



Introduction:

The ability to adapt in new or unfamiliar situations is a crucial life skill. However, in cross-cultural interactions, it can be difficult to decide when we should adapt to a different culture's expectations, or when it might be more appropriate to refrain from enacting unfamiliar customs and norms. Therefore, the goal of this activity is to guide you through this decision-making process and allow you to understand and reflect on your ability to adapt.

Participant Instructions:

1. Imagine that you are visiting somewhere with cultural norms that may be different from your own. You will be presented with a list of cultural behaviors or situations (on page 2) that you may encounter. For each of these behaviors or situations, choose whether you would adapt or not adapt to the cultural expectations in the context you've chosen.
2. To make your decisions, you should first ask yourself the following questions:
 - Do I have the skills and knowledge I would need to adapt, i.e., can I adapt **effectively**?
 - Do others want or expect me to adapt, i.e., is it **appropriate** to adapt in this situation?
 - Would adapting violate or conflict with my deep-seated morality or ethics, i.e., would adapting be **satisfactory**?
3. After you have made your decisions, debrief with the following questions:
 - In what situations did you choose to adapt (or not) and what criteria did you use to make that decision?
 - Were there any situations where it was particularly easy or difficult to make a choice to adapt or not? If so, why?
 - Were there any instances where you felt the choice to adapt would be dependent on the specific scenario? If so, can you provide the group with an example (i.e., who was involved? where did this scenario take place? when did this scenario happen?, etc.)?
 - What did you learn about adapting to different cultures?

For each situation, ask yourself:

- Do I have the skills and knowledge I would need to adapt, i.e., can I adapt **effectively**?
- Do others want or expect me to adapt, i.e., is it **appropriate** to adapt in this situation?
- Would adapting violate or conflict with my deep-seated morality or ethics, i.e., would adapting be **satisfactory**?

Behaviors or Situations:

1. How you greet someone.
 - Examples: Kissing, hugging, shaking hands, bowing, etc.
2. How you dress.
 - Examples: Dressing more modestly or less modestly, dressing according to gender norms, wearing traditional garments, etc.
3. How you style your hair.
 - Examples: Pulling your hair back, wearing your hair down in its natural state, covering your hair, straightening, or curling your hair, etc.
4. Participating in a religious ceremony (for a religion you do not practice).
 - Examples: Praying, taking communion, going on a pilgrimage, meditating, etc.
5. How you interact with someone of a different gender identity.
 - Examples: Making/not making eye contact, taking on either a subservient or dominant role, using an intermediary or making sure you have a chaperone, etc.
6. How you interact with authority figures.
 - Examples: Challenging or not challenging an authority figure, calling them a formal title, or referring to them in more casual terms, etc.
7. The level of affection you show your friend or romantic partner in public.
 - Examples: Kissing or not kissing, holding hands, or not holding hands, etc.
8. Undergoing or hiding body modification.
 - Examples: Piercings, tattoos, cosmetic surgery, etc.
9. Accepting food or drink offered to you when it goes against your dietary restrictions or preferences.
 - Examples: Accepting meat when you're a vegetarian, accepting food or drink that is normally off limits due to religious beliefs (pork, shellfish, etc.), accepting alcohol when you normally refrain from drinking, etc.
10. How you interact with individuals in the service industry (restaurant servers, taxi drivers, etc.)
 - Examples: Tipping or not tipping, calling them by their name or the title of their position, snapping your fingers or yelling to get their attention, etc.