

### **Introduction:**

This activity teaches participants about how the power of culture predisposes us towards how we choose to view events, and how each of us belongs to a “cultural tribe” that partially determines our ideas about appropriate solutions and paths to action. Participants will consider how people from other “cultural tribes” might propose ideas or actions that are counterintuitive to their own culture’s way of thinking.

### **Objectives:**

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

1. Define the values of their own “cultural tribes” and discuss how these differ from other “cultural tribes.”
2. Describe why certain cultural responses are counterintuitive to their own.

### **Time:**

30 minutes.

### **Group Size:**

Small group.

### **Materials:**

Participant Instructions (in [Downloads](#)); Article (in [Links](#)).

### **Intercultural Development Continuum Stages:**

- Minimization
- Acceptance
- Adaptation

### **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).

Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks:

- To demonstrate sophisticated understanding of the complexity of elements important to members of another culture in relation to its history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices.

### **Other Skills:**

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

### Activity Instructions:

1. Instruct participants to read the following article: [Glimpses of Culture Through a Lava Flow: Bomb the Crater or Clean Your House?](https://japaninsight.wordpress.com/2014/10/12/glimpses-of-culture-through-a-lava-flow-bomb-the-crater-or-clean-your-house/)

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2. Instruct participants to get into pairs and discuss the following questions:
  - “Does your culture predispose you to repel lava flows with bombs and D9s or welcome the lava ‘as an important guest?’”
  - Why are there “such starkly different responses to the same phenomena?”
3. Instruct participants to change partners, and discuss the following questions:
  - Does your culture traditionally put people above nature?
  - Does your culture believe that people can “own” land?
  - To what extent should “gaps” in opinion be filled (e.g., is it possible to reconcile the Hawaiian belief that people cannot own land with the Western idea of land ownership?)
4. Engage the group in an entire group discussion. Discuss the following questions:
  - Why is it important “to *not* focus on issues beyond your control (like trying to change the beliefs of others)?”
  - Is it “possible to respect others’ rights to believe what they want without accepting those beliefs yourself?”
  - What is the value of “focusing on common ground and cooperation for achieving mutual benefit?”

(Sullivan, 2018)