

Overview:

This lesson plan challenges participants to connect with someone from a different culture through music. In this activity, participants will find a partner and share their favorite songs that are in some way emblematic of their home culture. They will share what the song means to them and discuss the emotions that the song evokes.

Background and Information:

This activity was created by Katherine Yngve, CILMAR, and uses Dr. Robert Plutchik's Wheel of Emotion (see citation below).

Objectives:

As a result of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Communicate and share emotional memories with a person of another culture.
2. Recognize and listen to emotional responses.
3. Describe the cultural meaning of a song.
4. Learn about an artifact from another culture.
5. Develop empathy for a person of another culture.

Time:

20 minutes

Group Size:

Pairs

Materials:

Access to the Internet, CDs, or music files. Paper and pens/pencils. Copies of the Emotion Wheel Handout (in [Downloads](#)) or a projector to display the image.

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Denial
- Polarization
- Minimization
- Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Empathy

- To interpret intercultural experience from the perspectives of own and more than one worldview.
- To demonstrate ability to act in a supportive manner that recognizes the feelings of another cultural group.

Other Skills:

Friendship; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Activity Instructions:

1. Find a partner from another culture who is willing to help you learn more about their culture through sharing musical memories.
2. Then each of you needs to select one of your favorite songs from childhood; ideally this should be a song that is in some way emblematic of your home culture, but the most important thing is that it has been meaningful to you in the past. Find (or write out) the lyrics and download the song.
3. Separately, write down a memory or two that this song evokes from you. Look at the attached wheel of emotions (on the following page) and list at least one emotion that it evokes.
4. Meet with your cultural partner and share the songs. Each of you should explain what the song means to you, why it evokes emotions for you and why it is important to (some) folks in your home culture.

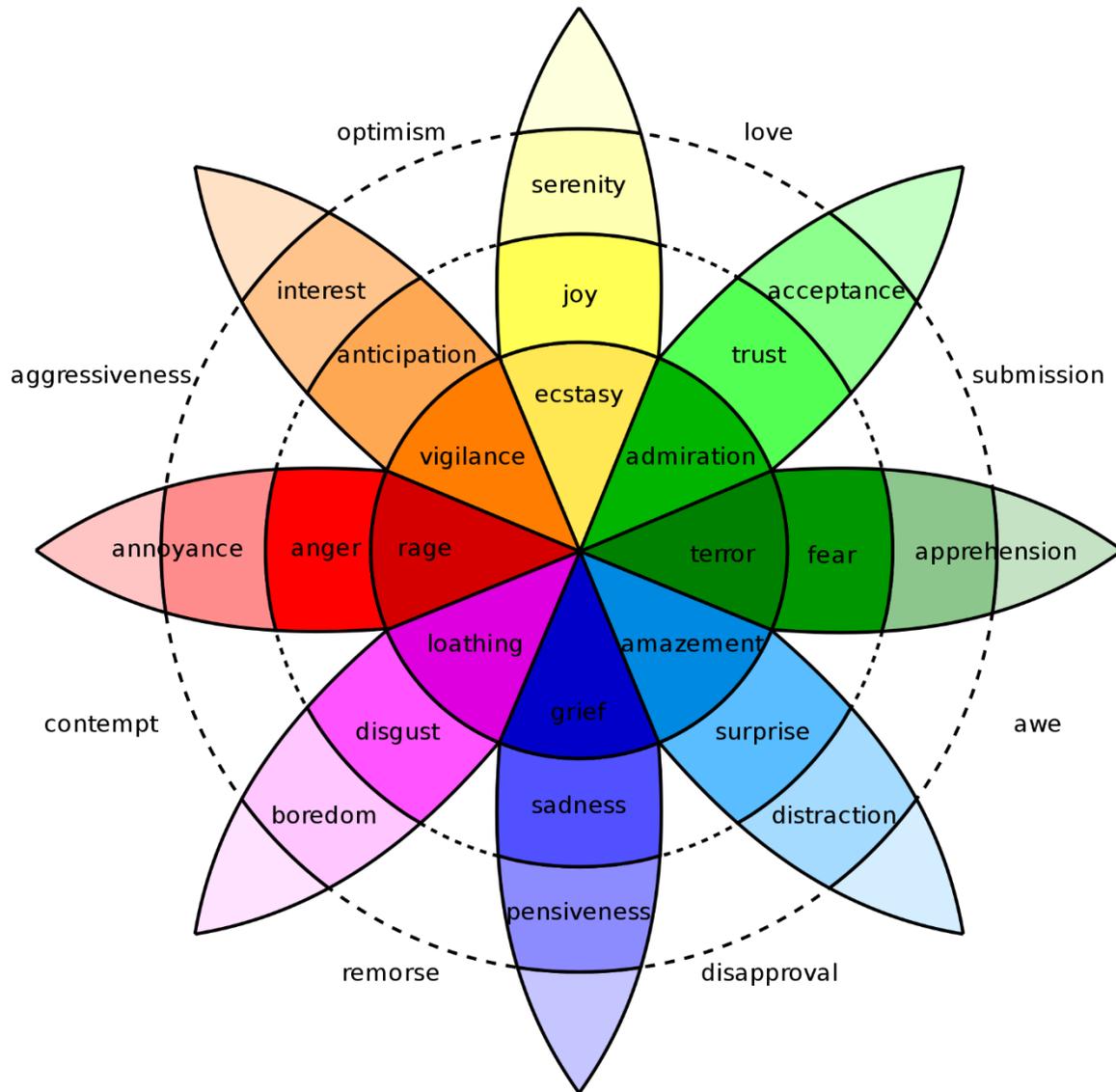
Reflection Questions:

- What emotional memory did you share with your cultural partner(s)?
- What emotions did your partner's story evoke in you?
- What emotions did you observe in your partner? Were they the same emotions he or she talked about with you?
- What cognitive meaning did your partner make of his or her emotional response to the song (meaning what reasons did he or she cite for it)?

Putting your Insights into Action:

When I need empathy and connection in the future, one thing I will do is:

When I see that others need empathy, one thing I will do is:



Activity created by Katherine Yngve, CILMAR, Purdue University. Activity uses Dr. Robert Plutchik's Wheel of Emotion:

Plutchik, R. (2001). The nature of emotions: Human emotions have deep evolutionary roots, a fact that may explain their complexity and provide tools for clinical practice. *American Scientist*, 89(4), 344-350. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27857503>

Related Tools:

Similar tools:

- [Changed or Not?](#)
- [Synthesis Through Song](#)
- [We Americans by the Avett Brothers \(song\)](#)