

Introduction:

This lesson asks participants to reflect on their emotions and practice managing them during interactions that may be tense or uncomfortable. They can choose either to talk with a family member or close friend with whom they disagree on a deeply held value/belief or to attend an event in which their social identity is minoritized. Either way, they will reflect on their emotions before, during, and after the conversation/event and consider how they might more strategically manage their emotions for future difficult encounters.

Objectives:

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

1. Practice managing their emotions in tense or uncomfortable situations.
2. Reflect on how they navigate their emotions in unfamiliar or uncomfortable cultural territory.
3. Brainstorm ideas for better managing their emotions during future difficult encounters.

Time:

2 hours.

Group Size:

Entire Group.

Materials:

Participant Instructions (in [Downloads](#)).

Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:

- Minimization
- Acceptance

AAC&U Intercultural Knowledge and Competence Goals:

Cultural Self-Awareness:

- To articulate insights into own cultural rules and biases (e.g., seeking complexity; aware of how their experiences have shaped these rules, and how to recognize and respond to cultural biases, resulting in a shift in self-description).

Openness:

- To initiate and develop interactions with culturally different others.
- To suspend judgment in valuing interactions with culturally different others.

Other Skills:

Emotional Resilience.



2. Before participants enter into this dialogue or attend this event, instruct them to use the adapted version of Plutchik's (1980) Wheel of Emotions (on the previous page) and the questions below to reflect and prepare themselves:
 - How do you feel going into this conversation or event? What emotions from the emotion wheel do you identify with right now? It's normal to feel a whole bunch of emotions – even conflicting ones – at the same time.
 - Why do you think you are feeling these emotions? What is causing you to react this way?
 - What previous experiences have you had that may be shaping your expectations?
 - What are some techniques that you might plan to use to manage your emotions during the dialogue or event?
 - For example: engaging in a mood booster like listening to uplifting music or going for walk just beforehand, stepping back and thinking what you would say to a friend in this situation so as to reframe your thoughts before going into the experience, paying attention to how you're feeling in response to what others are saying during the experience, considering the effects of expressing a particular emotion, staying aware of other's emotions, exploring assumptions you might be making going into the dialogue or event, analyzing why you're emotionally reacting the way that you are.
3. After the experience, instruct participants to use the Wheel of Emotions and the questions below to reflect on it. *Note:* You may ask participants to share their reflections as an essay, video, slideshow, etc.:
 - How did you actually feel during the dialogue or event? Did it match up with what you expected to feel?
 - What went well and maybe not so well in terms of managing your emotions? Which techniques were most effective for you?
 - How do you think others involved in the interaction experienced your emotions? What tells you this was their experience?
 - What do you need to do to work on your emotional management in unfamiliar or uncomfortable cultural territory?
 - What's the next situation or place where you can practice?
 - Is there a different strategy that you'd like to try? Or is there a different strategy that might work better?

Note: You're encouraged to repeat steps 2 and 3 if you wish to keep working on this challenge.