

.....

## Suggestions for Using “Culture and You”

**Objectives:**

- Help individuals see the pervasiveness of cultural programming
- Increase awareness about the interplay between culture and individual personality in influencing life situations
- Empathize with individuals of other cultural backgrounds

**Intended Audience:**

- Individuals seeking to increase their own awareness about cultural differences
- Participants in diversity training sessions
- Workgroup members coping with issues related to diversity

**Materials:**

- Copies of the worksheet, *Culture and You*

**Processing the Activity:**

- Ask participants to imagine themselves suddenly becoming members of another cultural or ethnic group in this society. Stress that they are to imagine being born into and socialized by that other culture. As a variation, individuals may be asked also to imagine themselves of a different gender, sexual orientation, or physical-ability level.
- Individuals discuss reactions and insights in pairs, triads, or small groups.
- Smaller groupings share discussion highlights with a total group in a wrap-up discussion.

**Questions for Discussion:**

- Which parts of your life would remain the same? Which would be different?
- On what did you base your decisions about where to place your checks?
- What surprises did you have? What reactions?
- What questions or issues do these raise for you?
- What did you learn from this activity?

**Caveats, Considerations, and Variations:**

- Some individuals may balk at being asked to make choices based on assumptions or stereotypes. This activity can lead to a discussion of such issues.
- When giving directions, be sure to emphasize that the purpose of the activity is not to reinforce stereotypes, but to see how culture influences our lives.
- Issues beyond culture, such as income or education level, will undoubtedly be brought up as influences. This serves to broaden the scope of the discussion to other dimensions of diversity.