

## Over Fifty Ways Culture Influences Us

### Etiquette & Behavior

- How we greet each other
- What is considered common courtesy
- What is considered impolite
- How we show respect and disrespect
- What is embarrassing
- What makes us feel good
- What we eat and how we eat
- What we wear
- What we buy and how we behave in stores
- How often we touch each other and how we touch each other
- How closely we stand next to each other
- The holidays we celebrate and the ways we celebrate them
- How we use money, credit and bartering
- What is risqué
- How we seek and use health services
- What we find humorous
- How we use mass transit
- Seating placement in a room

### Beliefs & Values

- What is beautiful or ugly
- What are worthwhile goals in life
- The nature of God and other religious beliefs
- Whether a person is in control of his or her down life or whether fate determines one's life
- Common sense
- Our perceived hygiene
- What is "right"; what is "wrong"

### Time

- How time is scheduled and used
- Whether schedules are important or unimportant
- The importance of maintaining tradition
- Whether old age is valuable or undesirable
- The importance of understanding one's history and passing it on

## **Communication**

- The language we speak
- What should be said; what should be left unsaid
- What is appropriate “small talk”
- Whom we speak to; to whom we should not speak
- Whether conversations should be formal or informal
- The meaning of hand gestures, facial expressions, and other nonverbal communication
- How often we smile, whom we smile at, and the meaning of a smile
- In which environments it is “safe” to speak one’s mind; in which environments we must censor identity
- Our tone of voice, use of emotion, and use of stories

## **Human Relations**

- The role of the individual
- The role and structure of the family
- The roles of men and how men should behave
- The roles of women and how women should behave
- The importance of competition between individuals
- Social class system
- Hierarchy in business relationships
- Interaction between strangers
- How to interact with a person in authority (boss, police officer, teacher, etc.)
- How to interact with a person who is serving us
- Relationships and obligations between parents and children with other family members
- Crowd or audience behavior