CHALLENGES TO IDENTITY

--In an Age of Boundary Meltdown
&
Increasing Global Interdependence

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EVOLVING IDENTITIES

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Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown
TOPICS TO COVER:

* **Introduction**
* **Definition: What is Identity?**

DIFFERENT LAYERS & FACTORS INFLUENCING IDENTITY:

* **OUR HUMAN IDENTITIES: Evolutionary Layers Influencing Identity**
* **OUR RACIAL AND GENDER IDENTITIES**

* **OUR CULTURAL IDENTITIES: Socially-Learned Influences on Identity:**
   - **--Identity in Individual vs. Collective Identity Cultures**
   - **--Renaming One's Identity by Minorities within Larger, Dominant Cultures**
   - **--Humor as a Vehicle for Minorities to Express Their Cultural Identity**
   - **--Identity-Based Conflicts**
   - **--Dangers of Identity Theft Today**
   - **--National Negotiating Styles of Different Countries & Cultures**
   - **--Globalization: More Westernization/Homogenization of Cultural Identity vs.**
   - **More Complex Identity Issues**
   - **--Adding Larger System Levels of Identity Doesn't Negate Earlier Levels**
   - **--Changes in Religious Identity as Images of Divinity Change with Time & Culture**

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown
TOPICS TO COVER:

* **OUR ROLE IDENTITIES—in the Workplace, Community, & Family**
* **EXAMPLES OF HOW CULTURAL IDENTITY HAS BEOME MORE COMPLEX**
  TODAY

* **OUR TECHNOLOGICAL IDENTITIES, & THE HUMAN-TECHNOLGICAL CONNECTION**

* **OUR PSYCHOLOGICAL IDENTITIES: Different Psychological Types**

* **OUR SPIRITUAL IDENTITIES: Expanded Consciousness Experiences**

* **ALTERNATIVE SCENARIOS of How Humans Deal with Identity Issues Today:**
  * **--Best Case Scenario**
  * **--Worst Case Scenario**
  * **--Mixed Case/Most Probable Case Scenario**

* **FINAL CONCLUSIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**
* **DISCUSSION OF KEY FACTORS IMPACTING PARTICIPANT'S IDENTITY TODAY**
* \ **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown

Introduction

* *What is identity?*

* *Identity is a complex topic.*

* *Identity is even more complex today:*

- *--now that all of the world's cultures are interacting, and*

- *--due to the increasing pace of change today.*

* *There are many factors influencing our identity, making us complex, multi-leveled beings.*

(continued)

Introduction

Definition: W*hat is Identity?*

* Who we think we are.

* What gives meaning to our lives.

* Includes both External and Inner Aspects of Identity

External Aspects of Identity:

•* How others see us and categorize us

•* How we are socialized into our culture via learning in different areas

•   & institutions of life.

Internal Aspects of Identity:

•* Who we think we are; * What motivates our behavior

•* What groups, ideas, values we identify with

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown

MANY FACTORS INFLUENCING IDENTITY, MAKING US COMPLEX, MULTI-LEVELED BEINGS, INCLUDING:

* Our Identity as Human Beings—how, from an evolutionary viewpoint, we are products of physical, biological, cultural, technological, and consciousness evolution, which all work through us and with us as human beings; impact if ET's.

* Our Racial and Gender Identities--including how others view us, & how we perceive and identify ourselves; DNA shows great variations and combinations.

* Our Cultural Identities—including all our socially-learned ideas & behavior from numerous institutions and areas of life; many cultural identity influences here;

* Our Role Identities—including our workplace, community, & family roles & responsibilities;

* Our Technological Identities, & the Human-Technological Connection;

* Our Psychological Identities—influenced by different personality types;

* Our Spiritual Identities—if that is part of our worldview & experience.

Each of these aspects of identity will be explored—esp. cultural aspects in depth.

*

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown

Our Human Identity: Broad Evolutionary Layers of Identity:

* **Physical-Chemical-Geological Evolution of the Universe & Earth**

"We are all star stuff." (and made up of the atomic elements of the universe).

--Carl Sagan

* **Biological Evolution of Species & Life**—our drives & automatic body processes that we share with the animal kingdom.

* **Cultural Evolution of all of Our Socially-Learned Behavior**—that makes us distinctly human and different from the animal kingdom, i.e., we create culture & learning & are products of culture & learning.

* **Technological Evolution**—a product of culture & learning; question whether it will become an independent life form in future; & human-machine relationship?

* **The Evolution of Consciousness**—our divine nature that we share with creative, self-aware, conscious beings.

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown

Many Factors Influencing Our Identity:

--Our Racial and Gender Identities--including biological & cultural factors, and how others view us, & how we perceive ourselves.

Racial & Gender Identities:

* *Impacted by Biological & Cultural Factors, as well as External Perceptions by Others and Internal Perceptions of Self; Can be deceptive.*

Racial Identities:

* USA: History of slavery & its impact on US culture & identities: If any % black blood, then classified as black, though most US blacks are a mixture of black, white, & often Native American blood.

* More genetic diversity within a race than between races on average.

Gender Identities:

* Many gender identities today: "Straight" & LGBT (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered—when body one sex, but internal identity is different)

* Some people born with both male and female organs, creating complex identity issues for parents and person.

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown
Many Factors Influencing Our Identity:

--<u>Our Cultural Identities</u>—including all our socially-learned Ideas & behavior—learned from numerous institutions and areas of life.

<u>Many Cultural Factors Influencing Identity</u>—to be covered:

Broad Definitions of Culture—Used Here (All Our Socially-Learned Behavior—That Makes Us Human and Distinct from the Animal Kingdom)

vs. Narrow Definitions (The Arts)

•**Cultures Socialize Us with Different Worldviews—including Different Underlying Values and Accepted Behavior Patterns.**

•*<u>Examples:</u>*

• * High Context vs. Low Context Cultures

• * Direct Communication vs. Indirect Communication Styles

• * Individual vs. Collective Identity

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Cultural Influences on Identity:

Identity in Individual vs. Collective Identity Cultures

* _Western Cultures: Individual Identity_: from day one is born, one is encouraged to express oneself and one's ideas and feelings as an individual.

* _Non-Western Cultures: More Collective Identities_: from day one is born, one is encouraged to subordinate one's individual needs and wants to those of the group.

* _Today: Much Cross-fertilization of Cultural Influences_, making identity more complex. Example: US-Japanese Negotiating Styles & Interactions.

* _Howard Gardner: 7 Learning Styles,_ of which one applies only in Western cultures with Individual Identity. while most non-Western cultures have more collective identity, though this is changing today.

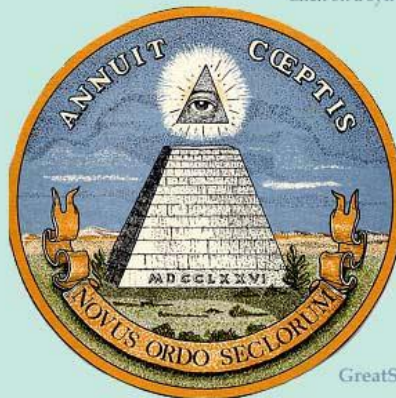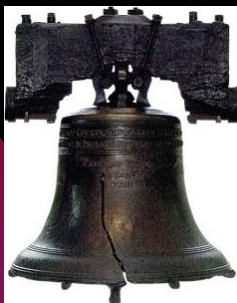# Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown

Different Learning Styles & Different Cultures:

Howard Gardner: 7 Learning Style

1. Spacial   1-2: object related
2. Logical-Mathematical
3. Bodily-Kinesetic   3-5: object free.
4. Language
5. Music   6-7: vary by culture
6. Interpersonal (very important in a group identity culture, like Japan).
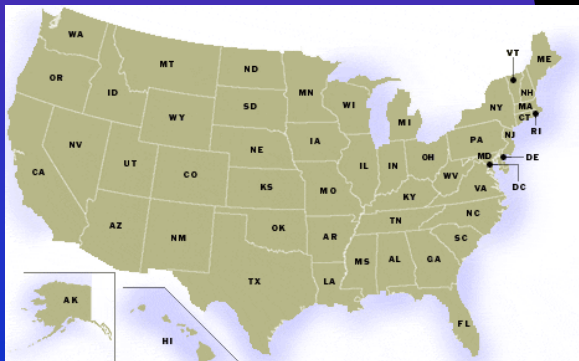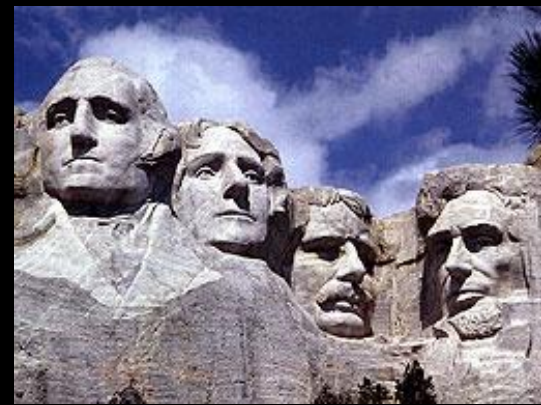7. Intrapersonal (more Western only—based on individual identity)
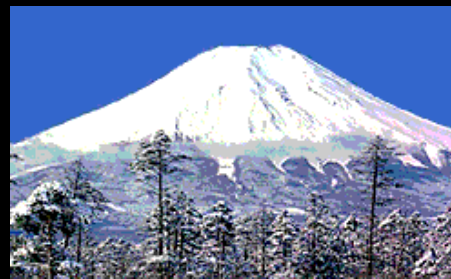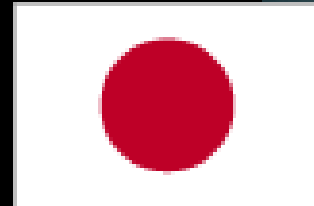
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Key Symbols of US Culture:

Key Symbols of Japanese Culture:

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown
Cultural Influences on Identity:

Note: Minorities within Any Dominant Culture

have at least two identities—of the dominant culture, & their minority culture.

Minorities Reclaiming Their Identity By Renaming Themselves & How They are Called

Examples:

* **"Black"** for African Americans

* **"Chicano"** for Latino/Latina Americans

•**Point:** Take a term that is originally negative in meaning and make it a positive term to represent your culture or ethnic group; also a term your group self-selects to describe itself, not a term selected by others.

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Cultural Influences on Identity:

Humor as a Vehicle for Minorities to Express Their Cultural Identity & *Reframe the Dominant Culture's Perceptions of Them*

Examples from U.S. Culture:

* Many Black comics: Dick Gregory, Richard Pryor, Eddie Murphy, Chris Rock, Dave Chappelle, Bill Cosby, Woopie Goldberg, etc.

* Mexican American comic, Carlos Mencia & his "Mind of Mencia," which makes fun of stereotypes of all ethnic groups.

* Middle Easterner group, "Axis Of Evil" (names after George W. Bush's reference to Iraq, Iran, & N. Korea).

* Jon Stewart, *The Daily Show,* & Stephen Colbert, *The Colbert Report*: most recent humor about superpacs & how huge donations from very wealthy contributors is distorting the US political process.

Cultural Influences on Identity:

Identity-Based Conflicts

* More difficult conflicts to resolve

•**Examples:**

•* **Israelis and Palestinians in Middle East:** both their historical identities and experiences are tied to the same land.

•Book: *Identity-Based Conflicts*, by Jay Rothman.

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Cultural Influences on Identity:

Dangers of Identity Theft:

* Problem of "proof of one's identity"—via passports, driver's license, bank accounts, govt. social security numbers, etc.—being stolen and used by criminals to access your accounts, and use your identity for illegal purposes.

* Because all these forms of "proof of identity" are available electronically today, accessing such information becomes easier.

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Cultural Influences on Identity:

National Negotiating Styles (NNS):

- *NNS reflect the underlying cultural values & behavior patterns of a given culture. Examples of this include:*

- ** Low Context vs. High Context Cultures and NNS*

- ** Direct vs. Indirect Communication Cultures and NNS*

- ** Individual vs. Collective Identity Cultures and NNS*

- See separate presentation on National Negotiating Styles for more on this.

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Cultural Influences on Identity:

Impact of Globalization on Identity: More Westernization/Homogenization of Cultural Identity Globally vs. More Complex Identity Issues

* All cultures are interacting & evolving today. No culture is static.

* Fear of many that Westernization is having a homogenizing effect on other cultures globally, making it difficult to preserve different cultures.

Alternative Hypotheses (from Linda):

* We are each our own unique synthesis of the different cultures that have impacted our lives, which is increasing cultural diversity in world.

* As we move rapidly into a globalized future world, we also reach back to our roots to hold onto what we most value from those traditions.

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Cultural Influences on Identity:

Adding Larger System Levels of Cultural Identity
Doesn't Require Eliminating Previous Levels of Identity

System Levels of Identity:

* Global/Planetary Citizen: some people

* Larger Regional Identities: Examples: "European" identity somewhat

• today; not "North American" or "Asian" regional identity yet!

* National Identities:

* Racial/Ethnic Identities within a Nation-State

** One can view above Levels of Identity as Systems within Systems within Systems. ** One can also add new larger system levels of identity without eliminating earlier smaller system levels of identity.

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(Partial) Cultural/Learned Influences on Identity:

Changes in Religious Identity (& Male-Female Roles in Society as a Reflection) as Images of Divinity Change Over Time

PREHISTORY:

* *Paleolithic/Old Stone Age:* Divinity as Earth Mother, with Everything in Nature Alive with Spirit/Energy in It. Hunting & Gathering Period.

* *Neolithic/New Stone Age:* Divinity as the Goddess. Early Agriculture.

HISTORY:

* *Ancient Civilizations & Empires:* Divinity as the Divine Union of Male & Female, with Their Offspring.

* *Ancient Greece:* Transition Period from Gods & Goddesses to Male God

* *Western Civilizations:* Divinity as God the Father

* *Today:* Divinity as Return of the Goddess & Partnership (Riane Eisler) OR Return of Divine Union of Male & Female (& Unity of Opposites) as Key to Spiritual Journey.

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Cultural Influences on Identity:

--**Our Role Identities**—including our workplace, community, & family roles & responsibilities:

• * **Workplace/Job Identities**: Skills, training, knowledge needed; amount of responsibility involved in job; interpersonal/technical abilities, etc.

• * **Community Identities:** amount and type of involvement in community and religious organizations

• * **Family Identities**: roles as parents (mother, father), grandparents, children, sisters & brothers, aunts & uncles, etc.

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Cultural Influences on Identity:

--Examples of How Cultural Identity Has Become More Complex Today

* Restaurants with "Fusion" mixed food from 2+ different cultures.

* People from mixed marriages—parents of different cultural/religious/racial backgrounds. Children are not automatically bi-cultural; it depends on their upbringing.

.* U.S. Census: new category of "Mixed" background. Ex: Tiger Woods. Raises political issues for some not wanting people to leave the minority category for "mixed."

2000 Census: ADD

2010 Census: ADD

Source: "Racial & Ethnic Identity, *Wikipedia.*

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Cultural Influences on Identity:

--<u>Our Technological Identities, & the Human-Technological Connection</u>

* *Technology keeps changing rapidly today and is a major driving force for change. The human-technological connection is also changing rapidly.*

* *Technology extends our capabilities as humans and allows us to do more than we could on our own—for good or ill—than we could without technology.*

• **<u>One can take on any identity on the internet. Examples:</u>**

* *Cartoon of a dog in front of a computer with the caption: "Nobody knows you're a dog on the internet."*

* *One creates one's own "Avatar" or figure to represent oneself online, as in Second Life—an online created community.*

* *Sex abusers and pedophiles also try to find victims on the internet.*

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown
Cultural Influences on Identity:

--<u>Our Technological Identities, & the Human-Technological Connection</u>

<u>Transhumanists, such as Ray Kurzweil, argue the next stage of human evolution is to upload one's consciousness (from one's brain) into a computer chip.</u>

*   *Point: humans, with our biological body & brain, would become obsolete*

*   *How much of our human identity is tied to our body & brain? Losing this would have a major impact on our future "human" identity!*

•**Other Transhumanists, such as Gregg Stock [CK] argue that humans will want to keep our bodies, but augment body parts as needed.**

•**Both seek physical "immortality"--**for humans to become trans-humans in some form in future.

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown
Cultural Influences on Identity:

--Our Technological Identities, & the Human-Technological Connection

Human Settlements in Space: As humans move to space & begin to have children there, they will take on new identities there—even declaring their independence from those on earth.

•* _Children born in space may change physiologically & not be able to return to earth. A new human species may begin to be born, with a new identity!_

Possibilities of Encountering Other Intelligent Life, and Realizing We Are Not Alone in the Universe:

* _Would force a reframing of what it means to be a human being._

* _Could help bring humanity together—as one human species vs. other "Alien" species, as already portrayed in much Science Fiction._

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Factors Influencing Our Identity:

--Our Psychological Identities—influenced by different personality types. Example: **Myers-Briggs Type Indicators, Based on Carl Jung's Psychological Types:**

* **Extrovert/Introvert Types:** how you get re-energized—from outer vs. inner focus and life—and act in the world. (E/I)

* **Sensing/Intuiting Types:** how you perceive the world—through your five senses or via hunches/intuition/a Sixth Sense. (S/N)

* **Thinking/Feeling Types:**   how you interpret what you perceive—whether you focus on ideas or values. (T/F)

* **Judging/Perceiving Types**: want to finalize things vs. open-ended—for more info. & spontaneous. (J/P)

Different personality types are based on different possible combinations of above polar opposites for each individual.

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown
Factors Influencing Our Identity:

--<u>Our Psychological Identities</u>—influenced by different personality types. Example: **Myers-Briggs Type Indicators, Based on Carl Jung's Psychological Types:**

* <u>**Extrovert/Introvert Types:**</u> (E/I)

* <u>**Sensing/Intuiting Types:**</u> (S/N)

* <u>**Thinking/Feeling Types:**</u> (T/F)

* <u>**Judging/Perceiving Types**</u>: (J/P)

<u>**Above important because:**</u>

* _Basic US institutions have many ESTJ's. Creativity requires intuition._

* _Knowledge of these types can increase tolerance. Good teams require all types._

<u>**Question:**</u> _what happens if have one personality type but live in a society/culture with a different dominant personality type?_

Note: _Many other typologies exist of different personality types & learning styles, which can all impact Identity in different ways, depending on one's type._

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown
Factors Influencing Our Identity:

--<u>**Our Spiritual Identities**</u>—if that is part of our worldview & experience.

Cultural/Learned Aspects of Identity: Many aspects of identity are learned throughout our lives from many different institutions and areas of life.

<u>**The Spiritual Path is about going beyond learning to become conscious and act consciously in the world as well:**</u>

• --<u>unlearning</u>, i.e., about peeling off all the layers of learned behavior to get back to our spiritual essence;

• --going into the darkness/our shadow to make it conscious & bring it "into the light"

• --moving from a focus on the external life (chakras one-three) to <u>developing inner mastery</u> & self-awareness (a spiritual/inner rebirth & chakras four-seven).

• --not living in the past or future, but <u>being totally present in the NOW</u> and experiencing expanded states of inner consciousness & interconnectedness.

IDENTITY CHANGES WHEN ONE ADDS A SPIRITUAL LAYER TO ONE'S IDENTITY.

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown

Spiritual Aspects of Identity

Expanded Consciousness Experiences That Transform Identity

Example: 7 Chakras, or Energy Centers in the Body

* **Each with a different & more Expanded Consciousness & Worldview** (from base of spine to top of head)

* The 4th Chakra represents a shift from focus on the outer life to the inner spiritual journey via a second spiritual rebirth vs. first physical birth.

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown

Alternative Scenarios on How Humans Deal with Identity Issues:

* **Best Case Scenario:** _people accept increasing global interdependence and cultural diversity and look for the best gifts all cultures can offer to humanity as a whole._

* **Worst Case Scenario:** _people come from fear of diversity and withdraw into nationalistic or ethnic, black & white worldviews, creating increasing conflicts both globally & within countrie**s.**_

* **Mixed, Most Probable Case Scenario:** _some people accept a globally diverse world, while others find it threatening to their identities—at least during a transition period—not being sure how they will fit into such a world. Over time, more people adapt to a culturally diverse world._

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown
Final Conclusions & Policy Recommendations

* ***Identity is a complex issue**—with multiple factors impacting our sense of who we are.*

* ***Identity is also potentially evolving within each individual**—including at different times within each individual's lives.*

* ***The more we can become consciously aware of the different factors impacting our identities and lives**—the more we can consciously modify different factors, and the more we can work on consciously integrating all these different influences on our lives, and be open to new potential influences on identity—as they emerge.*

* ***The World keeps evolving, and with it, our identities also need to keep evolving!!***

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown

How Will We Deal with Our Evolving Identities—Within an Increasingly Interdependent, Evolving World?

What Future Will We Create--
For Humanity and the World???

The Future is In Our Hands

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown

Thanks To:

Pony Vigil--For Help Designing an Earlier Version of This PowerPoint Presentation

Bibliography

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown

Discussion (if time): Which Factors Have Most Impacted YOUR Identity and Life?

See Handout.

Identity in an Age of Boundary Meltdown

Note:

Disregard slides after this for now.

Information in these slides may or may not be inserted with previous slides in this presentation.

They come from another presentation.

Creativity & Innovation: East-West (Japan-US)
Joseph Campbell: The Hero's Journey

East and West

Five+ Stages in the Hero's Journey:
* Restless; nothing holding you to current situation; seeking more
* Need to find Mentor/Teacher on journey
* Jumping-off place into the unknown
* Testing in unknown: find out who you really are
* Return to share lessons learned.

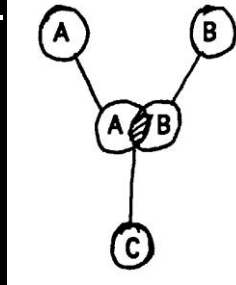**East-West Differences in Hero's Journey Towards Mastery::**
  * East: follow in path (art or spiritual form) of your guru/master
  * West: as individual, go into forest (unknown) at place of own choosing, to be tested. Model: King Arthur & Knights of Round Table.

The Future: Increasing Creativity & Innovation Through the Interaction & Cross-Fertilization Of People from Different Cultures:

Model: A + B = C:

USA & Japanese Interactions Create Something New

Together, or Influence Each Other's Cultures in Meaningful Ways

Examples:

--Western/US Influences on Japanese Culture

--Eastern/Japanese Influence on Western/US Culture

Also Individuals becoming their own unique synthesis of different cultural influences on their own lives.
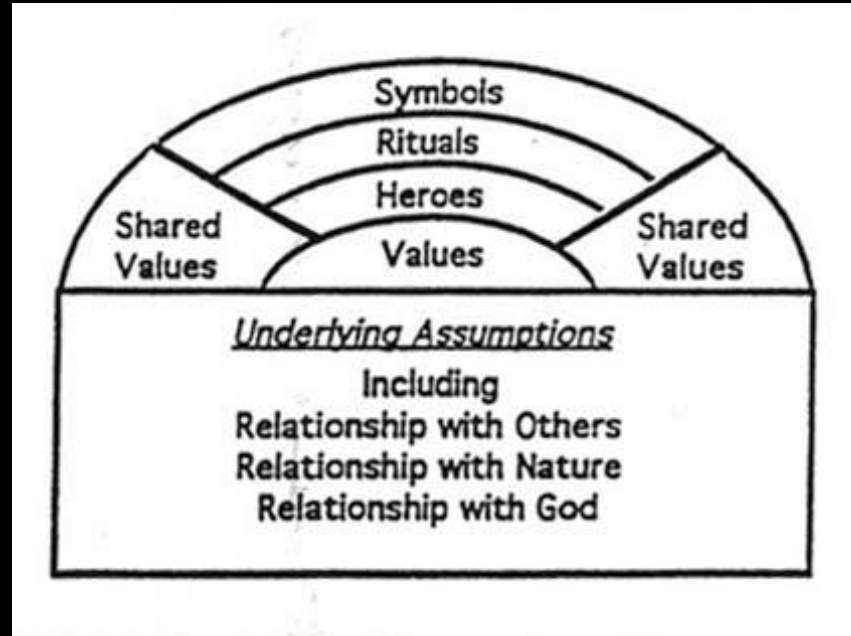
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Creativity & Innovation: East-West (Japan-US)

* Introduction to Culture and Intercultural Communication, and a Definition of Terms [see Diagram]

* Two Opposite Archetypal Worldviews Based on Opposite Underlying Values, which fit US-Japanese Cultures [see Diagram]

* Possibility of Discovering the Unity and Interdependence Between Seeming Opposites, Leading to a Both/And Worldview, & to Creativity & Innovation Resulting from the Interactions Between US & Japanese Cultures [see Diagram]

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Creativity & Innovation: East-West (Japan-US)

<u>Culture and Intercultural Communication</u>

Visible and Invisible Aspects of Culture

Two Opposite Cultural Paradigms:

1)Reality as Separate Parts: More US Culture

2) Reality as Homogenized Unity: More Japanese Culture

AREA	SEGMENTED THINKING WORLD VIEW	INTERDEPENDENT THINKING & WORLDVIEW
IDENTITY	Individual Identity—As Separate Individuals	Collective Identity—As Members of a Group,i.e., in Relationship to Others
SOCIETY	Separate Individuals	Homogenized Unity
NATURE	Separate from Nature, thus Try to Control Nature	Part of Nature,thus Live in Harmony with Nature
GOD/SPIRIT	God is Transcendent and Separate from Humans	Spirit is Indwelling in Nature & in All Things-- Minerals, Plants, Animals, & Humans
SCIENCE	Divide Reality Up Into Separate Parts and Analyze Each Separately	Reality is an Interdependent Whole; Seek to Balance Different Parts Relative to Each Other
MEDICINE	Body Made Up of Separate Parts; Take Out Defective Parts Through Surgery,Etc.	Body is an Energy Flow System--Ki. Goal is to Keep Energy in Different Parts of Body in Balance.
CONFLICT RESOLUTION	Adversarial, Win-Lose Approach (Win for Own Side);Example:Litigation	Seek Harmony and Win-Win Outcomes. Example: Mediation.
CULTURE	Low Context: Goal & Results-Oriented (Male Principle); More Western Cultures	High Context: Process & Relationship-Oriented (Female Principle); More Eastern/Non-Western Cultures.

Three Cultural Paradigms or Worldviews:

1) Reality as Homogen-ized Unity: (Japan/East)

2) Reality as Separate Parts: (US/West)

3) Reality as Complex Systems (Based on Both Unity & Diversity of Parts): (E&W Together =World)

NOTE: Different Types of C&I Can Occur in *Each* Context

ITEM	POLE ONE	BOTH/AND (not either/or)	POLE TWO
Cultural Identity	Group/Collective Identity	Both Group AND Individual Needs and Identity Important (Maslow's Synergistic Society	Individual Identity
Male-Female Principles	Female Principle: Identity through Relationships	Both Relationships AND Achievements Important	Male Principle: Identity through Achievements
Means/Ends	Means More Important (more Eastern Cultures)	Means AND Ends Both Important (Gandhi: "The means are as important as the ends.")	Ends More Important (more Western Cultures)
Spiritual/Material Values	Spiritual/Unseen Values Most Important	Both Spiritual AND Material Values Important	Material/Seen Values Most Important
High-Low Context Cultures	High Context Cultures: More Process-Oriented. Must develop relation-ships and get to know people (develop trust) before can do business	Both Relationships /Process AND Goals/Achievements Important	Low Context Cultures: More Goal/Achievement Oriented. Can do business with anyone (because have protection of the law)
Culture & Thinking	Concrete Thinking More Prevalent: conversation tends to the concrete.	Concrete AND Abstract Thinking Prevalent	Abstract Thinking More Prevalent: conversation tends to the abstract.
Religion	Immanent Spirituality	Both Immanent AND Transcendent Forms of Spirituality	Transcendent God
Religion	Female Images of Divinity: Nature Spirits, Mother Nature/Goddess, and/or Goddesses	Male AND Female Images of Divinity: Gods & Goddesses as Attributes of the One God or Spirit (which transcends all duality)	Male Images of Divinity: One God (Male)

Creativity & Innovation: East-West (Japan-US)

A Broader Example of Creativity & Innovation:

A Holistic, Integrative View of Peace, Based on Contributions from Western, Eastern, & Indigenous Cultures
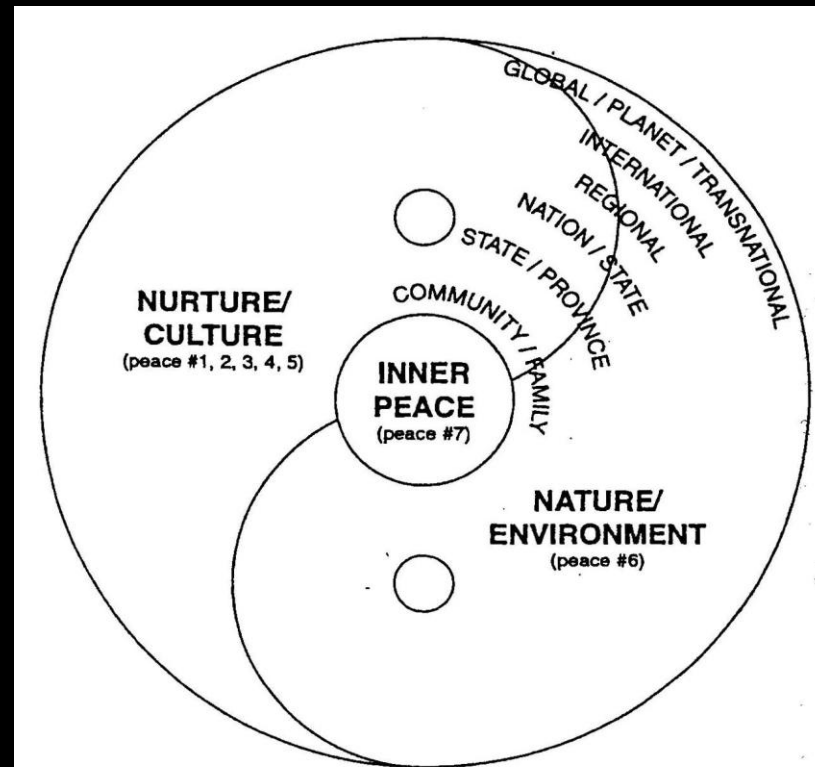

Fig. 2: Relationship Between Inner/Outer Aspects of Peace
Need Dynamic Balance Between:
* Inner Peace and Aspects of Outer Peace
* Nature/Environment & Nurture/Culture

A Broader Example:
A Holistic, Integrative View of Peace Based on Contributions from Western, Eastern, & Indigenous Cultures

* *Western Cultures*—start with forms of outer peace & trying
• to change the external world & work for social justice, etc.
* *Eastern Cultures*—start with inner peace
* *Indigenous Cultures*—start with peace with the earth.
* *Together*--they create a more powerful vision of peace.

<u>Conclusions</u>:

On Endless Possibilities for Creativity & Innovation Resulting from the Ongoing Interactions of Eastern, Western, & Indigenous Cultures —including U.S. & Japanese Cultures