

Live Your Best FAO Spouse Life

Strategies, Tips and Personal Accounts of Making the Most Out of this Career Choice



OBJECTIVES

STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Understand cultural influences and differences within the host country they will be posted & predict how these will impact their life at post.
- Utilize provided resources and strategies for further personal research of host country.
- Recognize areas of FAO life that offer unique opportunities and challenges.
- Utilize provided resources and strategies as mitigation tools for themselves and family members.

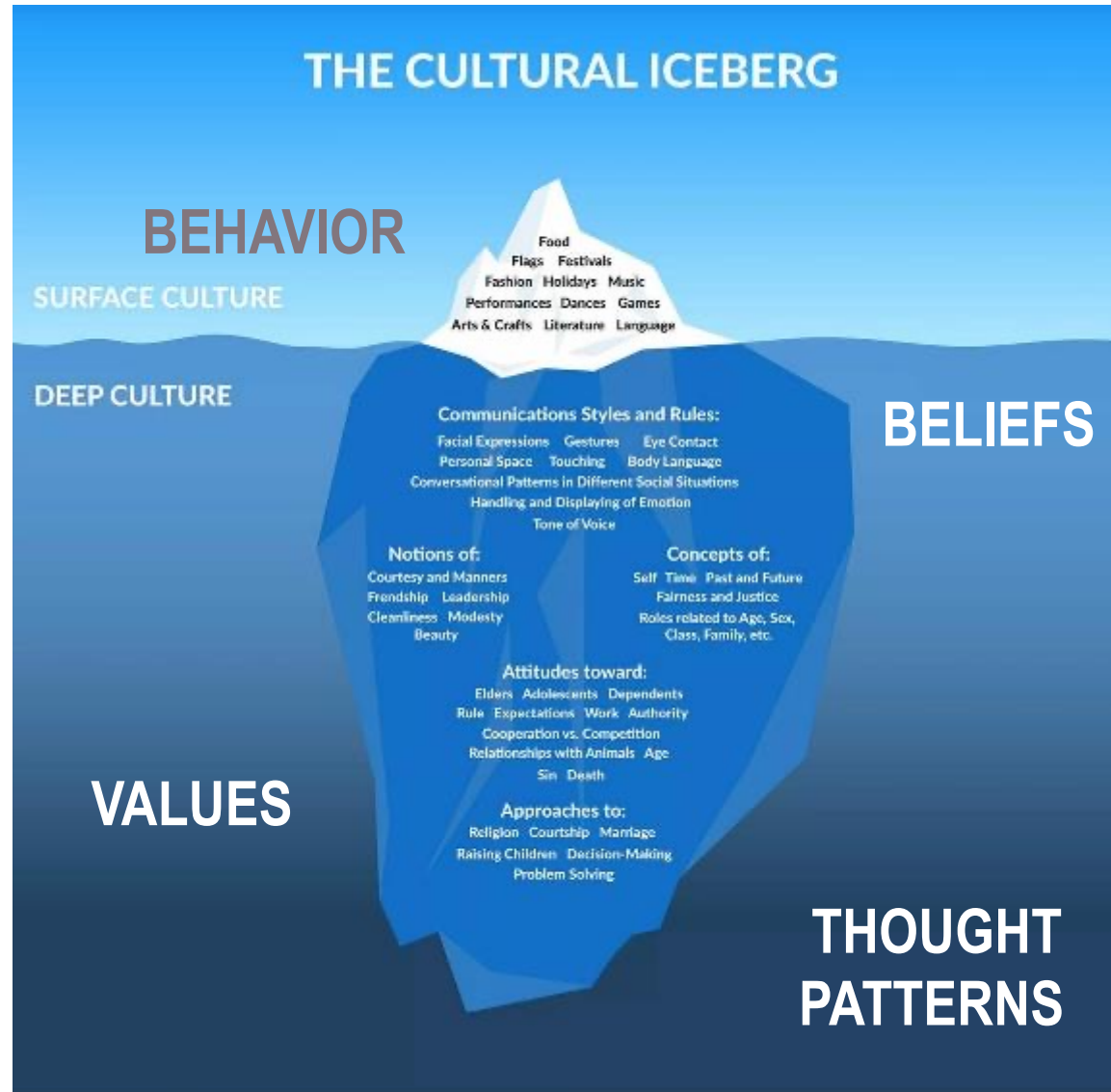
UNDERSTANDING “CULTURE”

Culture is a *shared* system of meanings about the world in which we live...

- Culture comes in layers
- Culture is relative
- Culture is learned
- Culture is about groups
- Culture (even one's own) is difficult to explain



CULTURE IS LIKE AN ICEBERG

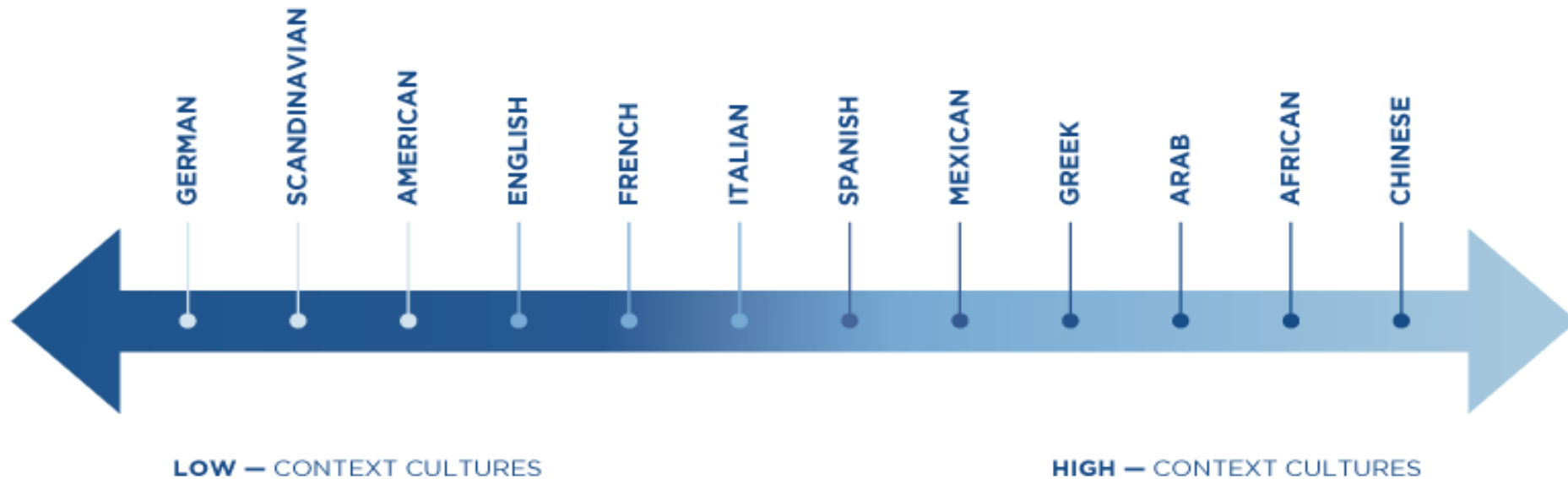


Understanding Cultural Differences, by Dennis White, Ph.D.

WHERE WILL YOU BE GOING?

High-context cultures are those that communicate in ways that are implicit and rely heavily on context. They tend to be more collectivist, value interpersonal relationships, and have members that form stable, close relationships.

Low-context cultures are cultures that communicate information in a direct, explicit, and precise way. They tend to value tasks over relationships, and are individualistic



WHAT DO WE STRIVE FOR IN OUR LIVES OVERSEAS?



HOW CAN WE ACHIEVE THIS....

Put in the work!

Work on understanding more about the culture through research and lay the groundwork for your own personal journey.



Preparation and Mindset

'Before You Go' Strategies

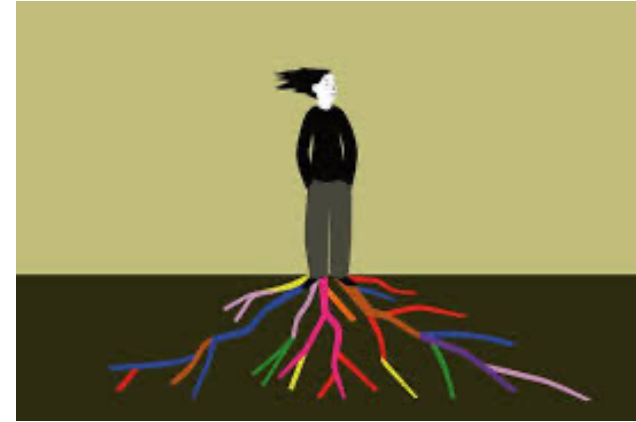
STRATEGIES AND TOOLS FOR DIGGING DEEPER INTO YOUR HOST COUNTRY CULTURE...

- ✓ *Culture Grams as a research tool (insert link here)*
- ✓ *Begin to read the news in your new host country.*
- ✓ *Explore movies or television shows about or from your host country.*
- ✓ *Curate your own list of books that are relevant to your country or AOR...and get started reading!*



STRATEGIES FOR PERSONAL GROUNDWORK....

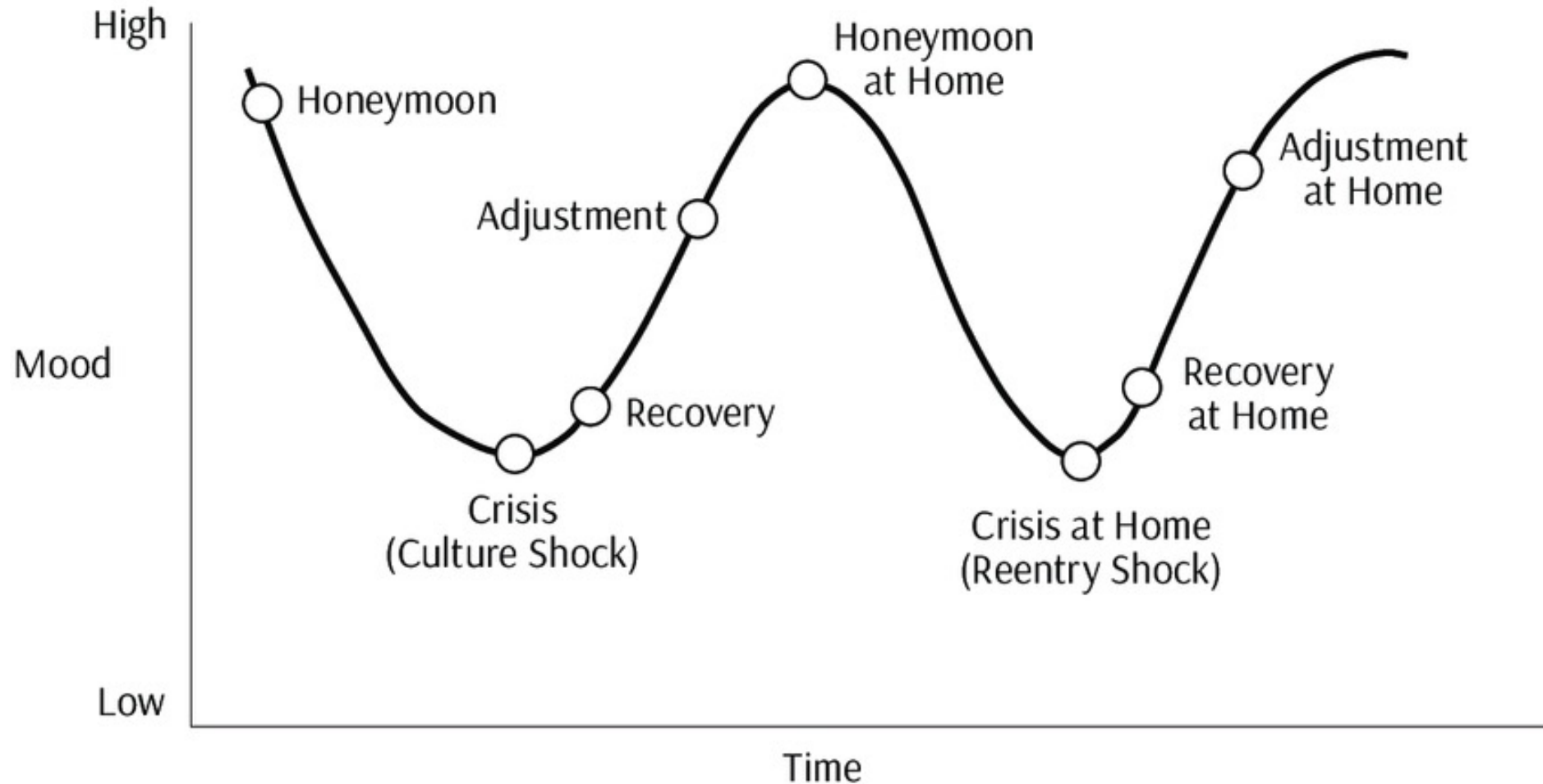
- ✓ *Learn the Language*
- ✓ *Set Realistic Expectations*
- ✓ *Discuss Roles and Expectations*
- ✓ *Professional Development Planning—More to come in our Employment Brief*
- ✓ *Connect with Others—Reach out to CLO, attend SCO Spouse Course or JMAS, ask about social sponsor*
- ✓ *Mental Health Check-In with Yourself— develop a plan for managing your mental health while at post. Can be informal or more formal if needed*



Adaptation and Integration

'Once You Arrive' Strategies

...WHY DO WE NEED THESE STRATEGIES?

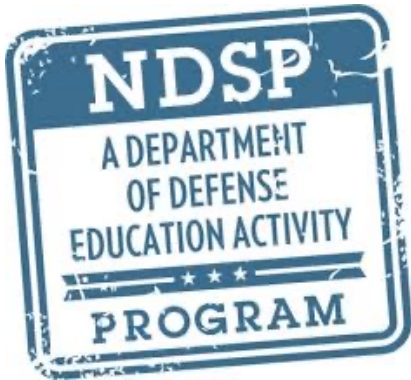


Stages of Culture Transition: W Curve

STRATEGIES TO SOFTEN THE CURVE.....

- ✓ *Embrace the New—Be Brave.*
- ✓ *Reestablish Your ‘Next New Normal’*
- ✓ *Build Your Support Team*
- ✓ *Learn Local Customs and Etiquette—Observe how locals navigate life*
- ✓ *Take Care of Your Body—Eat well, move your body, get outside if possible*
- ✓ *Stay Connected to Home*
- ✓ *Give Yourself Some Grace*
- ✓ *Get Help If You Need It!*

WHERE TO LOOK FOR SUPPORT:



*Use our JFAOC *Resource Lists* on Padlet to find these resources and many more!*

BREAK OUT GROUPS!

Talk with your small group about any strategies that have helped you soften culture shock curve....

- What helped you feel settled?
- What are you doing now in the 'before you go' phase?
- What sorts of questions do you have for those in the group who have done this before?

Those joining us online can add their insights to these questions in the chat!

Putting the **F-A-O** in F.A.O.



Finance *Assistance* *Outlook*

Keep a lookout for how these three topics are woven through the Spouse Program this week!

How can they work for you?