

Bennett's Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

Ethno-centrism			Ethno-relativism		
Denial	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation	Integration

Denial of cultural difference is the state in which one's own culture is experienced as the only real one. Other cultures are avoided by maintaining psychological and/or physical isolation from differences. People at Denial generally are disinterested in cultural difference, although they may act aggressively to eliminate a difference if it impinges on them.

Defense against cultural difference is the state in which one's own culture (or an adopted culture) is experienced as the only good one. The world is organized into "us and them," where "we" are superior and "they" are inferior. People at Defense are threatened by cultural difference, so they tend to be highly critical of other cultures, regardless of whether the others are their hosts, their guests, or cultural newcomers to their society.

Minimization of cultural difference is the state in which elements of one's own cultural world view are experienced as universal. Because these absolutes obscure deep cultural differences, other cultures may be trivialized or romanticized. People at Minimization expect similarities, and they may become insistent about correcting others' behavior to match their expectations.

Acceptance of cultural difference is the state in which one's own culture is experienced as just one of a number of equally complex worldviews. Acceptance does not mean agreement—cultural difference may be judged negatively—but the judgment is not ethnocentric. People at Acceptance are curious about and respectful toward cultural difference.

Adaptation to cultural difference is the state in which the experience of another culture yields perception and behavior appropriate to that culture. One's worldview is expanded to include constructs from other worldviews. People at Adaptation are able to look at the world "through different eyes" and may intentionally change their behavior to communicate more effectively in another culture.

Integration of cultural difference is the state in which one's experience of self is expanded to include the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews. People at Integration often are dealing with issues related to their own "cultural marginality." This stage is not necessarily better than Adaptation in most situations demanding intercultural competence, but it is common among non-dominant minority groups, long-term expatriates, and "global nomads."