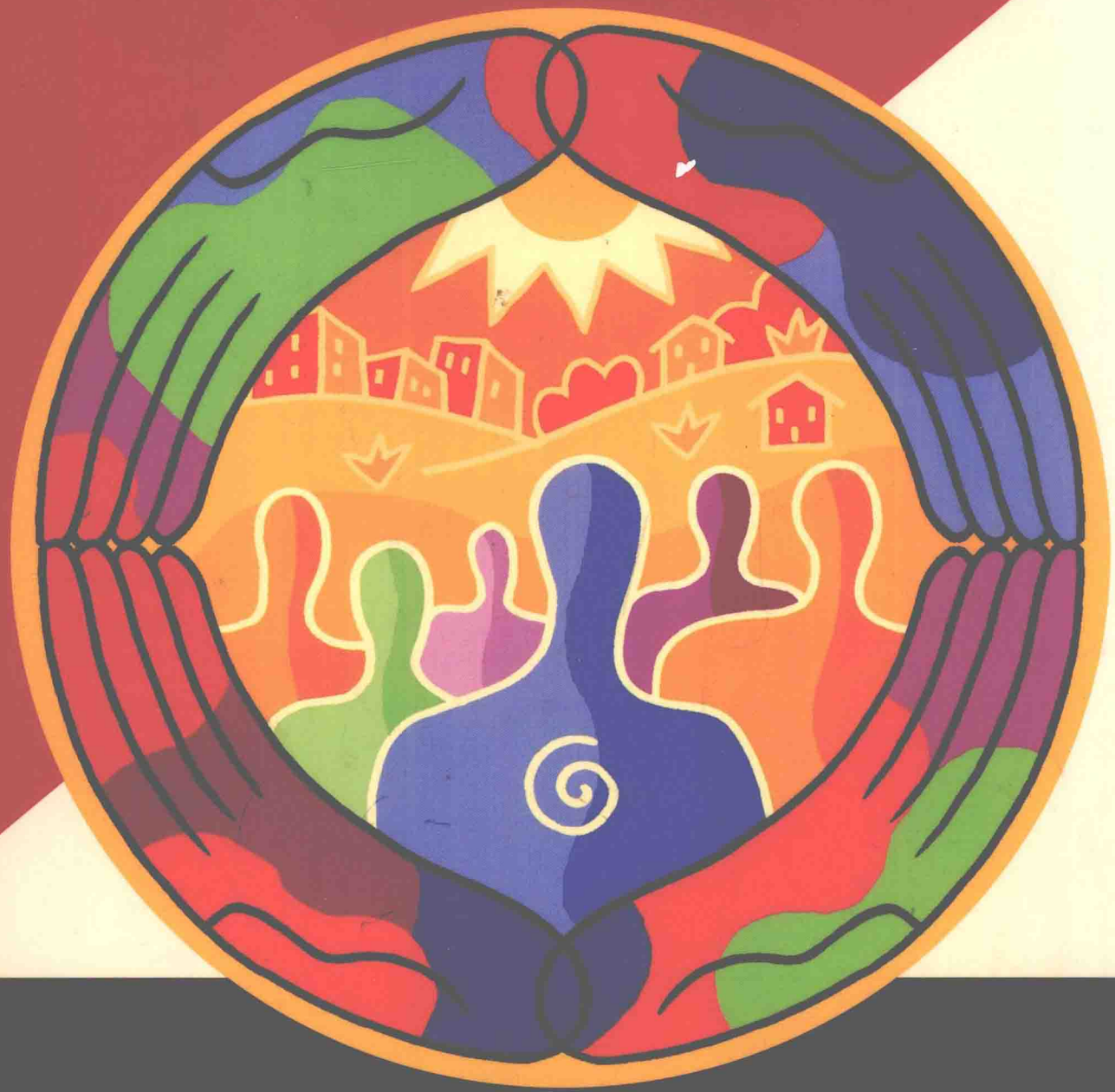


Kenneth Cushner



Human Diversity in Action

DEVELOPING MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCIES
FOR THE CLASSROOM

Third Edition

Human Diversity in Action

Developing Multicultural Competencies for the Classroom

Kenneth Cushner
Kent State University

t h i r d e d i t i o n



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**HUMAN DIVERSITY IN ACTION: DEVELOPING MULTICULTURAL
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I've often thought there ought to be a manual to hand to little kids, telling them what kind of planet they're on, why they don't fall off, how much time they've probably got here, how to avoid poison ivy, and so on. . . . And one thing I would really like to tell them about is cultural relativity. I didn't learn until I was in college about all the other cultures, and I should have learned that in the first grade. A first grader should understand that his or her culture isn't a rational invention; that there are thousands of other cultures and they all work pretty well; that all cultures function on faith rather than truth; that there are lots of alternatives to our own society. Cultural relativity is defensible and attractive. It's also a source of hope. It means we don't have to continue this way if we don't like it.

—Kurt Vonnegut, 1974

This may be the start of that manual.

—Kenneth Cushner, 2006

About the Author

Kenneth Cushner (Ed. D.) is Executive Director for International Affairs and Professor in the College and Graduate School of Education at Kent State University. He is a frequent contributor to the professional literature in multicultural and intercultural education and is internationally known for his work in the professional development of educators through workshops and consultation. Among his publications, Dr. Cushner is the author or co-author of *Human Diversity in Education: An Integrative Approach*, 5th ed. (McGraw-Hill, 2006); *Beyond Tourism: A Practical Guide to Meaningful Educational Travel* (Scarecrow Education, 2004); *International Perspectives on Intercultural Education* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998); *Intercultural Interactions: A Practical Guide*, 2nd ed. (Sage Publications, 1996), and *Improving Intercultural Interactions: Modules for Cross-Cultural Training Programs, Volume 2* (Sage Publication, 1997). Dr. Cushner has developed and led international travel programs on all seven continents. In his spare time, Dr. Cushner enjoys music (percussion and guitar), travel, and photography.

Preface

With the publication of the third edition of *Human Diversity in Action: Developing Multicultural Competencies for the Classroom*, we find people becoming increasingly interconnected and interdependent, both on the domestic front as well as across the globe. The smooth functioning of many governments, economies, and businesses increasingly requires more people to have greater awareness, knowledge, and skill in order to interact effectively with those whose cultures may be quite different from their own. It is increasingly clear that people must strive to better understand those who are culturally different as well as to make themselves better known to others. This will be no simple feat given what we know about the manner in which people learn about others.

Why It Is Important to Use This Workbook

The fields of cross-cultural training and intercultural education continue to grow in response to these very real needs. One thing that stands out in the research of intercultural education and training is the critical role that meaningful experience plays in culture learning. That is, while it is relatively easy to transfer a significant amount of valid information to others through cognitive approaches such as lectures, books, and films, just having new information itself is not sufficient to make people behave any differently. Thus, typical multicultural courses that emphasize lecture and readings may fall far short of achieving the very goals they set out to accomplish; students and teachers just do not become more effective in their interpersonal interactions or in modifying their instruction simply by being presented with new information. Rather, people learn to live and work more effectively with others as a result of long-term immersion and active

experiences that engage the emotions, and often precede or accompany cognitive inputs.

This workbook was developed with the intent of providing the student of culture with structured experiences designed to increase awareness, knowledge, and skill in intercultural understanding and interaction with the ultimate impact being on teachers and students in schools. Through this workbook, students and instructors can become actively engaged in many practical exercises that examine critical elements of the educational process that are influenced by culture. They can then discuss their experiences with others, gaining comfort with what are often difficult concepts and topics to speak about. Thus, users of this workbook benefit by reflection, dialogue, and collaboration.

To the Instructor—Using the Workbook

This workbook will be useful to those teaching a variety of courses where culture and/or human diversity are central elements. People have found these exercises to be of value in such courses as multicultural, global or international education; social studies or other methods courses that require students to attend to diversity in very real ways; new student orientation courses that emphasize diversity issues; as well as in a variety of field experience settings, including student teaching seminars. This collection of activities can also be a very useful addition to the professional development of practicing teachers, providing the workshop consultant with a variety of activities designed to bring aspects of diversity to the forefront.

This workbook was designed to easily accompany our text *Human Diversity in Education: An Integrative Approach*, now in its 5th edition (Cushner, McClelland and Safford, McGraw-Hill ©2006), and the workbook activities are keyed directly in the text at appropriate points to alert students and instructors.

The workbook can also be used alone, or can easily be used as a complement to many of the multicultural textbooks currently available on the market. A correlation chart, housed on the workbook's Web site at www.mhhe.cushner3e, identifies where specific activities might be used in conjunction with some of the other multicultural textbooks that are in current use.

To the Student—Why You Are Using This Workbook

It is important that you understand that you must be an active participant in your own learning if you are to truly understand diversity and issues sur-

rounding culture. Culture learning is not effectively accomplished in a passive mode. Thus, this workbook is designed to be consumable, and is intended to be linked closely with the content you are reading about in your textbook. That is, you are encouraged to write in this workbook and to use the various exercises as guides to help you develop a more culturally sensitive approach to your interactions with others, and ultimately a more authentic approach to teaching and learning.

The Organization of the Workbook

This workbook provides several exercises that are presented in three different sections, or levels of culture learning. Part I provides basic content related to the concept of culture and the development of self. It is essential that anyone seriously interested in exploring the complex phenomenon of culture and intercultural interaction look closely at the various dynamics that have gone into the formation of self. Part II provides basic frameworks and skills in the analysis of cultural differences and the processes involved in intercultural interaction. Part III presents exercises to provide insight into culture's influence on teaching and learning as well as a number of strategies that can be used to modify existing curriculum and instruction. You are encouraged to use these exercises over a relatively long period of time, such as throughout a semester or academic year, as the changes that we are all required to make, both within ourselves as well as within our institutions, are quite dramatic and will not happen overnight.

New to This Edition of the Workbook

This workbook has been well received by previous users. Thus, this third edition follows a similar format as the previous editions. Previous users will, however, notice a few changes. There are fewer activities in this edition, thus making it easier to complete in the course of an academic term. Additional activities are available online at www.mhhe.com/cushner3e. Changes have been made to individual exercises and new activities have been included based on the feedback of current users.

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A project such as this cannot develop and improve without the insights and assistance of many individuals. To this end, the following individuals deserve thanks:

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Online Resources for Human Diversity in Action

www.mhhe.com/cushner3e

Additional Readings and Activities

Online Activity 1: Interpreting One's Own Intercultural Experience: The Magic of Journal Writing

Online Activity and Reading 2: How Culture is Learned: Socializing Agents

Online Activity 3: Examining Stereotypes Held by Self and Others

Online Activity and Reading 4: The Triad Model for Developing Multicultural Understanding

Online Activity 5: Using the Interpersonal Cultural Grid to Expand Intercultural Understanding

Additional Critical Incidents

PowerWeb Articles and Newsfeeds

Electronic Versions of Activities 2, 13, 14, 19, 30 and 36

Related Web Links

Access to the above resources is free using the passcode card packaged with your new workbook. If you have a used workbook, you can purchase access at www.mhhe.com/cushner3e.

Table of Contents

<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Online Resources for Human Diversity in Action</i>	xv

Part I Getting to Know the Culture of Self

Activity 1	
Mental Maps of Culture: An Icebreaker	3
Activity 2	
Inventory of Cross-Cultural Sensitivity.	5
Activity 3	
The Nature of Culture and Culture Learning	11
Activity 4	
Childhood Experiences	15
Activity and Reading 5	
Understanding Cultural Complexity	17
Activity 6	
Proverbs as a Window into One's Culture	23
Activity and Reading 7	
Cultural Values in American Society	29
Activity 8	
Family Tree: Tracing One's Roots and Family Experiences	37
Activity 9	
Who Am I?	41
Activity and Reading 10	
The Culture Learning Process.	45

Part II Getting to Know the Culture of Others: Intercultural Interaction

Activity 11	
Adjustment to Change	61
Activity and Reading 12	
A Culture-General Framework for Understanding Intercultural Interactions	65
Activity 13	
Critical Incident Review	77
Activity 14	
Observing Cultural Differences.	93
Activity 15	
Learning About Others	97
Activity 16	
Community Scan: Analyzing Available Resources That Support Multicultural Education	99
Activity 17	
Stereotypes and Their Impact on Interaction and Learning	103
Activity 18	
Privilege: The Invisible Knapsack	111
Activity 19	
Interviewing Non-Native English Speakers about Their Experiences in This Country	115
Activity 20	
What Does It Feel Like to Be Excluded?	119
Activity 21	
Gender Role Socialization	123
Activity 22	
Observing Gender Differences	125
Activity 23	
The Plight of Women on a Global Scale	129
Activity 24	
Sexual Orientation: A Matter of Experience?	133
Activity 25	
The Student with Special Needs.	139

Activity 26	
Understanding Religious Diversity	143
Activity 27	
Institutional Discrimination: Social Class in Focus	145
Activity 28	
Writing Your Own Critical Incidents	149

Part III Modifying Curriculum and Instruction to Address the Goals of Diversity

Activity 29	
Future's Window	153
Activity 30	
Ethnic Literacy Test: A Cultural Perspective	
Differentiating Stereotypes from Generalizations.	159
Activity 31	
Determining Bias in Textbooks.	177
Activity and Reading 32	
Learning Styles	181
Activity and Reading 33	
The Goals of an Education That Reflects Diversity	185
Activity and Reading 34	
Modifying Existing Instructional Material to	
Reflect the Goals of Diversity.	189
Activity 35	
Now It's Your Turn: Modify a Lesson to Address	
the Goals of Diversity	197
Activity 36	
The Inventory of Cross-Cultural Sensitivity (ICCS)	199
 Glossary	 207
References	211

p a r t o n e

Getting to Know the Culture of Self

Activity 1**Mental Maps of Culture: An Icebreaker**

Purpose

1. To reflect upon your early experiences related to culture and intercultural interaction.
2. To learn about others as you each share and discuss your early experiences and understanding of the concept of culture.

Instructions

Reflect upon some of the experiences you had growing up that may have influenced your understanding of the concept of culture. Perhaps you grew up in an environment that was filled with culturally diverse experiences and encounters. Or, perhaps you were raised in a rather segregated or protected environment and had little direct experience with people different from yourself. When did you first learn about different people? How did you react to this experience? What messages did others give you — either intentionally or not, that you still remember today? How have you come to understand the concept of culture today? Reflect back over your life and try to recall events and experiences along the way that have influenced your feelings and thoughts about people from different cultural backgrounds.

In the space below, or on another sheet of paper, make a drawing or diagram that includes your experiences and your thoughts, feelings, and understanding related to culture. Then, using your drawing, introduce yourself to one or two other people while sharing your experiences with culture. In your discussion, look for similarities and differences in your feelings and thoughts, the events and experiences that contributed to their development, and the people who influenced you along the way.

