

# Cultural Adjustment

## Unit Overview for the Trainer

This unit provides participants with an overview of cultural adjustment. It focuses on the following key points:

- ▶ Cultural adjustment is a process that happens over a long period of time. The process is different for different people, but there are certain stages to the process that most people go through as they adjust to a new culture.
- ▶ It is important for refugees to develop healthy ways to cope with the stresses and changes (such as changes in family roles) that occur as they adjust to life in the United States.
- ▶ Although Americans are open to other cultures and ways of doing things, there are certain basic values, beliefs, and practices that they expect residents of the United States to follow.

Some of the refugees' traditional practices may differ from those of most Americans. Some practices may be considered unacceptable and even illegal. Like others who have left their homes and resettled in a foreign land, refugees may feel worried and frustrated as they adjust to life in the United States. These feelings are normal and usually go away over time. The adjustment process can take 2 to 5 years. Being patient, keeping an open mind, and learning healthy ways to cope with stress and culture shock can help ease the process. Finding a job and learning English will also help refugees adjust.

This unit includes seven activity plans. The first provides an overview of the topic and contains the most important information. It is recommended that this activity be provided to all newly arrived refugees in reception and placement (R&P) orientation sessions. The rest of the activities can be covered if there is a need for them and enough time.

At the beginning of each activity plan in this unit is an introduction for the trainer, which highlights the plan's key concepts and main messages.

The seven plans are as follows:

- ▶ *The Basics: Cultural Adjustment.* During this session, participants will learn about the stages of cultural adjustment and how they may go through the process. They will learn that the period of cultural adjustment varies from person to person and that becoming self-sufficient and taking care of one's self are very important during this period. Participants will then learn how to find support if they are experiencing emotional health challenges.
- ▶ *Diverse Communities.* In this session, participants will gain an understanding of the diversity of the U.S. population. Participants will learn about the importance of being tolerant and respectful of those different from them, while expecting tolerance and respect from others.

- ▶ *Punctuality.* This session looks at the importance of being on time for meetings and appointments in the United States. Participants learn that being late is considered disrespectful and may have negative consequences.
- ▶ *Family Roles.* In this session, participants will learn about the changes in family roles that refugee families often experience in the United States and explore ways to handle them.
- ▶ *Parenting Practices.* In this session, participants will look at parenting challenges that refugee families often face and consider culturally acceptable and legal ways to handle these situations in the United States.
- ▶ *Adjusting to Changes and Challenges.* During this session, participants will explore some of the feelings they may have and changes they might undergo as they adjust to life in their new communities. Then they will consider how they might cope with these feelings and changes.

The following chart shows which *R&P Orientation Objectives and Indicators* are included in each of the activity plans in this unit.

	Content Objective	Learning Indicator	Activity Plan
<b>Role of the Local Resettlement Agency</b>	Assistance provided by the local resettlement agency and public assistance is limited and benefits vary across agencies, locations, and cases	Participants can verbalize that they will receive assistance but non-urgent issues may not be addressed immediately	Adjusting to Changes and Challenges
<b>Refugee Status</b>	Refugees may be eligible to file for family reunification	Participants know where to get assistance in the filing process	Adjusting to Changes and Challenges
<b>English</b>	For both adults and children, learning English is critical to successful adjustment in the U.S.	Participants can list reasons why learning English is important for successful adjustment in the U.S.	The Basics: Cultural Adjustment
<b>Public Assistance</b>	There are responsibilities associated with some types of assistance	Participants understand the importance of maintaining communication with their public assistance caseworker (when applicable)	Adjusting to Changes and Challenges
<b>U.S. Laws</b>	There are legal rights and restrictions related to family life	Participants know laws regarding domestic violence	Family Roles
		Participants know laws regarding child supervision, neglect, and abuse, including acceptable methods of disciplining a child	Parenting Practices

	Content Objective	Learning Indicator	Activity Plan
Your New Community	There are community and public services that are available to support residents	Participants can identify community services relevant to their specific needs, such as senior services or child care/day care	Family Roles
	Members of the refugee's ethnic or religious group who live in the area may be a good source of support	Participants are aware of Ethnic Community-Based Organizations or other organizations that serve members of their community	The Basics: Cultural Adjustment
Employment	Early employment and job retention are essential to survival in the U.S., and must be the primary focus for all employable adults (men and women)	Participants can articulate that turning down any job could be used as a reason to lose benefits	Adjusting to Changes and Challenges
	There are general characteristics of U.S. professional and work culture to which refugees must adapt in order to be successful in finding and maintaining employment	Participants can identify appropriate and desirable workplace behavior	Punctuality
Health	There are norms associated with health care services in the U.S.	Participants can acknowledge the importance of being on time for health appointments	Punctuality
	There are local resources available to support refugees' mental health	Participants understand that experiencing culture shock is a normal part of adjustment	The Basics: Cultural Adjustment
		Participants understand that services are available to support their mental health	The Basics: Cultural Adjustment
Safety	Police and law enforcement agencies exist to help people if they become a victim of a crime	Participants understand the role of the police and know that police and other law enforcement officials are trustworthy and are there to help them	Adjusting to Changes and Challenges
Cultural Adjustment	There are core characteristics that define the American experience	Participants understand that the U.S. is a culturally diverse society and that there can be widely varying cultural norms in different parts of the country	Diverse Communities
		Participants are familiar with key philosophies that are the foundation of American culture and law, such as individualism, non-discrimination, and gender equality	Diverse Communities Adjusting to Changes and Challenges

	<b>Content Objective</b>	<b>Learning Indicator</b>	<b>Activity Plan</b>
<b>Cultural Adjustment</b>	There are cultural norms and expectations that are fairly widespread throughout the U.S.	Participants are familiar with issues of etiquette, such as punctuality, politeness, appropriate noise levels, and appropriate dress and appearance	Diverse Communities Punctuality
	There are numerous phases of cultural adjustment	Participants can indicate that cultural adjustment is a multi-step, long-term process	The Basics: Cultural Adjustment
	Resettlement may have an impact on family roles and dynamics	Participants can identify situations in which current roles and family dynamics may be challenged upon resettlement in the U.S.	Family Roles Adjusting to Changes and Challenges
	Expectations regarding parenting practices may differ in the U.S. from what refugees are used to	Participants can identify parenting practices that may be unfamiliar or challenging	Parenting Practices
		Participants can identify parenting practices that are illegal or unacceptable in the U.S.	Parenting Practices
	There are some basic coping mechanisms to deal with the stressors of adjustment	Participants can list possible coping mechanisms for themselves and their families	The Basics: Cultural Adjustment Family Roles
		Participants can articulate that honoring and preserving their home culture can help facilitate successful adjustment to life in the U.S.	The Basics: Cultural Adjustment
		Participants can identify the types of religious and/or cultural resources that may exist in the communities where they settle	The Basics: Cultural Adjustment
	There are ways to seek assistance from others in your community	Participants can identify possible sources of assistance when facing adjustment challenges	The Basics: Cultural Adjustment
	<b>Education</b>	There are legal and normative expectations regarding schooling in the U.S.	Participants understand the concept of parental involvement in schooling
The value for adults and teenagers to continue formal education should be weighed against the need to work		Participants can identify education as a lifelong experience	Family Roles

# Cultural Adjustment

## The Basics: Cultural Adjustment

### Introduction for the Trainer

#### Key Content

During this session, participants will learn about cultural adjustment, some ways to cope with the stresses involved with adjustment, and the importance of self-sufficiency in the adjustment process. Participants will also learn about sources of support when they are feeling sad or overwhelmed during the adjustment process.

#### Main Messages

Adjusting to a new country and way of life takes time. There are four common phases of cultural adjustment that refugees may recognize as they continue through their adjustment process: honeymoon, culture shock, adjustment, and mastery.

Refugees often feel sad or overwhelmed as they adjust to their new surroundings and culture. Encourage participants to consider some coping mechanisms to deal with the stresses of adjustment. Emphasize the importance of finding a job and learning English to a smooth adjustment. Trainers should let participants know that if they or a family member ever feel unable to cope with the stress of their new life in the United States, they should seek professional help right away.



35 minutes

#### Objectives

Participants will be able to do the following:

- ▶ Identify and describe the four common phases of cultural adjustment
- ▶ Explain how the phases of cultural adjustment relate to their own personal adjustment process
- ▶ Discuss why seeking help when feeling sad or overwhelmed is important
- ▶ Describe how to find sources of support if feeling sad or overwhelmed

#### Materials

- U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment Descriptions (included)
- The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment (included)
- Ball of yarn or string
- Balloon
- Optional: Scissors
- Optional: Flipchart paper, markers, and tape

#### Key English Vocabulary

- ▶ *culture*
- ▶ *culture shock*
- ▶ *support*
- ▶ *I feel \_\_\_\_\_ [excited, sad, tired] today.*

## Session Preparation

The trainer should become familiar enough with The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment Descriptions to discuss The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment poster during this session.

Print The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment in as large a format possible.

An empty space where participants can comfortably stand in a circle without furniture is ideal for this session.

Blow up the balloon and tie the end.

## Trainer's Introduction of Session to Participants

During this session, we will talk about the common phases of cultural adjustment and how they may relate to you as you adjust to life in the United States. Cultural adjustment happens over time, and is different for each person. Being self-sufficient and able to take care of yourself during this time will help you adjust.

When you feel sad or overwhelmed, finding help or support is very important. During this session, we will consider different places to go when support is needed.

## Introductory Exercise

*Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the sentence. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the sentence whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.*

Show participants The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment poster. Explain the chart (length of time, levels of happiness, and the emotions that the faces in the poster show). Tell participants that although everyone experiences cultural adjustment differently, this poster shows the common U-curve that most people go through when they move to a new place. Point to each phase on the poster and ask participants what the phase is called, how people might feel during this phase, and at what point in time this phase might occur. Refer to The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment Descriptions as needed.

Participants stand, forming two lines facing each other. Each participant should be standing a few feet away from her or his partner (or partners, if there is an odd number of participants).

Stand behind one line so only half the participants can see you (with the other half standing with their backs to you). Hold up The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment poster and point to a phase on the chart. Participants facing you must make a face that demonstrates that phase of cultural adjustment. Their partners (with their backs to you and the poster) guess what phase is being shown.

Do the same for the other half of the group, pointing to a different place on the graph so participants are demonstrating a different phase of cultural adjustment. Continue going back and forth for 3 to 5 minutes.

Ask participants to sit down.

## Activity

Ask participants which cultural adjustment phase would be the hardest. *[Participants should choose the culture shock phase.]* Ask participants to think about sources of support (such as family, religion, and friends) that can help support them when life gets hard or they feel sad. Ask participants to stand in a circle. Stand in the circle with them, holding the ball of yarn and the balloon. Place the balloon on the floor next to you (or hold it between your feet if it is moving around too much).

While holding the ball of yarn, say one thing that provides you with support when you feel sad, such as talking to a friend or going for a walk. Ask participants who have thought of something to share to raise their hands. *[The trainer may need to remind participants that they already thought about sources of support.]* Hold the end piece of the yarn and gently toss the ball of yarn to a participant with a raised hand. That person shares one thing that provides support during difficult times. Again, ask participants to raise their hands if they have something to share. The participant holding the yarn makes the string of yarn between the trainer and the participant taut. The participant then gently tosses the ball of yarn to another participant with a raised hand. The group continues in this way until most participants have shared at least one thing. Encourage participants to say something different from what others have said. If participants are having trouble coming up with something new, they can say something that has already been stated.

When all participants have shared one thing, the circle may look like this:



Tell participants that the yarn web inside the circle demonstrates the support we have when we are feeling sad or overwhelmed. Ask participants if the web is strong enough. If participants say no, continue the activity until participants feel they have enough support.

When participants say that the web is strong enough, ask for the ball of yarn to be gently tossed back to the trainer. Ask a participant near you to hold the initial piece of yarn for you. Ask another participant to hold the ball of yarn. Tell participants that the group will test the support by throwing the balloon into the web of support. If participants can keep the balloon above the ground only using the web (no walls, furniture, hands, or bodies), there is enough support. If the balloon touches the ground, the group must keep tossing the yarn ball until participants are able to keep the balloon above the ground with their web of supports.

Ask participants to sit down and debrief the session using the questions below.

## Debriefing Questions

- ▶ What are the common phases of cultural adjustment, in the order they usually occur? How do people feel during each phase?
- ▶ What phase would be the hardest? How will you cope when you reach this phase?
- ▶ When you are feeling sad or overwhelmed, what are some important things to remember about cultural adjustment?
- ▶ What types of support did the group identify? Which will be most helpful to you?
- ▶ Why is support important? Why is this web important?

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## *Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups*

To conduct the introductory exercise:

- ▶ When working with an individual, discuss the common phases of cultural adjustment while showing the corresponding pictures on The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment poster.
- ▶ When working with two or three participants, conduct the exercise as it was previously described. The trainer can take part or participants can take turns making faces among themselves.

To conduct the activity, cut 15 to 20 pieces of yarn, 8 to 12 inches long. Ask participants to come up with sources of support. For each one, lay a piece of yarn on a flat surface, such as a table or floor. Lay the pieces across one another; the more pieces there are, the stronger the web will be. Discuss the strength of the web based on how much of the flat surface can be seen. Debrief the session using the questions provided.

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## Variations and Considerations

When the activity is complete, cut the web into pieces, giving each participant a piece to take home. When participants are feeling sad or overwhelmed, the piece of yarn can remind them of some of the supports shared during the session.

On a piece of flipchart paper, record the types of support discussed during the activity so that participants can later refer to them.

If possible, prepare a larger version of The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment in poster format such as the version available for automatic download here: <http://goo.gl/Jvk56m>.

Consider preparing The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment handouts for each participant.

For participants who do not know English well, use translated versions of The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment.

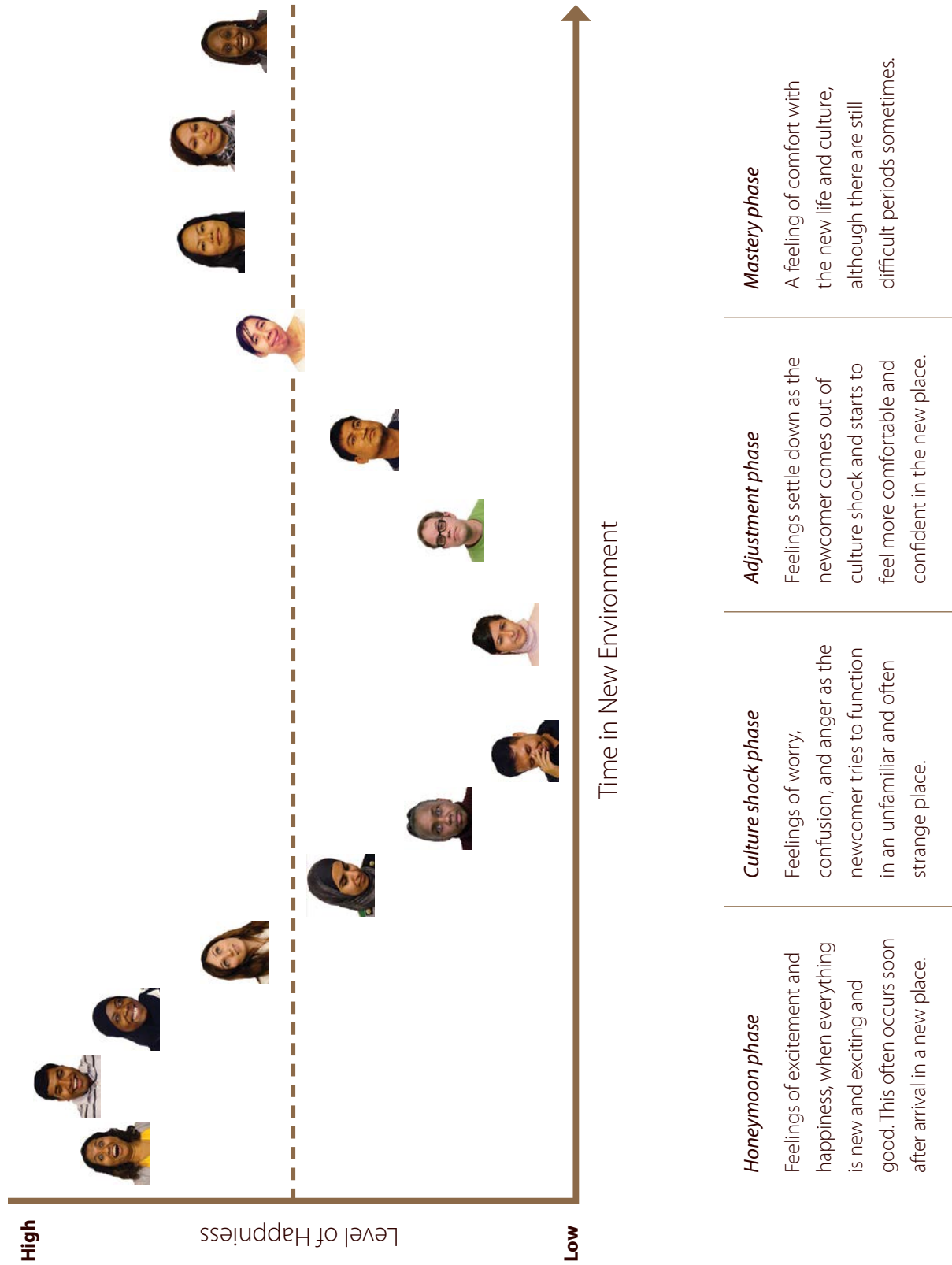
Share some of the services available in your community for participants feeling sad or overwhelmed. A Professionals Providing Adjustment Support in the Community worksheet is provided in the activity plan "Health and Hygiene: Addressing Emotional Health Challenges." Keep in mind, however, that insurance plans may require that the patient's primary doctor or nurse provide a referral for therapy or other medical services. For this reason, trainers may want to tell participants that the first step in finding counseling support is to talk to their primary doctor and get a referral from her/him.

If counseling resources are not available in your community, two national mental health hotlines with language support and a suicide prevention toolkit designed for refugees are available:

- ▶ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (<http://goo.gl/QxbfBg>): 1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
This suicide prevention hotline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and staffed by trained crisis counselors who provide information about mental health services available in the caller's area. The website also offers free materials, such as quick reference wallet-size cards for counselors and at-risk people who may want to call the hotline, posters, pre-made audio public service announcements, and magnets. Languages include English and Spanish, and 148 others through telephone interpreters.
- ▶ LIFENET (<http://goo.gl/Cn5yAb>): 1-800-LIFENET (543-3638)  
This suicide prevention hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is sponsored by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and can be accessed from anywhere in the United States. It offers services to individuals experiencing a mental health or substance abuse crisis and to their family and friends. Its staff of mental health professionals refers individuals to mental health and substance abuse services. Languages include English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Japanese, Korean, Fujianese, and other languages through telephone interpreters.
- ▶ The Refugee Health Technical Assistance Center (RHTAC): <http://goo.gl/w3Fv2P>  
This organization offers a Suicide Prevention Toolkit, containing, among other items, some materials in Nepali and posters in Arabic, Burmese, Karen, and Nepali. The RHTAC website also offers other related suicide-prevention resources.

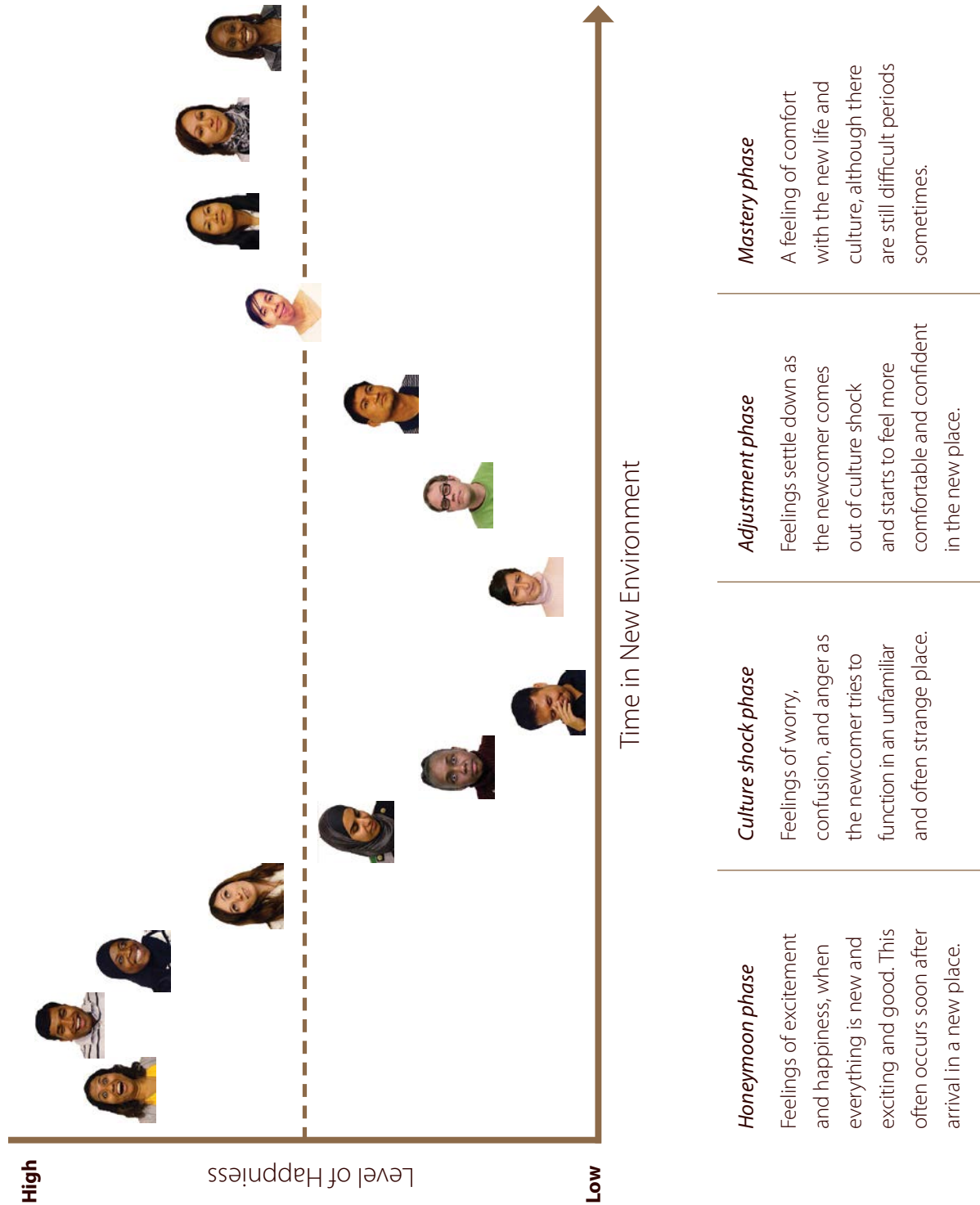
# The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment

The graph below shows the common phases of cultural adjustment that most people experience when moving to or visiting a new place.



## The U-Curve of Cultural Adjustment Descriptions

The graph below shows the common phases of cultural adjustment that most people experience when moving to or visiting a new place. The timeframe in which this u-curve occurs differs for everyone, so it is important that participants are aware of the phases in their own lives and consider them when their adjustment becomes a challenge.



# Cultural Adjustment

## Diverse Communities

### Introduction for the Trainer

#### Key Content

During this session, participants will learn about cultural diversity in the United States and the importance of being tolerant of and respectful to those different from them.

#### Main Messages

The United States is a diverse society, made up of people of different races, ethnicities, religious views, and other practices or beliefs. Showing tolerance and respect towards all people, whatever their beliefs and backgrounds, is an important value for most Americans. Refugees should be tolerant and respectful to those who are different from them, and they should expect the same tolerance and respect from others.



35 minutes

#### Objectives

Participants will be able to do the following:

- ▶ Identify different types of diversity
- ▶ Describe the need to show respect to others

#### Key English Vocabulary

- ▶ *diversity*
- ▶ *respect*
- ▶ *tolerance*
- ▶ *Please tell me something about you or your family.*

#### Materials

- Flipchart paper and tape
- Colored markers, 1-2 per participant

## Note to Trainer

This session can be conducted easily and quickly.

## Session Preparation

Prepare a piece of flipchart for every three to four participants by drawing a rough outline of a person on each piece.

## Trainer's Introduction of Session to Participants

The United States is a very diverse country, and our community is made up of a diverse group of people. Being tolerant and respectful of those different from you is considered very important in our community and the country. Just as the community should show you and your family respect, so you should show respect towards those around you.

## Introductory Exercise

Ask participants:

*What are the different ways groups of people can be diverse?*

Encourage participants to think not only about the United States but also about the places they lived in before coming to the United States. Answers could include the following: race, religion, age, gender, ethnicities, level of education, physical ability, culture, income level, past experiences, family make-up, sexual preference, eating habits, immigration status, marital status, country of origin, and political viewpoints. Record notes from the discussion on flipchart paper.

*Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the sentence. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the sentence whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.*

## Activity

Divide participants into groups of three to four people. Give each group the piece of prepared flipchart paper and some colored markers.

Based on the earlier discussion, group members think about the types of diversity they have seen in their community. Within the outlines of the figure on the flipchart paper, members draw pictures or write about the diversity they have seen.

Bring the full group together and ask small groups to present the diversified outline.

After the presentations, debrief the session with participants using the questions below.

## Debriefing Questions

- ▶ What are some ways groups of people can be diverse? What are some ways people can be the same?
- ▶ Why do you think it is important to show respect for people who might be different from you?
- ▶ How can you communicate with people that you disagree with?
- ▶ What are some situations in which you will need to interact with people different from you in the United States?
- ▶ What is important to remember about the diversity in your community?

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## *Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups*

When working with an individual or a small group of participants, lead a brainstorming session similar to the one described earlier. Add examples of diversity from the local community as well as those provided in the introductory exercise. Working with participants, record the discussion on flipchart paper.

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## Variations and Considerations

If possible, group participants by language background for the activity so that participants can communicate in a common language.

Bring magazines, scissors, and glue for participants so that they can cut and paste pictures into the outline of the figure.

Ask participants to collect pictures from magazines or newspapers showing the diversity they have seen in their community and bring these to the session to paste into their group's outline of the figure.

# Cultural Adjustment

## Punctuality

### Introduction for the Trainer

#### Key Content

During this session, participants will learn about the importance of being on time for professional and personal meetings and appointments in the United States.

#### Main Messages

In the United States, people are expected to arrive on time for appointments and meetings, whether professional or personal. Being late is seen as disrespectful, and in some situations being late can have serious consequences. The trainer should warn participants that they may lose their jobs if they show up late for work, and they may lose appointments if they are not on time to meet with their case workers/managers, doctors, or other service providers.



35 minutes

#### Objectives

Participants will be able to do the following:

- ▶ Explain the importance of being on time
- ▶ State some negative consequences of being late
- ▶ Identify ways to avoid being late

#### Key English Vocabulary

- ▶ *early*
- ▶ *late*
- ▶ *on time*
- ▶ *Be on time! Don't be late!*

#### Materials

- Flipchart paper, markers, and tape
- Punctuality Game Board (2 options included), 1 per group of 3–4
- Playing pieces (pieces of paper, pebbles, paper clips, etc.), 1 per group of 3–4
- Late Examples List (included)

## Trainer’s Introduction of Session to Participants

In the United States, you are expected to arrive on time or even a little early for appointments and work. This is considered respectful behavior. If you are late, it is considered disrespectful, and there can be negative consequences.

### Introductory Exercise

*Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the phrase. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the phrase whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.*

Conduct a large group brainstorming session by asking participants, “In any of the places you lived before you came to the United States, what events did you need to be on time for?” Record notes on flipchart paper.

### Activity

Tell participants that the session will now talk about being on time for events in the United States.

Divide participants into groups of three to four people.

Distribute a Punctuality Game Board and a playing piece to each group.

Groups place their playing piece on the “Start” block. Groups move their playing piece one space to the left, following the arrows. Participants discuss what is being shown in the picture and what will happen if they are late. Refer to the Late Examples List to help participants understand the negative consequences there may be. Participants then discuss ways to avoid being late.

Groups then move their playing piece one space on their Punctuality Game Board, following the arrows, and continue their discussion about the consequences of being late and how to avoid it.

Bring the full group together and debrief the session using the questions below.

### Debriefing Questions

- ▶ Why is it important to be on time for jobs, appointments, and meetings?
- ▶ Besides being disrespectful, what are some negative consequences of being late?
- ▶ What can you do to make sure you are on time?



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## Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups

When working with an individual or a small group, conduct the introductory exercise as a brainstorming session by asking participants why it is important to be on time. The trainer can provide examples from the Punctuality Game Board, such as going to a doctor's appointment, catching a bus, attending classes, or meeting someone. The Punctuality Game can be played with as few as two people, so if the trainer participates, the game can be played when there is a single participant. As described earlier, participants take turns moving the playing piece to the next square by following the arrows. Participants and the trainer discuss why it is important to be on time for the situation shown in the square that the playing piece sits on. Then participants move the playing piece to the next square. When finished, debrief the session using the questions provided earlier.

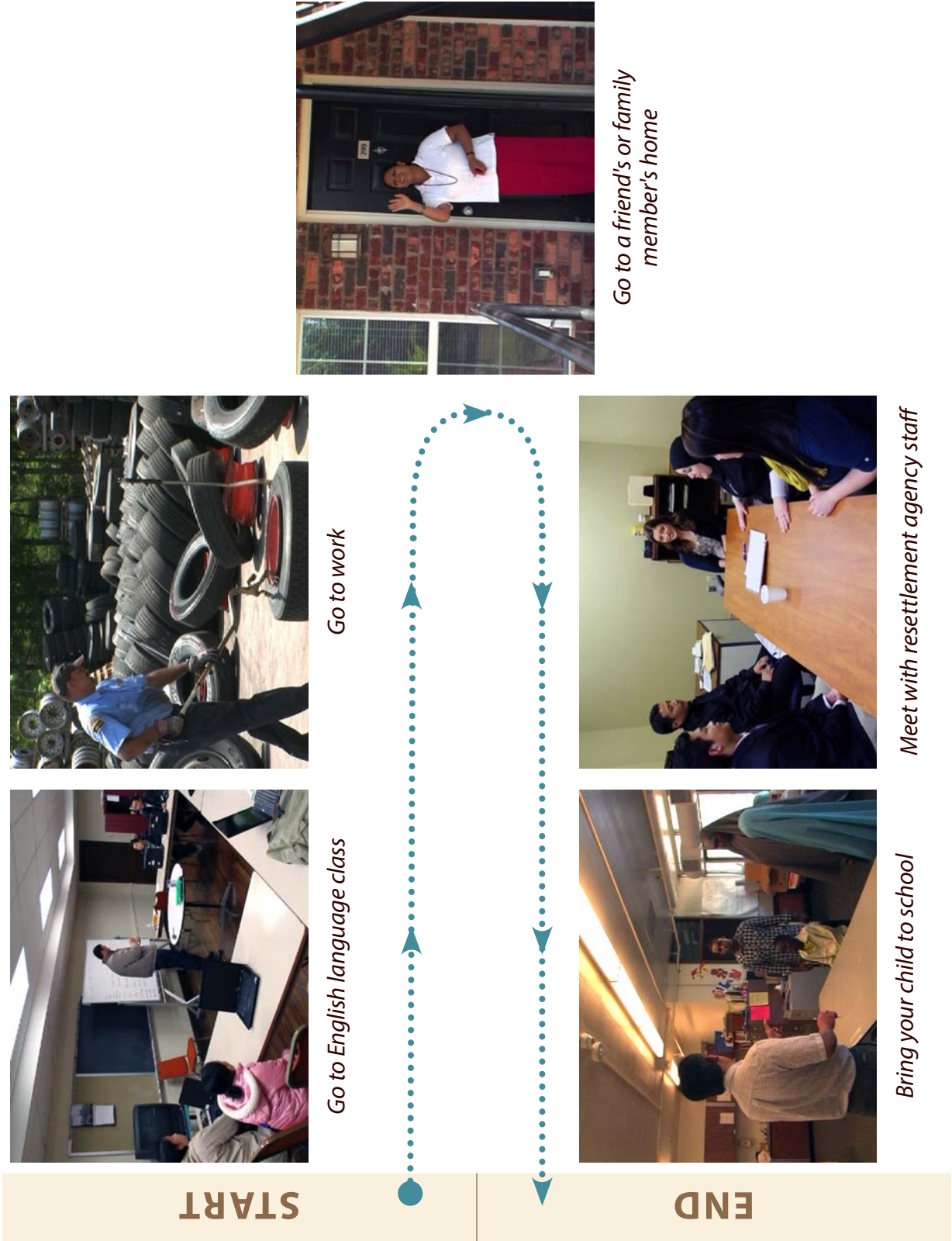
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## Variations and Considerations

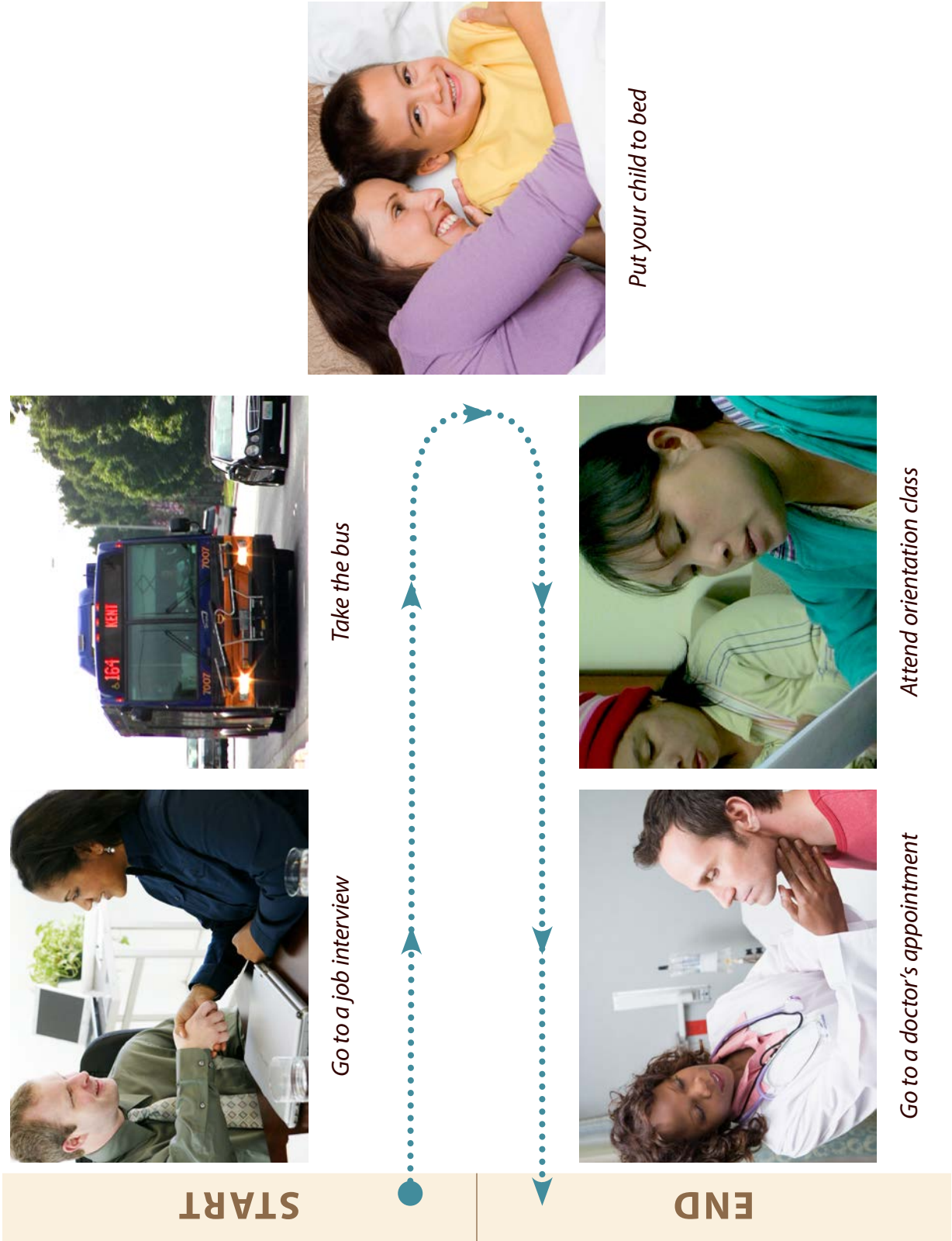
If possible, group participants by language background for the activity so that participants can communicate in a common language.

If needed, use translated versions of the Punctuality Game Boards.

# Punctuality Game Board 1








# Punctuality Game Board 2








## Late Examples List

### Punctuality Game Board 1

<i>If you are late when you ...</i>	<i>then you may ...</i>
 <p>go to English language class,</p>	miss important information.
 <p>go to work,</p>	lose your job.
 <p>go to a friend's or family member's home,</p>	shorten the visit or miss it completely.
 <p>meet with resettlement agency staff,</p>	miss important information or a meeting.
 <p>bring your child to school,</p>	risk punishment from the school for your child, or your child might miss learning something important.

### Punctuality Game Board 2

<i>If you are late when you ...</i>	<i>then you may ...</i>
 <p>go to a job interview,</p>	not be offered the job.
 <p>take the bus,</p>	miss the bus, have to wait for another bus, or pay more money to get where you are going in a different way.
 <p>put your child to bed,</p>	have a grumpy child who is tired and inattentive.
 <p>attend orientation class,</p>	miss important information.
 <p>go to a doctor's appointment,</p>	miss the appointment, be charged for the appointment without attending, and the doctor may refuse you as a patient in the future.

# Cultural Adjustment

## Family Roles

### Introduction for the Trainer

#### Key Content

During this session, participants will learn about the changes in family roles that may occur during resettlement and how to handle them in a healthy manner.

#### Main Messages

Resettlement may affect family dynamics by changing existing roles. The change in family roles is one of the most stressful parts of resettlement for refugees. However, there are healthy ways to deal with these role changes. Participants should be encouraged to communicate openly and honestly with family members so that each person has a good idea of what everyone in the family is feeling and going through.



40 minutes

#### Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- ▶ Describe some role changes that may occur within their family
- ▶ Discuss how role changes might make them and other members of their family feel
- ▶ Explain ways to handle the potential role changes in a healthy manner

#### Materials

- Blank printer paper, 5 different colored pieces
- Index cards (or pieces of colored paper) the same color as the 5 colored blank papers
- Flipchart paper, markers, and tape
- Family Roles Critical Incidents (included), 2-3 copies
- Optional: Age Group Pictures (included)

#### Key English Vocabulary

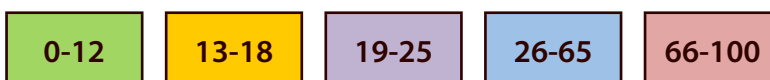
- ▶ *change*
- ▶ *relationship*
- ▶ *roles*
- ▶ *Let's talk about it.*

## Note to Trainer

When working with participants who are parents, this is a good introductory session to the activity plan, "Cultural Adjustment: Parenting Practices."

## Session Preparation

Make Age Group Signs by writing age groups (0-12, 13-19, 20-25, 26-60, 61-100) on the five pieces of different colored paper. For example:



Hang the Age Group Signs in front of the training space.

Put a supply of the five kinds of different colored index cards on each table.

Review the Family Roles Critical Incidents. Determine the approximate number of groups that will participate and which incidents will be of most interest to participants.

## Trainer's Introduction of Session to Participants

Many immigrant families find that roles within their family change after the family moves to the United States. During this session, we will explore some common changes within families and think about how they could be handled.

## Introductory Exercise

*Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the sentence. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the sentence whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.*

Review the Age Group Signs hanging in the front of the training space. Ask participants to think about the family members they live with and take index cards that match their situation. For example, a family may be made up of a 10-year-old, a 14-year-old, a 16-year-old, a 40-year-old, a 46-year-old, a 59-year-old, and a 71-year-old. That participant would take one green index card (for the 10-year-old), two orange index cards (for the 14- and 16-year-olds), three blue index cards (for the 40-, 46-, and 59-year-olds), and one pink index card (for the 71-year-old).

Ask participants to hold their index cards and stand. Participants walk around the training space and form groups of three or four with others who have similar age groups in their family. For example, participants with elderly members in their family might sit together, while participants with children

under 12 might sit together. Participants will most likely be able to sit in a number of groups. Try to keep the groups more or less evenly numbered, with no more than four members per group.

## Activity

Ask each group to choose a spokesperson to share highlights from the upcoming discussions with the full group.

Read aloud one Family Roles Critical Incident followed by the questions. Participants discuss the questions in their small groups.

Bring the full group together and ask group spokespeople to share highlights from their small group discussions. Record notes on flipchart paper.

If there is time, continue in the same way with the other Family Roles Critical Incidents. Consider having small groups change the spokesperson for each incident discussed.

Debrief the session with participants using the questions below.

## Debriefing Questions

- ▶ What are some role changes that you heard about during this session?
- ▶ What are some ways your family might manage these role changes in a healthy way?

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## *Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups*

When working with an individual or a small group of participants, skip the introductory exercise. Choose two to three of the Family Roles Critical Incidents based on the family make-up of the individual participant or the small group. Read one Family Role Critical Incident aloud and discuss the questions with the individual or small group. Conclude with the debriefing questions, if appropriate.

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## Variations and Considerations

When working with a less literate group, consider using the Age Group Pictures in addition to the Age Group Signs. After printing and cutting the pictures along the dotted lines, hang them next to the corresponding Age Group Sign.

When working with more literate participants, print and cut out Family Roles Critical Incidents, in English or a language the participants can read. Make sure there is one literate participant in each small group during the introductory exercise. distribute one family roles critical incident to each small group for the activity discussion.

## Family Roles Critical Incidents

### Family Roles Critical Incident 1

Severin's daughter Aude learns English quickly at school and is able to help Severin do things, such as talk to store clerks and ask for directions. Severin does not feel confident going places alone, but he does not want to depend on his daughter.

*Discuss the critical incident and consider the following questions:*

- ▶ How do you think Severin feels?
- ▶ How would you feel if you were Severin?
- ▶ How might Aude feel about this situation?
- ▶ What are some things Severin could do to improve his situation?

### Family Roles Critical Incident 2

Chit Aung and Eh Paw are proud of their teenage son, Kyaw Oo, and are happy that he has been doing well in school, learning English quickly, and making new friends. Last week, however, Kyaw Oo arrived home on a school night after 10:00 pm. Chit Aung and Eh Paw asked him where he had been, and Kyaw Oo told them he had been studying. While they support his school work, Chit Aung and Eh Paw were upset that Kyaw Oo had not asked for permission or told them he would be out late.

*Discuss the critical incident and consider the following questions:*

- ▶ How would you feel if you were the parents?
- ▶ How do you think the son feels?
- ▶ What are some things each member of the family could do to avoid this situation in the future?

### Family Roles Critical Incident 3

Arjun and his wife Rupali resettled in their new community. Rupali quickly found a full-time job with benefits as a housekeeper at a hotel. After 6 months, Arjun was able to find a part-time job working at a grocery store. Arjun felt uncomfortable with the situation because Rupali had never worked outside the home before, and, as the family's main source of income, she was feeling more confident.

*Discuss the critical incident and consider the following questions:*

- ▶ How would you feel if you were Arjun or Rupali?
- ▶ What would you do?
- ▶ What could Arjun and Rupali do to deal in a positive way with the situation?



### Family Roles Critical Incident 4

Waabberi moved to the United States with his son, daughter-in-law, and four grandchildren. He was happy for his family, who seemed to be adjusting well to their new community. However, Waabberi did not have any friends and had very little to do during the day. He was also surprised by the disrespectful behaviors his grandchildren were developing, and felt sad that they wanted to speak only in English.

*Discuss the critical incident and consider the following questions:*

- ▶ How would you feel if you were Waabberi?
- ▶ What are some things Waabberi's family could do to help him?
- ▶ What could Waabberi do to help himself?
- ▶ What could he do about his grandchildren's behavior?

### Family Roles Critical Incident 5

William and Nicia were both able to find jobs quickly when they arrived in the United States. However, their work schedules did not allow William and Nicia to take care of their two young children during the day. Their case worker/manager suggested they find a child care center for the younger child and a preschool for the 4-year-old, or a group of working parents who could share child care responsibilities. William and Nicia had never had anyone but family look after their children and felt uncomfortable with these ideas.

*Discuss the critical incident and consider the following questions:*

- ▶ What are some options that William and Nicia have?
- ▶ What would you do if you were William or Nicia?

### Family Roles Critical Incident 6

Majid and his wife Ala resettled in the United States with their children, ages 4, 7, 9, and 13. Ala found a part-time job quickly and started working, leaving Majid home to care for their 4-year-old. Ala was often tired when she arrived home, so Majid cooked dinner for the family and did a lot of the household chores. Over time, Majid became frustrated with his new role in the family. Some evenings when he was feeling frustrated, Majid would hit Ala.

*Discuss the critical incident and consider the following questions:*

- ▶ Would you consider this home situation serious? Why?
- ▶ How would you feel if you were Majid? How would you feel if you were Ala?
- ▶ What are some things that Majid or Ala could do to help themselves or their family?

### **Family Roles Critical Incident 7**

Moe Win, Naw Ku, and their two school-age children resettled in their new community. The adults both found jobs, and the children were doing well in school. However, they all missed their home country and their friends and family. To feel better, Moe Win started drinking alcohol regularly.

*Discuss the critical incident and consider the following questions:*

- ▶ What is the problem in this incident?
- ▶ How would you feel if you were Moe Win? How would you feel if you were Naw Ku?
- ▶ How do you think the children feel about the situation?
- ▶ What are some things Moe Win could do to feel better?

### **Family Roles Critical Incident 8**

Sita Maya's son Kazi was not doing well in school. Sita Maya met with Kazi's teachers and tried to help Kazi with his homework, but he was not interested. Soon Kazi's teacher called Sita Maya to report that Kazi had not attended school that day. When Kazi arrived home, Sita Maya asked him what happened. Kazi did not respond, frustrating Sita Maya even more, so she slapped him.

*Discuss the critical incident and consider the following questions:*

- ▶ What is the problem in this incident?
- ▶ Do you think Sita did the right thing?
- ▶ How would you feel if you were Sita Maya? How do you think Kazi feels?
- ▶ What are some things Sita Maya or Kazi could do to help their family?

### **Family Roles Critical Incident 9**

Evrard and Cecile resettled in the United States with their three school-age children and their 22-year-old son Renan. Evrard, Cecile, and Renan were able to find jobs while the three younger children started school. Evrard and Cecile felt overwhelmed in their new community and were barely able to pay their rent and other bills. One day Renan told them that he wanted to study at the local community college instead of work. While Evrard and Cecile wanted Renan to be happy, their family needed Renan's income.

*Discuss the critical incident and consider the following questions:*

- ▶ How would you feel if you were Evrard or Cecile? How do you think Renan feels?
- ▶ What are some options for Evrard, Cecile, and Renan?
- ▶ If your family were in this situation, what would your family do?

Age Group Pictures



*Ages 0-12*



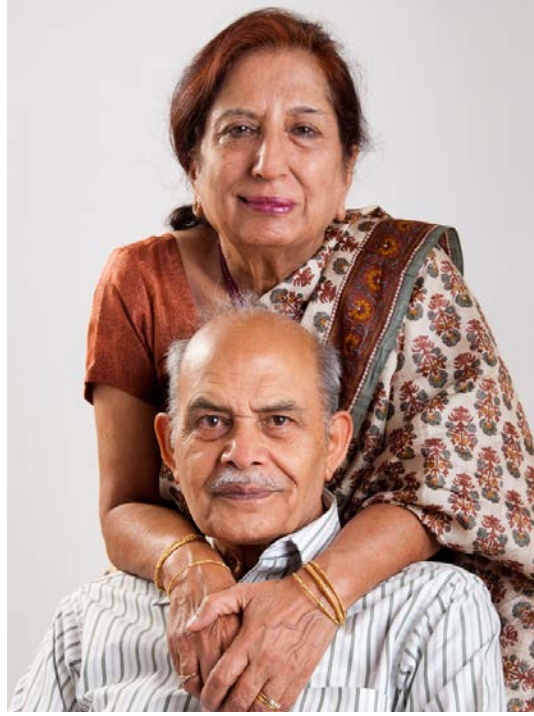
*Ages 13-18*



*Ages 19-25*



*Ages 26-65*



*Ages 66-100*

# Cultural Adjustment

## Parenting Practices

### Introduction for the Trainer

#### Key Content

During this session, participants will learn about common parenting practices in the United States.

#### Main Messages

Refugee parents may face challenges as their children adjust to the new culture faster and differently than they do. Parents may not like some of the things their children want to do or some of the ways they talk and act. Yet some of their parenting practices may be unacceptable or even illegal in the United States. If refugee parents think about the challenges they might face in the future, they may be better prepared to meet them.



30 minutes

#### Objectives

Participants will be able to do the following:

- ▶ Describe how they might feel in certain situations that might arise with their children
- ▶ Discuss some acceptable ways to control and discipline their children

#### Key English Vocabulary

- ▶ *appropriate*
- ▶ *children*
- ▶ *play*
- ▶ *Tell me about \_\_\_\_\_ [it, school, the playground, other kids, your homework, what happened, etc.].*

#### Materials

- Parenting Practice Scenarios (included)
- 4 pieces of blank paper
- Markers and tape

## Note to Trainer

When working with participants who are parents, this is a good follow-up session to the activity plan "Cultural Adjustment: Family Roles."

## Session Preparation

Label each of the blank papers "A," "B," "C," and "D." The letters should be large and visible from anywhere in the training space. Tape the four letters to the walls in different places so that they are spread out around the training space.

Review the Parenting Practice Scenarios and choose three to four that would be of most interest to the group.

## Trainer's Introduction of Session to Participants

Raising children is always a challenge, but raising children in a culture that is not your own brings special challenges. During this session, we will consider some situations you may face as parents in the United States. You will think about the situation and how you would handle it. Then you will consider whether the way you would handle the situation is acceptable and legal in the United States, and whether there are other ways of handling the situation.

Parents everywhere have strong ideas about the best way to raise their children. Try to keep an open mind during this session. If you do, you may leave the session with some good ideas to help you deal in an acceptable and effective way with the challenge of raising your children in a culture that is not your own.

## Introductory Exercise

*Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the sentence. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the sentence whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.*

## Activity

Read a Parenting Practice Scenario aloud to the full group. Then read the possible ways to handle the situation. Participants listen to the options, think about what they would do, and move to stand under options A, B, C, or D to show their responses.

Ask participants if their response is legal or illegal in the United States. To get the discussion going, invite one participant to stand under each of the A, B, C, and D responses and explain her or his response. Tell the participants the acceptable and legal response or responses. Then ask participants if there are any other acceptable ways to handle the situation.

Continue in the same way with the next Parenting Practice Scenario.

When finished, debrief the session with participants using the questions below.

## Debriefing Questions

- ▶ Which of the scenarios that we discussed during this session would be hardest for you to deal with? Why?
- ▶ What is one helpful thing you learned about managing a parenting challenge during this session?
- ▶ How are you feeling about the changes in culture and parent-child relationships that were discussed during this session?

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## *Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups*

When working with one to three participants, distribute four pieces of paper labeled "A," "B," "C," and "D" to each participant. Read a Parenting Practice Scenario aloud. Participants share their responses by holding up one of their labeled papers, and then explain their responses. Continue with the rest of the scenarios this way.

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## Variations and Considerations

If needed, use translated versions of the Parenting Practice Scenarios.



## Parenting Practice Scenarios

### Parenting Practice Scenario 1

Your infant, Rahim, has not been feeling well or sleeping well for the last week. You are feeling very tired and frustrated with Rahim for not sleeping. How would you handle this situation?

Possible responses:

- A. Make an appointment with Rahim's doctor to discuss the problem.
- B. Leave Rahim in the crib for a few hours and ignore the crying, hoping he will fall asleep.
- C. Have your older child or a neighbor take care of Rahim so you can take a break.
- D. Continue singing to Rahim. Eventually, he will have to go to sleep.

### Parenting Practice Scenario 2

Your 2-year-old, Leela, has been running all over the apartment, and you are tired of chasing her. Leela keeps opening the cabinet with the cleaning supplies and taking them out when you are not looking. How would you handle this situation?

Possible responses:

- A. Spank Leela and tell her to stop opening the cabinet.
- B. Move your cleaning supplies so they are out of Leela's reach.
- C. Put child safety locks on the cabinet doors where the cleaning supplies are kept.
- D. Have your 9-year-old child watch Leela to make sure she does not open the cabinet.

### Parenting Practice Scenario 3

Your 9-year-old daughter, Mi Mi, tells you that another girl at school has been making fun of the lunches you pack for her and pushing her on the playground at recess. How would you handle this situation?

Possible responses:

- A. Start sending Mi Mi to school with money for the lunch provided by the school.
- B. Talk to Mi Mi's teacher about what has been happening.
- C. Call the other girl's parents to complain about the issue.
- D. Tell Mi Mi to ignore it; things will get better.

#### **Parenting Practice Scenario 4**

Your son, Sherab, has been happy at his new elementary school and has made some good friends whom you like. He is invited to his friend Charles's birthday party, and Charles's mother offers to drive Sherab home after the party. When Sherab returns home, he asks you why Charles has two mothers instead of a mother and a father. How would you handle this situation?

Possible responses:

- A. Tell Sherab not to be friendly with Charles anymore.
- B. Ask Charles' parents about their family situation.
- C. Ask Sherab more about the party and Charles's family.
- D. Discuss the matter with your case worker/manager.

#### **Parenting Practice Scenario 5**

Your 13-year-old son, Asad, brings his first report card home from school, and his grades are very bad. You did not realize Asad was struggling so much. How would you handle this situation?

Possible responses:

- A. Punish Asad for his bad grades.
- B. Ask Asad why his grades are so poor.
- C. Talk to Asad's teacher about what he needs to do to improve.
- D. Find another school for Asad to attend.

#### **Parenting Practice Scenario 6**

Your teenage daughter, Grace, has been unhappy since you moved to your new community. She has not made many friends, and has been having trouble learning English. Grace tells you she is going to meet a friend to go and watch a movie. How would you handle the situation?

Possible responses:

- A. Tell Grace she cannot go to the movies without a family member.
- B. Say okay.
- C. Ask Grace about her friends, their families, and their backgrounds.
- D. Offer to bring Grace to the movies so you can meet her friends before they go to the movie.

### **Parenting Practice Scenario 7**

Your teenage daughter, Juliana, made friends very quickly and seems happy in your new community. One day she has plans to meet some friends and go to a nearby mall. Your neighbor told you that the mall is safe and many teenagers hang out there with their friends. When Juliana is ready to leave, she is wearing a short skirt. How would you handle this situation?

Possible responses:

- A. Tell Juliana she is not allowed to see her friends.
- B. Tell Juliana she has to change her clothes or she cannot go.
- C. Do not say anything.
- D. Ask Juliana to invite her friends to your home instead.

### **Parenting Practice Scenario 8**

Your teenage son, Cardel, is on the high school soccer (football) team. He is keeping up with his schoolwork and making friends. Cardel asks if he can go to a party at his friend Jonah's house with some of his teammates the next Saturday. You say yes. You later find out from a neighbor that there will probably be alcohol at the party. How would you handle this situation?

Possible responses:

- A. Ask Cardel about the party again and if alcohol will be served.
- B. Forbid Cardel to go to the party, but do not give him a reason. You don't have to: You are the parent, and he must obey you.
- C. Suggest Cardel spend some time with his friends during the day instead.
- D. Call Jonah's parents and ask if they will be home during the party and if alcohol will be served.

# Cultural Adjustment

## Adjusting to Changes and Challenges

### Introduction for the Trainer

#### Key Content

During this session, participants will learn about common challenges they may face as they adjust to a new country and culture, and some ways to handle these challenges.

#### Main Messages

It can take 2 to 5 years for refugees to adjust to life in the United States. There will be challenges along the way, such as changes in family roles. Trainers should stress the importance of understanding and following common U.S. practices, such as being on time. Understanding the challenges they may face and ways to manage them can help participants adjust more easily.



25 minutes

#### Objectives

Participants will be able to do the following:

- ▶ Consider some common adjustment challenges
- ▶ Identify different points of view regarding them
- ▶ Discuss various ways to manage these adjustment challenges

#### Key English Vocabulary

- ▶ *call*
- ▶ *cultural adjustment*
- ▶ *feelings*
- ▶ *How do you feel about \_\_\_\_\_?*

#### Materials

- Managing Adjustment Game Board (included), 1 per playing group (as described in the session preparation)
- Managing Adjustment Cards (included), 1 per playing group
- Markers or highlighters, 4 different colors
- Playing pieces (stones, pieces of paper, etc.), 4 per playing group
- Managing Adjustment Spinner Mat (included), 1 per playing group
- Pencil, 1 per playing group
- Optional: Managing Adjustment Color Game Board (included), 1 per playing group
- Optional: Reviewing Adjustment Cards (included), 1 per playing group

## Session Preparation

Determine the number of teams that will play based on how you want to group participants for this topic. Grouping can be by literacy level, language background, age, gender, family make-up, or some other way. Participants can play the game as individuals or on teams of two to three people (or more, if necessary), with up to four teams (or individual players) per game. There may be two or more games going on at the same time.

If possible, place at least one person in each small group who can read. If there are not enough literate participants, divide the full group into four teams, and play the game as a full group. The trainer then reads the cards aloud to the full group while showing the pictures.

Prepare the Managing Adjustment Game Board for each group by printing the pages and marking the squares with the markers or highlighters so that all squares labeled “1” (including the “Start” square) are the same color, all squares labeled “2” are the same color, all squares labeled “3” are the same color, and all squares labeled “4” (including the “End” square) are the same color. Look at the Managing Adjustment Color Game Board as an example.

The Managing Adjustment Cards are organized into four categories: Asking for Help, Communication, Responsibilities, and Social Adjustment. First, print a full set (cards from all four categories) for each group. Cut the cards along the dotted lines, keeping sets together. Assign a color to each category that matches one of the four colors of the Managing Adjustment Game Board, and mark the back of each card with the color it belongs to. For example, Asking for Help Cards might be blue, Communication Cards might be green, Responsibilities Cards might be yellow, and Social Adjustment Cards might be red. Keep each set of Managing Adjustment Cards divided into the four separate categories.

## Trainer’s Introduction of Session to Participants

Adjusting to life in the United States will be a long process, and there are many things that will feel new or different to you. During this session, we will play a game, and in the game you will consider some of the changes you might face as you adjust to life in your new community. You will think about how the changes might feel and how you might handle them.

## Introductory Exercise

*Briefly review the key English vocabulary for this plan by saying the first word aloud in English. Participants say the word to a partner, and then all together as a group. Continue in the same way with the rest of the words and the question. Throughout the session, emphasize the words as they come up and use the question whenever there is an opportunity. If there is time (8 to 10 minutes), use the unit vocabulary found at the end of this unit to help participants better understand key English vocabulary words.*

## Activity

Divide participants into the teams and small groups you chose during the session preparation. Distribute a Managing Adjustment Game Board, a set of Managing Adjustment Cards, playing pieces, a Managing Adjustment Spinner Mat, and a pencil to each group.

Each group places the Managing Adjustment Game Board on a flat surface in the center of the group. Each team in the group places its playing piece on the “Start” square. *[As noted earlier, a game can have either individual players or teams made up of two or more players. For convenience, we will use only the word team in these instructions, but trainers should keep in mind that a team might have just one player.]* The set of Managing Adjustment Cards, stacked in four piles, should be placed near the board.

Small groups put the Managing Adjustment Spinner Mat flat on the table near the board and place the pencil in the middle of the spinner mat.

The first team spins the Managing Adjustment Spinner Mat by holding the middle of the pencil and twisting it while dropping it near the middle of the spinner mat. Whatever number the point of the pencil is pointing closest to is the number chosen. The team then moves its playing piece that number of spaces.

The team takes note of the color square it has landed on, and picks up the card from the top of the same colored pile. The team reads the card, and gives an answer. The group considers the answer, deciding if it is good enough, and discusses other possible answers.

If other teams feel the team’s answer was good enough, at its next turn the team spins the Managing Adjustment Spinner Mat. If the answer is not good enough, at its next turn the team must remain on the same space and pick another card from the same pile.

After the group has decided whether an answer is good enough or not, the next team takes its turn by spinning the Managing Adjustment Spinner Mat and the game continues as already described.

The trainer should listen to small group discussions during the game to be sure that participants understand the information.

When groups are finished, bring the full group together and debrief the session using the questions below.

## Debriefing Questions

- ▶ What discussions did your group have during this session? What did you learn?
- ▶ What are some aspects of cultural adjustment we have discussed that you have not yet faced?
- ▶ How has your experience so far been similar to the experiences of other participants? How has it been different?

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## Working With Individuals or Very Small Groups

When working with an individual, choose five to ten Managing Adjustment Cards that are relevant to the participant. Cut them up and put them into a box, basket, or envelope. The participant draws one card, and the trainer and participant discuss the question. When finished, the participant draws another card to discuss. Continue until all of the cards have been discussed.

When working with two or three participants, the game can be played as a two- or three-player game. The trainer can also participate as a player, sharing answers from either personal experiences or those of other refugees s/he has worked with.

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## Variations and Considerations

Instead of preparing the Managing Adjustment Game Boards with markers or highlighters, print the Managing Adjustment Color Game Board for small groups to use.

Create cards on different topics to be used with the Managing Adjustment Game Boards.

Make this session a review or wrap-up for the cultural adjustment unit by using the suggested Reviewing Adjustment Cards and adding others to discuss topics relevant to the group. The trainer should choose between the First Time Worker Cards and the New Job Cards—or use both—depending on the work backgrounds of participants.

If needed, use translated versions of the Managing Adjustment Cards or the Reviewing Adjustment Cards.

# Managing Adjustment Game Board

2	2	2	3	3	3
2	2	2	3	3	3
2	2	2	3	3	3
1	1	1	4	4	4
1	1	1	4	4	4
<b>START</b>	1	1	4	4	4



## Managing Adjustment Cards

### Asking for Help Cards

<p><i>If you are at a store and do not know what product you need, or cannot find the product you need, you can ask a salesperson for help. How do you feel about doing this?</i></p>	<p><i>If you are having trouble with something in your home, you should call your landlord/landlady. How do you feel about doing this?</i></p>
<p><i>If you are lost or cannot find your way, you can ask someone on the street for directions. How would you feel about doing this?</i></p>	<p><i>If you feel you might be in danger, you could ask a police officer for help. How would you feel about doing this?</i></p>
<p><i>If you have a question about where something is in your community, you could ask a neighbor. How do you feel about doing this?</i></p>	<p><i>If you need to buy something and don't know where to find it, you can ask your case worker/manager, a volunteer from the resettlement agency, or a neighbor for advice. How do you feel about doing this?</i></p>

## Communication Cards

<p><i>Americans consider eye contact when talking to another person respectful behavior. How is this similar to or different from body language in your culture?</i></p>	<p><i>Being polite and respectful to service providers often makes it easier for you to accomplish tasks and get help. How do you feel about this?</i></p>
<p><i>If someone is bothering you or making you feel uncomfortable, you have the right to ask that person to stop. How would you feel about doing this?</i></p>	<p><i>If you need to talk to your case worker/ manager, but s/he is not available, you should leave a message (even if it is not in English). Why do you think this is important?</i></p>
<p><i>Polite and respectful body language is important when communicating with others. From what you have seen in the United States, what are some examples of body language that are different from those you are used to?</i></p>	<p><i>When you don't understand what a service provider tells you, you should say, "I'm sorry. I don't understand." How do you feel about this?</i></p>

## Responsibilities Cards

*Case workers/managers, health care professionals, and other service providers cannot share with other people any personal information that you tell them. How does this make you feel?*

*Even if you break a law you did not know about, you must pay the penalty. How do you feel about this?*

*If you choose to move to a new apartment, home, town, or state, you are responsible for notifying others about changing your address. How do you feel about this?*

*When you apply for a job, you have a right to know what the salary and benefits will be. How is this different from your previous experiences?*

*You may be able to apply for your family members overseas to join you in the United States. First, you must talk to your case worker/manager about it. How do you feel about this option?*

*You will receive assistance when you are resettled, but you may not get help right away on issues that are not very important. How do you feel about this?*

## Social Adjustment Cards

*Americans usually shake hands when meeting for the first time. Practice this with another player.*

*If you do not understand something that someone tells you, you should ask them to say it again. How would you do this?*

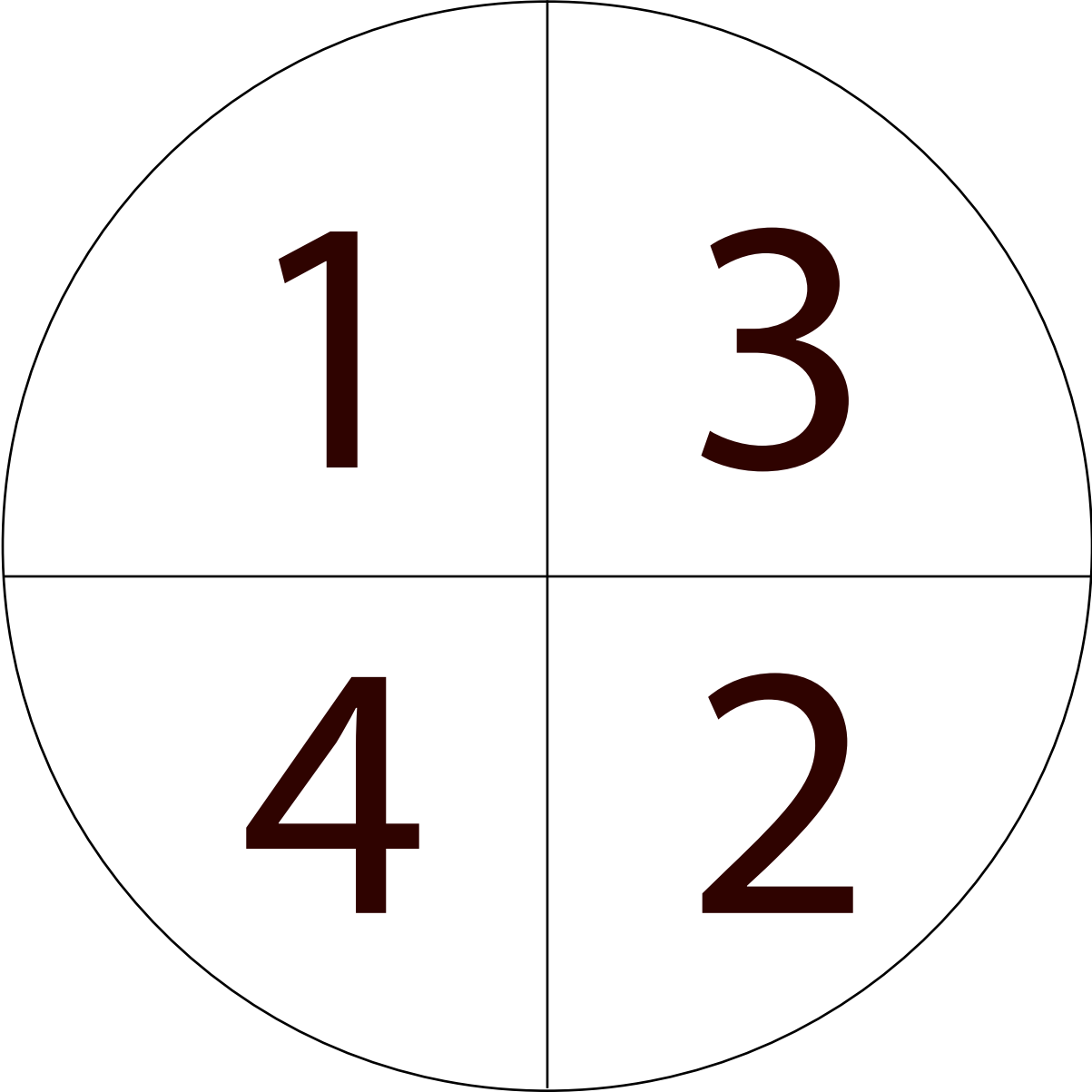
*Most Americans want you to call before going to their house. How does this differ from the custom where you are from?*

*When Americans talk to one another, they don't stand as close to each other as do people from some other cultures. With another player, show the distance that people in your country stand from one another when they talk to one another, and then show the distance that Americans stand from one another.*

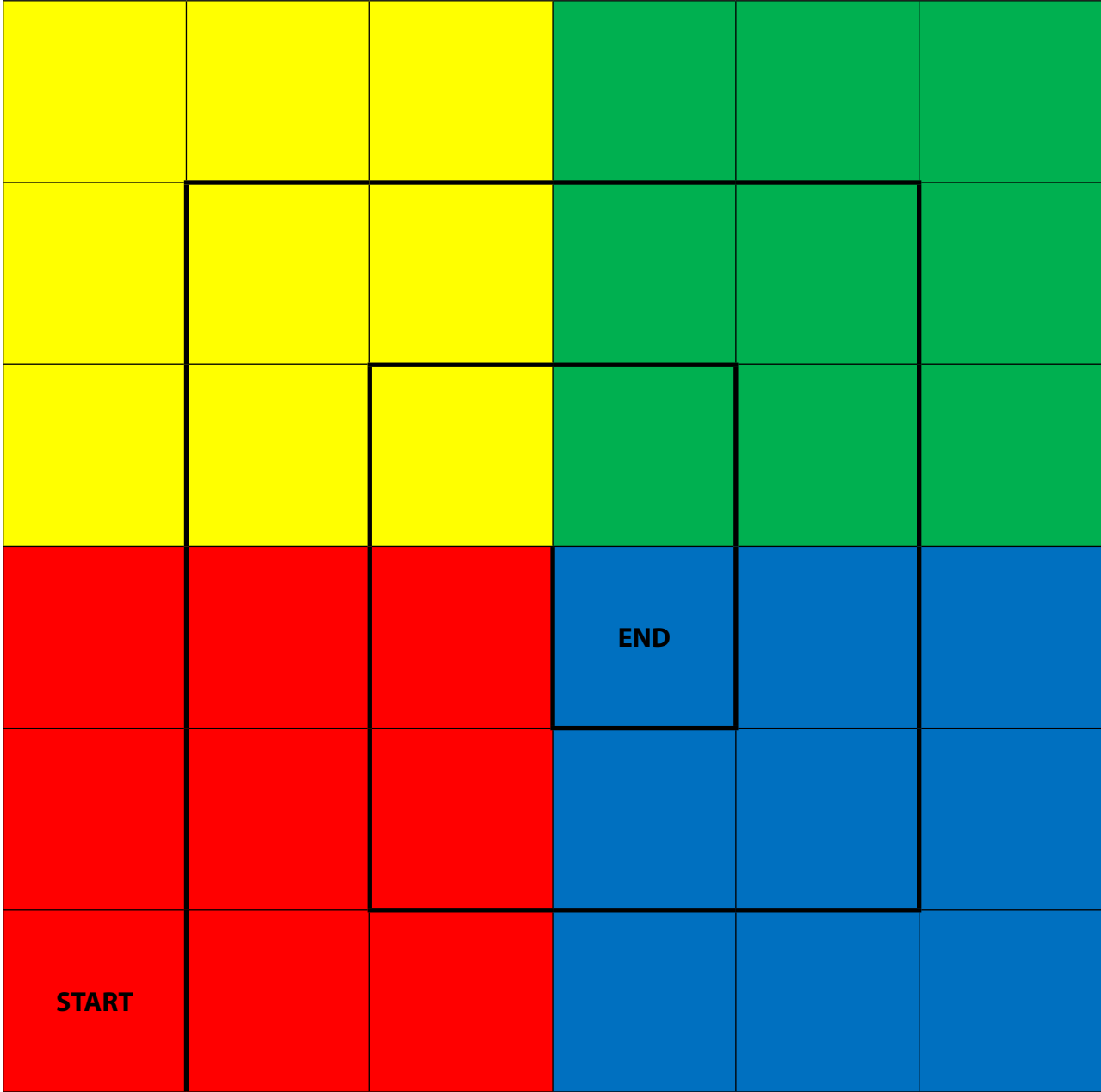
*When talking with someone in the United States, a man or a woman, you should make eye contact. Practice this with another player.*

*Why do you think it will be important for you to learn English greetings as soon as you can?*

Managing Adjustment Spinner Mat



# Managing Adjustment Color Game Board



## Reviewing Adjustment Cards

### Family Role Cards

*Elderly refugees often have trouble learning English and getting involved in the community. How could you help elderly people in your family or community?*

*If you are feeling uncomfortable with some of the role changes in your family, what would you do?*

*Most U.S. schools teach children that it is good to ask questions. What would you do if your children started asking you many questions about what you think or why you do something in a certain way?*

*Often children learn English faster than adults. How would you feel about this if it happened in your family, and how would you handle it?*

*One way parents in the United States punish their children is by taking away privileges, such as seeing friends or watching TV. What will your family do if your children do something wrong?*

*Sometimes in the United States the wife in the family is the primary breadwinner. How would you feel if this were the case in your family?*

## First Time Worker Cards

*You are offered your first job. How would you feel about being out of the house so often?*

*You are working many hours and are very tired when you get home. You feel you need help with some of the household chores, but in the past you were the one who did all the chores. What do you do about this situation?*

*You have your first job interview. Your case worker/manager suggests you wear clothing that is different from what you usually wear. How would this make you feel?*

*You were able to find a job faster than other members of your family, and now you are financially supporting your family. How do you feel about this?*

*Your family decides that you need to work to support the family, but you have never held a job before. How would this make you feel?*

*Your new job requires you to wear a uniform. How would you feel about this?*



## New Job Cards

*Americans value a strong work ethic. How would you describe someone with a strong ethic?*

*If you are offered a job and turn it down, you could lose your public assistance. How does this make you feel?*

*Many families in the United States find that both the husband and the wife need to work. How would you feel about this?*

*Refugees who had professional jobs in their own countries (for example, doctors, nurses, and office workers) usually can't work in their professions in the United States right away. Many have to take low-skilled or unskilled jobs (such as a housekeeper or factory worker) when they first arrive in the United States. How would you feel about working at this kind of job?*

*Which would be better: A low-paying job with health benefits or a higher paying job without health benefits?*

*Your supervisor could be a man or a woman. How would this make you feel?*

## Time Management Cards

*Children are expected to attend school every day and arrive on time. How will you make sure that your children go to school every day on time?*

*If you are taking public transportation to work, how will you make sure that you are on time?*

*If you are very late or do not attend a doctor's appointment, you may be charged for the appointment anyway and the doctor may not be willing to see you again. How can you make sure this does not happen?*

*If you know you are going to be late for work or a meeting, what should you do?*

*Many families find their days very full and busy. How will your family manage this?*

*You are expected to arrive on time or a few minutes early for meetings. How will you handle this?*

## Working With Your Resettlement Agency Cards

*The resettlement agency and other service providers offer different types of orientation classes. Why are they important? How do you feel about attending these?*

*The resettlement agency has a limited amount of money to help you resettle in your new community. What can you do to work with them during your first weeks and months in the United States?*

*The staff at your resettlement agency asks you for personal information about you and your family. How do you feel about this?*

*While many people may be telling you things about life in the United States, the most accurate information will come from resettlement agency staff. What do you think about this statement?*

*Working closely with your case worker/manager will help ease your resettlement process. How do you feel about this?*

*Your case worker/manager and other staff at the resettlement agency are not always available to help you. How does this make you feel?*

# Cultural Adjustment

## Unit Vocabulary

The following lists key English vocabulary words related to this unit. The words are in alphabetical order.

[The following paragraph consists of instructions for the trainer. If you choose to share the unit vocabulary with participants, we recommend removing the following paragraph.]

Introduce words by using the definition and contextual sentence. Omit words that participants already know. A partner talk is meant to be a 2-minute exchange between participants and should include two to three terms that the participants easily understand. Encourage conversation and interaction, and focus on what participants already know about the word from its use during the session. Following the list of vocabulary words, there are two unit vocabulary worksheets for participants who would like to practice the words more.

Vocabulary Word	Definition	Context	Partner Talk
<i>adjust</i>	To change or get used to.	Ilyas finds it difficult to <i>adjust</i> to food in the United States.	What is difficult for you to <i>adjust</i> to? What is easier to adjust to? Why?
<i>appropriate</i>	Correct for a specific time or place; proper.	In some cultures it is <i>appropriate</i> to take off your shoes when you enter their home.	Do you think it is <i>appropriate</i> to shake hands when you meet someone? Why or why not?
<i>call</i>	To telephone someone.	Most Americans expect you to <i>call</i> them before you visit their home. They also expect you to <i>call</i> if you will be late or unable to attend an event.	In places you have lived before coming to the United States, is it acceptable to visit someone without <i>calling</i> them first? When did you need to <i>call</i> ?
<i>change</i>	To cause someone or something to become different in some way.	Tara is afraid her children are going to <i>change</i> and no longer respect her.	What do you think about <i>change</i> ? Is there any part of yourself you can <i>change</i> easily?

Vocabulary Word	Definition	Context	Partner Talk
<i>child/children</i>	A young human, either a girl or boy; plural of <i>child</i> .	In the United States, <i>children</i> are often called <i>kids</i> .	When do you think a <i>child</i> becomes an adult? Why?
<i>cultural adjustment</i>	The process of becoming familiar and comfortable with a new culture.	<i>Cultural adjustment</i> can take a long time. Balaram finds it helpful to talk to family about his feelings.	What are some things that you can do to make your <i>cultural adjustment</i> easier?
<i>culture</i>	Language, customs, beliefs, actions, and art of a group of people.	Sarah and Thom want to pass on some parts of the Congolese <i>culture</i> to their children.	What parts of your <i>culture</i> do you want to pass on to your children?
<i>culture shock</i>	Feelings of worry, confusion, and anger as a newcomer tries to function in an unfamiliar and often strange place.	Ella is experiencing <i>culture shock</i> . She finds it hard that she is supposed to look people in the eye.	What can you do if you or someone you know has <i>culture shock</i> ?
<i>diversity</i>	A variety of anything; for example, people, ideas, foods, and so on.	There is a lot of <i>diversity</i> of people in large cities such as New York and Los Angeles.	What are some good things about living in a place with lots of <i>diversity</i> ? What are some difficult things?
<i>early</i>	Before the usual, arranged, or expected time.	In the United States, many people like to arrive <i>early</i> to an appointment; for example, they might arrive at 3:45 for a 4:00 appointment.	Do people arrive <i>early</i> for appointments in places you have lived? Why or why not?
<i>eye contact</i>	Two people looking at each other's eyes.	In the United States, it is important to make <i>eye contact</i> when you speak with someone.	How do you feel about making <i>eye contact</i> with people when you speak to them? Why?

Vocabulary Word	Definition	Context	Partner Talk
<i>family</i>	People who are related. These include parents, children, grandparents, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, and cousins.	Naw Baw and her <i>family</i> live together in their new home.	Who is part of your <i>family</i> ?
<i>feel/feelings</i>	To have a belief or opinion about something. Also, to experience through the sense of touch, or through a sense of the physical or mental state.	Sometimes Veronica <i>feels</i> sad about leaving her daughter at home with her grandmother while Veronica goes to work.	How do you <i>feel</i> about asking someone you don't know very well for help?
<i>friend</i>	A person who is close to another person and likes being with her or him.	<i>Friends</i> are important as well as family.	How do you think you can make <i>friends</i> in the United States?
<i>late</i>	After the expected time or deadline.	It is not good to arrive <i>late</i> for a business appointment or interview. It is better to be early or at least on time.	What is the attitude or feeling about being <i>late</i> in places you have lived? What do you think about that attitude?
<i>on time</i>	At the correct and precise time for an event.	Myo Myint is always <i>on time</i> for his English class.	What can you do so that you can arrive <i>on time</i> for all your events?
<i>play</i>	To take part in activities that are just for fun, that will relax and amuse you.	Children need to have time and space so they can <i>play</i> .	What games or sports do you like to <i>play</i> ?
<i>relationship</i>	The ways in which people act and connect with one another.	In the United States, the <i>relationship</i> between a student and teacher is usually less formal than in other countries.	What kinds of <i>relationships</i> are very special to you?

Vocabulary Word	Definition	Context	Partner Talk
<i>to respect/to be respectful</i>	To show that you value someone.	In many cultures, people <i>respect</i> older people very much.	Who do you <i>respect</i> ? Why?
<i>roles</i>	The way people in certain situations are expected to act.	Ahmad thinks the <i>roles</i> of men and women in the United States are very different from their <i>roles</i> in Somalia.	Do you think the <i>roles</i> of men and women will be different in the United States from <i>roles</i> you have experienced elsewhere? Please explain.
<i>support</i>	To help someone when there are problems and troubles; to provide enough money for.	When Namina was ill, her mother <i>supported</i> her by taking care of her children and doing the housework.	Who can <i>support</i> you when you need help?
<i>tolerance</i>	A willingness to accept people whose race, religion, opinions, or habits are different from one's own.	Many people came to the United States looking for <i>tolerance</i> of their religion.	How can you show <i>tolerance</i> for people who are very different from you?

## Cultural Adjustment Unit Vocabulary Worksheets

There are two unit vocabulary worksheets. Worksheet 1 is for beginning-level English language learners, and Worksheet 2 is for learners with more advanced English language skills.

The worksheets can be incorporated into an orientation session, or they can be given to participants to work on at home.

## Cultural Adjustment Unit Vocabulary Worksheet 1

Directions: Look at the pictures in the word bank. Then read the sentences below. Decide which word matches the sentence and write it in the space.

### Word Bank



*family*



*early*



*relationship*



*friend*



*late*



*roles*

1. Everyone in the Kallayoun family has different \_\_\_\_\_: Fatimah cleans, Karim cooks, and the children take out the garbage.
2. Sandra had to run to her meeting because she was \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The Cho family invites their neighbor to dinner. They have a good \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Prince came to the United States with his \_\_\_\_\_: his wife and his daughter.
5. Alexi arrives seven minutes \_\_\_\_\_ for his doctor's appointment so he waits.
6. Amina helps her \_\_\_\_\_ apply for a job.



## Cultural Adjustment Unit Vocabulary Worksheet 2

Directions: Read the paragraph below. Use the word bank to complete the sentences.

Word Bank			
adjust	change	culture	culture shock

Jessica and Prince moved to a new community with their family. At first, they had

c\_\_\_\_\_ sh\_\_\_\_\_ because the customs were so different from their own culture. They thought they would have to ch\_\_\_\_\_ how they dress and what they eat.

Now they know they have to ad\_\_\_\_\_, but they can still pass on their

c\_\_\_\_\_ to their daughter.



