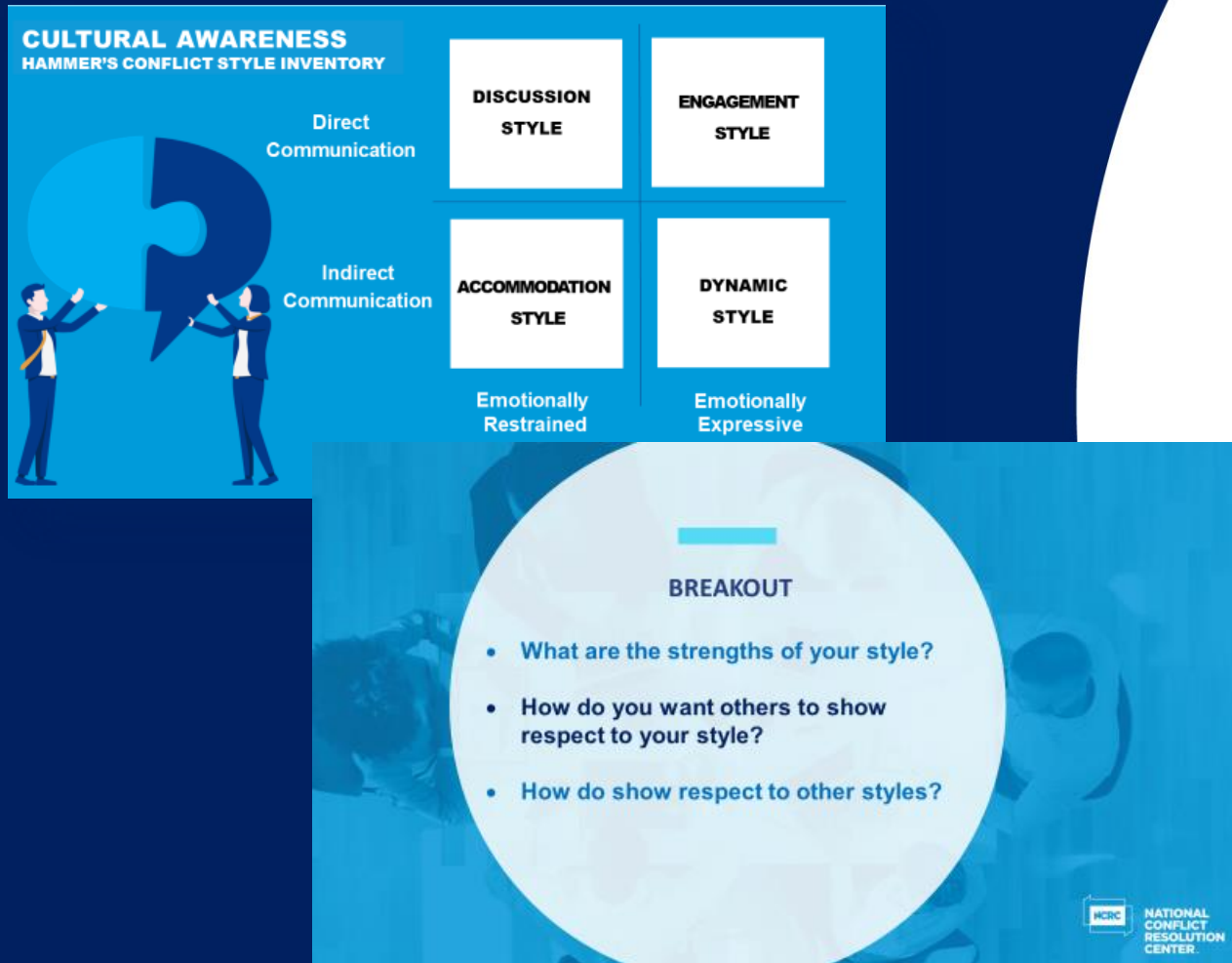
Confirmation bias forms and reconfirms stereotypes we have about people while information that refutes our expectations is ignored. We tend to remember stereotype-consistent information and to forget stereotype-inconsistent information, which is one way stereotypes are maintained even in the face of disconfirming evidence.

FURTHER LEARNING

If you haven't taken [Harvard's Implicit Association Test](#), you may want to do so.

Novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TED Talk [The Danger of a Single Story](#) is a compelling example of the problems with confirmation bias.

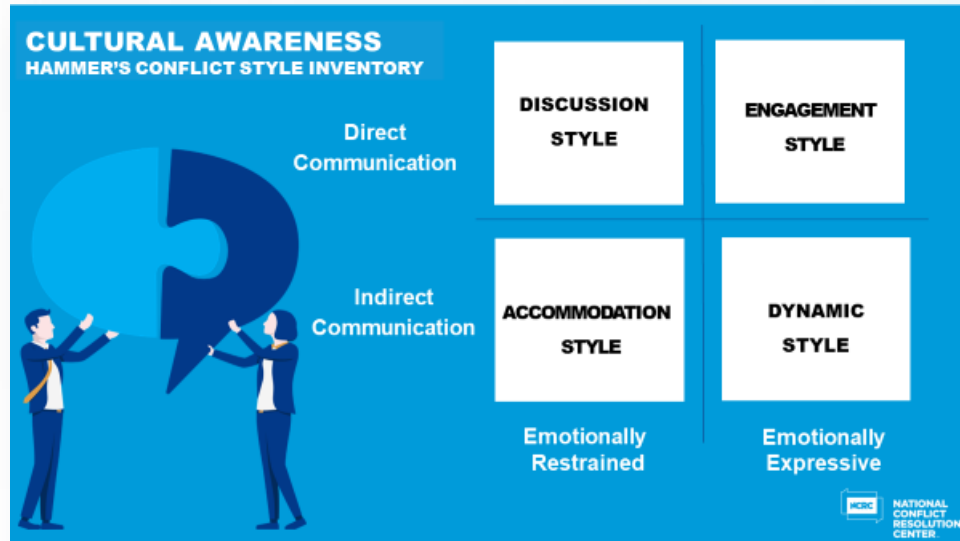
Cultural Awareness: Communication Styles



NCRC developed this exercise based on research by Dr. Mitchell Hammer to help leaders explore differences in communication styles. Understanding your default style and being able to identify the style of others can help to create a collaborative and inclusive environment. Being responsive to the style and needs of others is an important component of managing sensitive conversations.

Each style has its strengths; no one style is better than the others. As humans, we are adaptive and can sometimes fluctuate between styles based on power dynamics or situations; however, we all have a default style we feel most comfortable using. Recognize that power dynamics in the workplace may play a role in whether someone expresses their style fully. Inclusive work environments honor authentic expression of individuals.

Cultural Awareness: Communication Styles



Discussion-style communicators tend to be verbally direct and emotionally restrained. They are clear and concise with their words and can set aside their emotions in the interest of problem solving.

Strengths: Direct, clear, good at problem solving and remaining objective

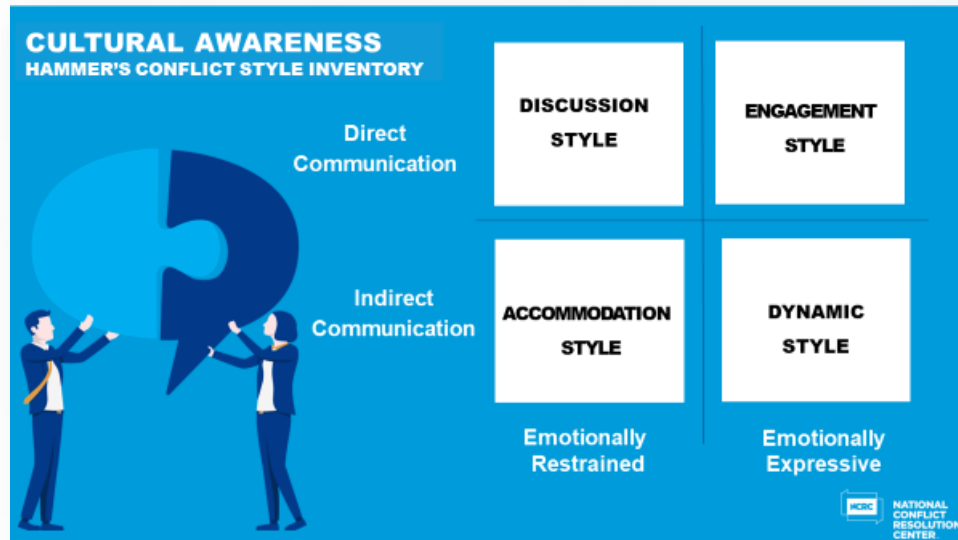
Needs from others: Directness, logic, calmness, transparency

Engagement-style communicators tend to be direct with their words and emotionally expressive. This style values timely verbal and nonverbal expression and appreciates when others actively listen and validate their emotions.

Strengths: Vulnerability, transparency, compassion, openness

Needs from others: Emotional vulnerability, clear communication, openness, validation

Cultural Awareness: Communication Styles



REFLECT

How would knowledge of these styles affect how you demonstrate that you are listening to employees?

Accommodation-style communicators tend to be indirect and emotionally restrained, which makes them the peacekeepers in relationships. During conflict, they may opt to just let the issue go, but when they choose to bring up something, they have put much thought into it.

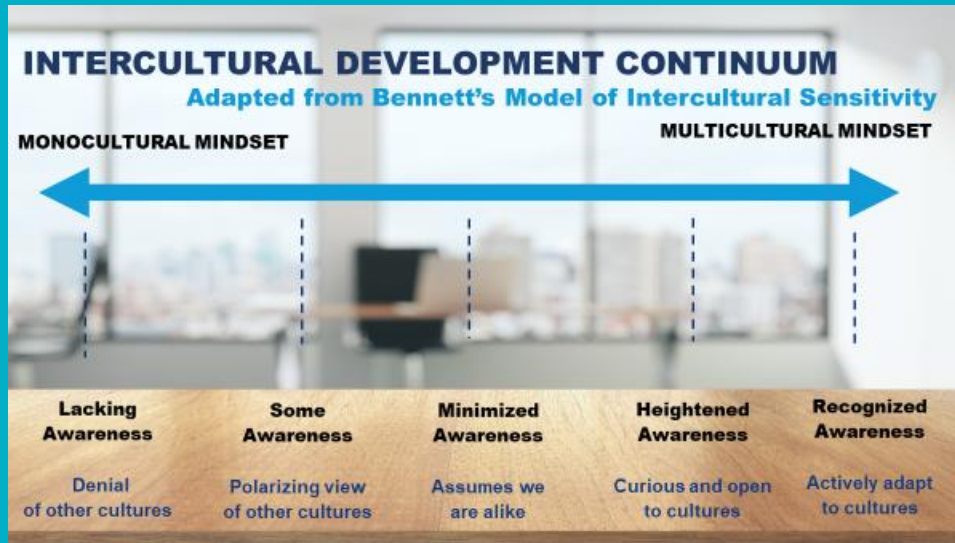
Strengths: Fair, observant, collaborative, unproblematic

Needs from others: Time, boundaries, acknowledgement

Dynamic-style communicators tend to show their emotions but are verbally indirect. During conflict resolution, they feel deeply and intuit the emotions of all involved. They need time to process their emotions before putting them into words.

Strengths: Intuitive, allows space for all to process, thinks before they speak, observant of others' emotional well-being

Needs from others: Space, time, patience, understanding, compassion



It can be useful when working with people in intercultural environments to consider your own cultural mindset and how it relates to your view on sensitive issues around identity.

As a workplace leader, it's important to consider the fact that people are at different points on this continuum.

BREAKOUT

- Where would you place yourself on this continuum?
- Share about a time when you were at a different place and what led to your growth.
- As a leader, how do you respectfully talk to employees, especially with those at the far-left end of the continuum?

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FURTHER LEARNING

Learn more about the Intercultural Development Inventory [here](#).

The IDI is a robust assessment that measures you on a reliable intercultural development continuum. You receive two scores: one is where you perceive yourself, and the other is where the instrument measures you. A debrief session after the assessment helps you process this information for your continued growth.

Tips for Interaction

Intercultural Development Continuum

A CTIVE AWARENESS

- ▶ Remain nonjudgmental of the other person
- ▶ Refrain from projecting your mindset onto the employee
- ▶ Manage your neutrality/Check your reaction

R ESPOND RESPECTFULLY

- ▶ Utilize questions to engage the individual
- ▶ Acknowledge emotions and experiences
- ▶ Connect what they are saying to their needs

T ROUBLESHOOT TOGETHER

- ▶ Help them gain better understanding of (not agreement with) of the others' perspectives
- ▶ Focus on needs in order to work comfortably despite the different perspectives

**TIPS FROM THE INTERCULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY ON
INTERACTING WITH OTHERS**

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REFLECT

Others will demonstrate different mindsets about cultural awareness. Which of these mindsets would be the most challenging for you to support?

NCRC credits the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) for their work in utilizing this continuum as a tool in understanding and promoting racial justice. We have incorporated some lessons from their approach in the framework of the ARTful Conversation. They are worth reinforcing.

The IDI focuses on ways that individuals can be supported in their growth. These are adapted for consideration by workplace leaders in their interaction with others.

Tips for Interaction

Intercultural Development Continuum

With **ACTIVE AWARENESS**, it is important for you, as a leader, to be aware of your own biases and reactions to the individual. Maintaining a stance of nonjudgement is important.

RESPOND RESPECTFULLY to the individual, asking thoughtful questions, using humble inquiry, and maintaining a curious stance. This is where you can acknowledge their emotions and experiences without agreeing with their conclusions. As much as possible, connect their comments to their needs (instead of reinforcing their stereotypes), which allows you to maintain that neutral stance.

Lastly, with **TROUBLESHOOT TOGETHER**, helping the employee see that others have different perspectives is critical for moving forward. Then you can help them see the value of working with others, despite their different perspectives.

ACTIVE AWARENESS

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RESPOND RESPECTFULLY

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**TIPS FROM THE INTERCULTURAL
DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY ON
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Closure

The ART of Inclusive Communication

- Humble Inquiry
- Cultural Humility
- In-Group Bias/Confirmation Bias
- Conflict Styles
- Intercultural Development Continuum

What is one takeaway for you from today's session?

WHAT'S NEXT

- Watch "How to Build Inclusive Teams"
- Next Week: The Bystander Challenge



Thank you for your participation in the ART of Inclusive Communication. We look forward to seeing you in The Bystander Challenge.



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