

**MULTICULTURALISM ON CAMPUS: A MILIEU MANAGEMENT
APPROACH**

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Milieu Management is an administrative approach which views the entire university as a learning environment. All participants cooperate in helping students learn to understand themselves, their relationships and the world in which they live. Milieu Management is a particularly effective approach to enhancing multicultural understanding on campus because it includes all segments of the community and does not divide the faculty from the student affairs staff in this important undertaking.

Biography

Jane Fried is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Counseling Psychology, Rehabilitation and Special Education at Northeastern University in Boston, MA. She is the Coordinator of the master's degree program in College Student Development and was formerly Coordinator of Residence Education and Director of Residential Life at the University of Hartford. She is the editor of monographs on education for student development and the effect of gender and perspective in student services administration. She is also the author of a chapter on Instruction in Student Services: A Handbook for the Profession. She has served as the chair of the Standing Committee on Women, the Ethics Committee and the Affirmative Action Committee of the American College Personnel Association. She currently serves on the ACPA media board and has been a member of the editorial boards of the Journal of College Student Development, and Initiatives, the journal of the National Association of Women in Education.

Resources for Additional Reading

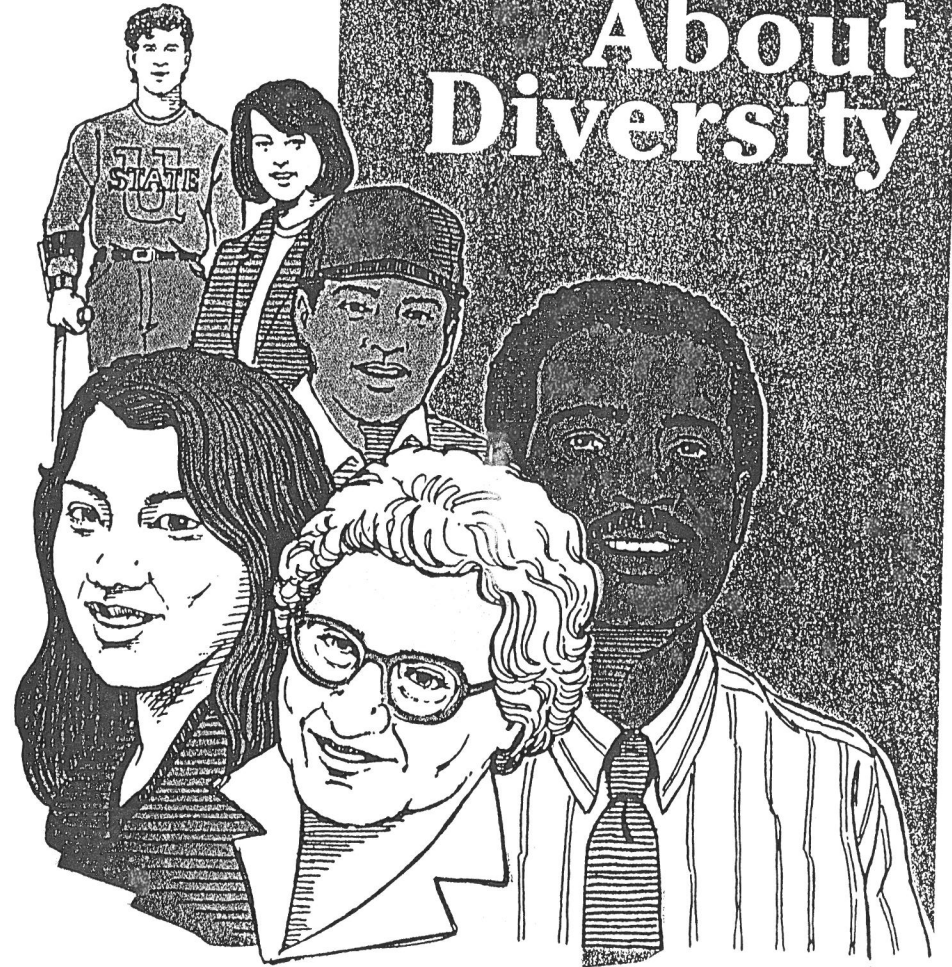
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Learn About Diversity



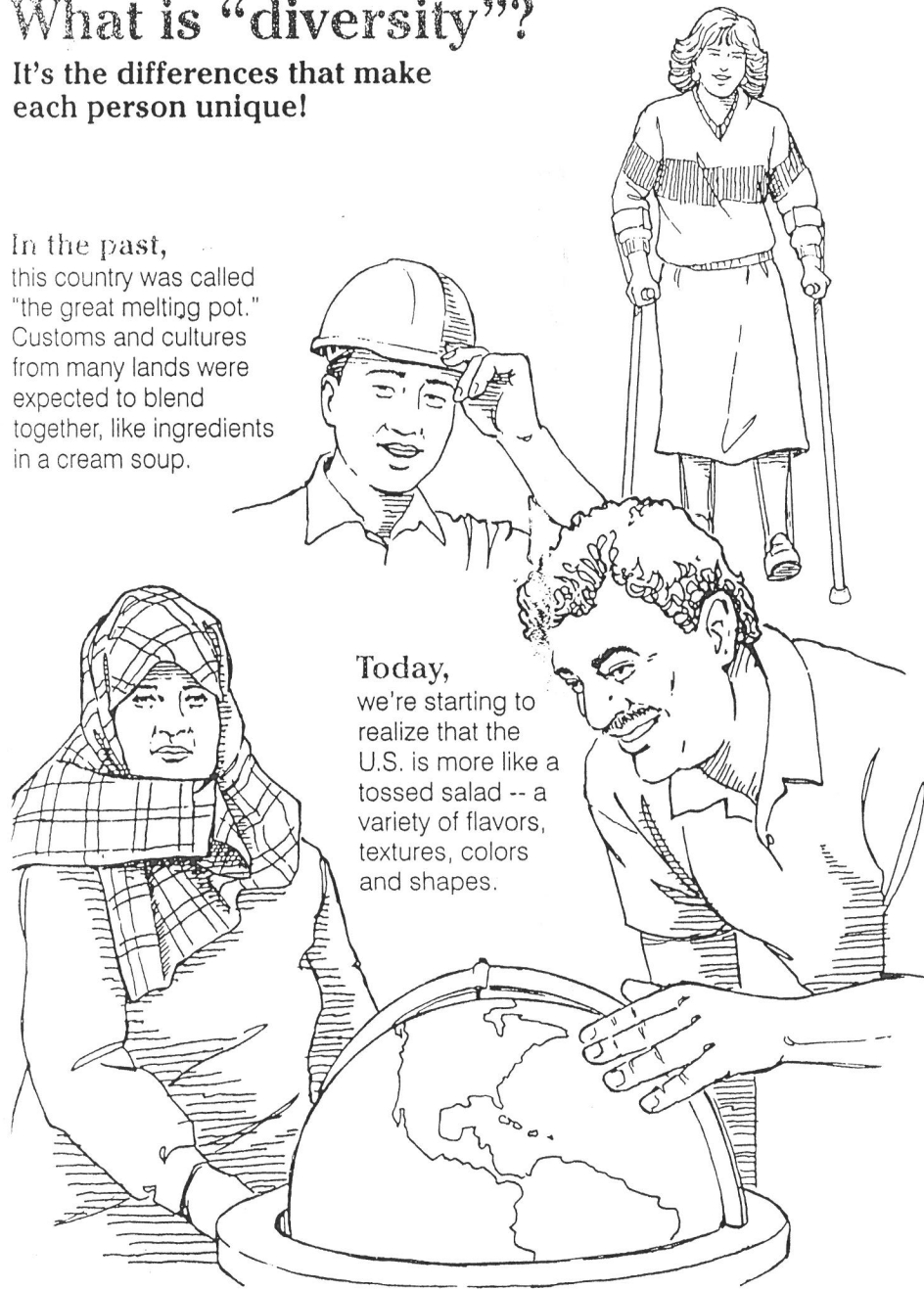
file Multicultural

What is "diversity"?

It's the differences that make each person unique!

In the past, this country was called "the great melting pot." Customs and cultures from many lands were expected to blend together, like ingredients in a cream soup.

Today, we're starting to realize that the U.S. is more like a tossed salad -- a variety of flavors, textures, colors and shapes.



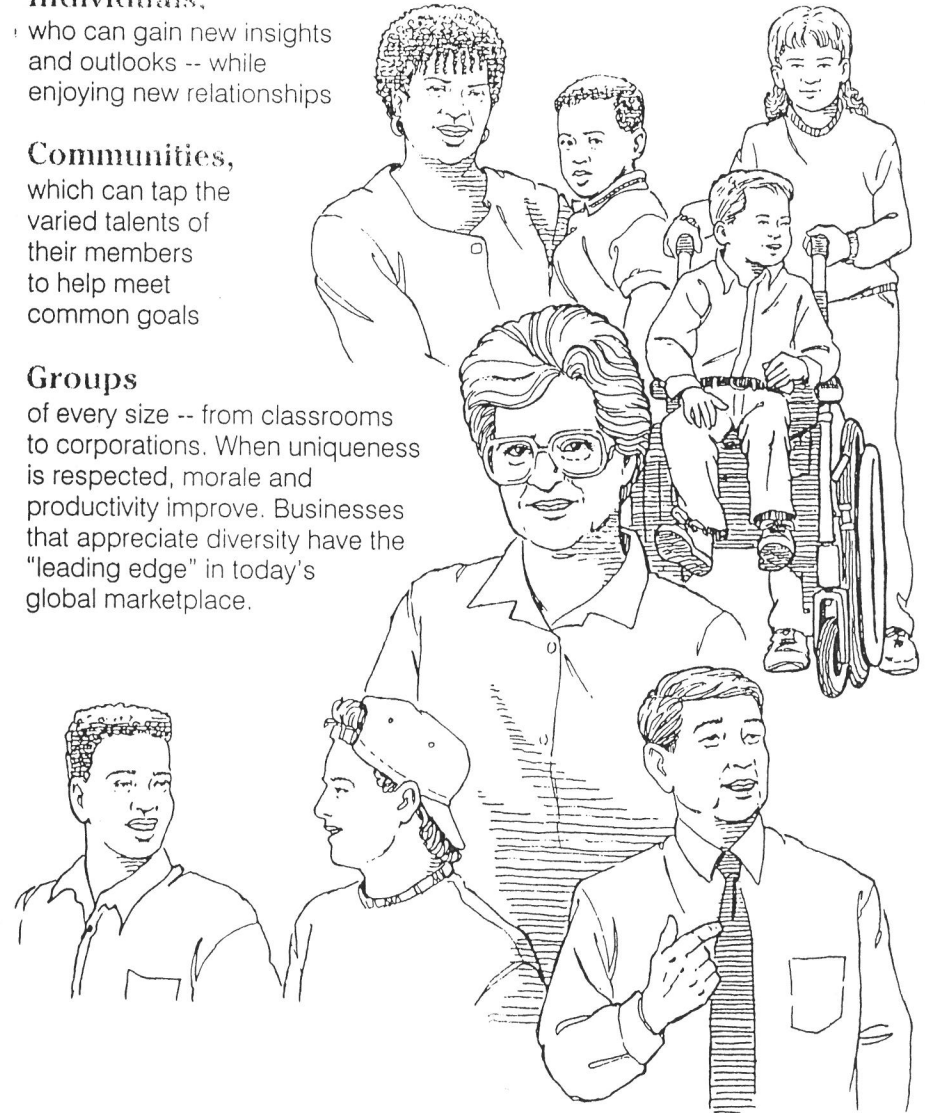
Why should I learn about diversity?

Because diversity can enrich your life -- and your world. Understanding and appreciating differences helps:

Individuals, who can gain new insights and outlooks -- while enjoying new relationships

Communities, which can tap the varied talents of their members to help meet common goals

Groups of every size -- from classrooms to corporations. When uniqueness is respected, morale and productivity improve. Businesses that appreciate diversity have the "leading edge" in today's global marketplace.



Diversity is transforming our nation.

For centuries, American education, business and government have reflected the culture of the vast majority: white people of European descent.

By the year 2000, however, we'll see big changes. For example, out of every 100 workers:

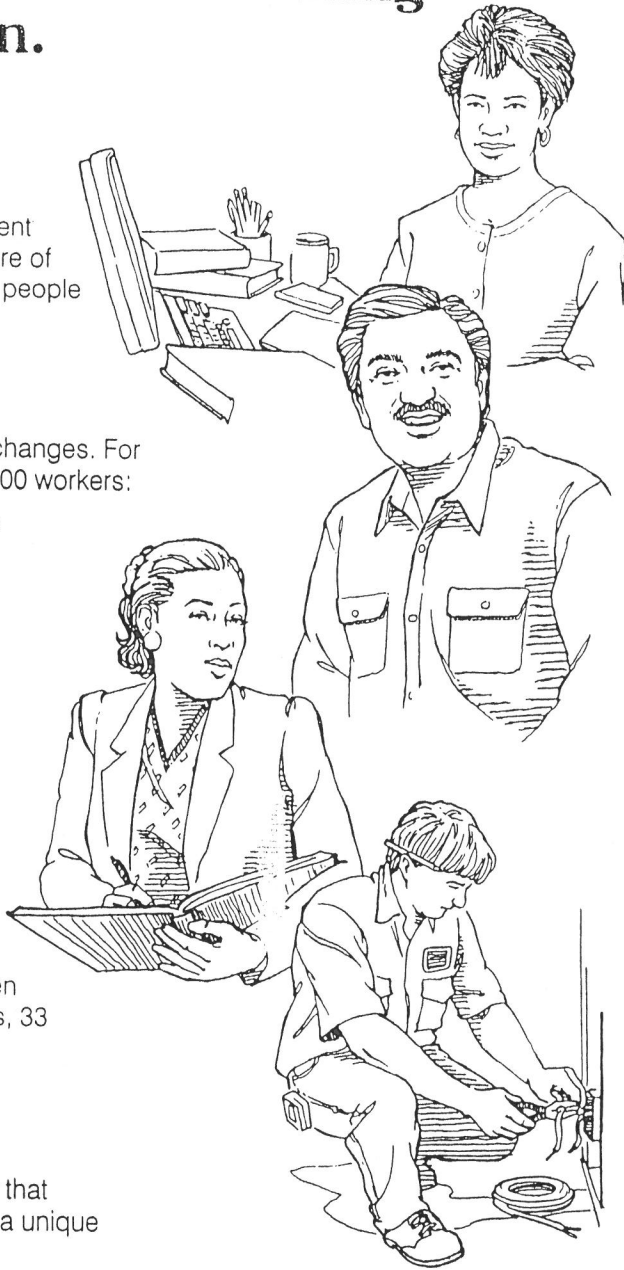
- 10 will be immigrants
- 16 will be U.S.-born Hispanics, African Americans or other people of color
- 47 will be women (including 12 women of color)
- 32 will be U.S.-born, white men.

Note: Total is more than 100 because immigrant women and women of color are counted twice.

Out of every 100 children in American classrooms, 33 will be children of color.

It's easy to talk about statistics.

It's harder to remember that behind each number is a unique human being.



What makes each person unique?

Many things, including:

Biology

-- which determines gender; body size; skin, hair and eye color

Ethnicity and culture

-- the customs, language and sense of identity often shared by people with similar roots

Family life

-- including family size, values, traditions and social class

Beliefs

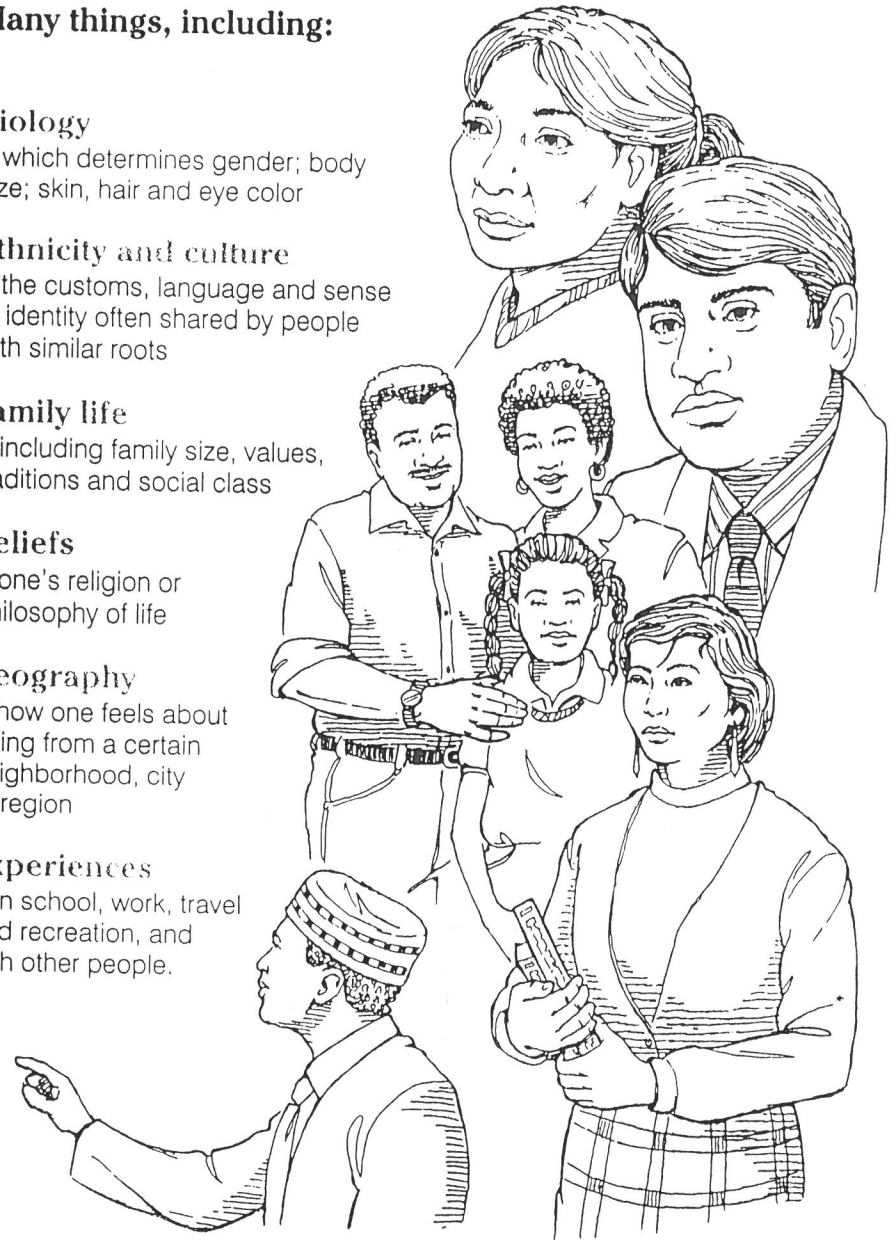
-- one's religion or philosophy of life

Geography

-- how one feels about being from a certain neighborhood, city or region

Experiences

-- in school, work, travel and recreation, and with other people.



Taking a look within

Understanding diversity begins with understanding how you see yourself, your place in the world - and your own uniqueness.

As a start, complete each statement below. Then, compare your responses with those of a relative, friend or co-worker. (No one response is "better" than another.) The differences may surprise you!

1. I wear my hair the way I do because _____
2. In my family, children are expected to _____
3. I often feel uncomfortable around people who a _____
4. I am proud to be _____
5. When I hear people speaking another language, I think they're _____
6. If people must choose between work and family, they should _____
7. I really feel like an outsider when _____
8. The most important thing in life is _____
9. My ethnic or cultural heritage is special because _____
10. I'm often attracted to people who _____

Taking a look at others

We all make judgments about people based on our experience with them.

But:

- When we make a judgment before getting to know someone, we "pre-judge" the person (the source of the word "prejudice").
- When we assume everyone in a certain group is the same, we "stereotype" the individuals in that group.



Prejudice and stereotypes hurt everyone

-- whether they're negative ("only wimps cry") or positive ("black women are strong"). They:

- keep us from knowing the individual
- cut us off from fresh ideas
- limit the person's opportunities
- can make the person feel rejected or resentful. He or she may even come to believe the stereotype!

It's hard not to form prejudices and stereotypes. But we can keep them from influencing how we interact with others.

Quick! What do you see?

To learn more about how you make judgments, look at the picture first. Then, pick the phrase beside it that best matches your impression.



1. These women are talking about:
- A. their husbands
 - B. the economy
 - C. something over coffee.



2. This person:
- A. finds it easier to use ramps than stairs
 - B. is probably not very bright
 - C. is helpless.



3. People with foreign accents:
- A. are quaint and charming
 - B. don't understand English well
 - C. are probably from other countries.



4. These men are:
- A. making a drug deal
 - B. poor and unemployed
 - C. talking.



5. This woman is late because:
- A. something delayed her
 - B. she's lazy
 - C. she was tied up with an important business call.



6. These men must be:
- A. glad to see each other
 - B. homosexuals
 - C. Italian-Americans.



7. This woman:
- A. is fat and lazy
 - B. eats a lot of junk food
 - C. is shopping.



8. Older workers are:
- A. a growing part of the workforce
 - B. slow and can't learn new procedures
 - C. looking forward to retirement.



9. These students are:
- A. serious and hard-working
 - B. from families with roots in Asia
 - C. lousy at sports.



10. Young people today:
- A. are all into rap music and weird clothes
 - B. are idealists
 - C. need a good education to get good jobs.

Rate your responses.

Give yourself a point each time your response matches one below:

1. C, 2. A, 3. C, 4. C, 5. A, 6. A, 7. C, 8. A, 9. B, 10. C.

The highest score is 10. The higher you score, the less likely you are to rely on stereotypes and prejudice.

People differ in many ways.

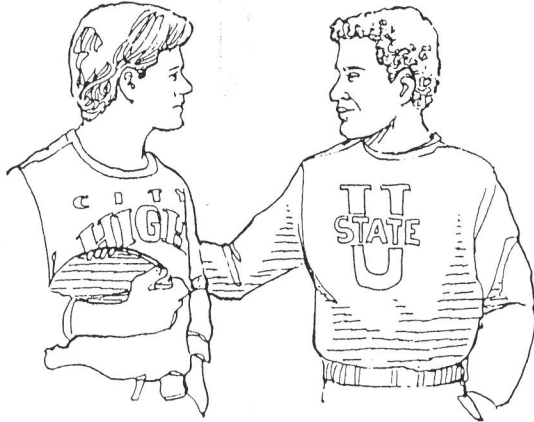
For example, cultural background (including ethnicity) can influence the way people communicate through:

Body language

In some cultures, people often stand close together. The closeness may be uncomfortable to a person from another culture.

In other cultures, people often stand farther apart. The distance may seem unfriendly to a person from another culture.

Direct eye contact is considered rude in many cultures.



Listening

- In some cultures, listeners tend to look at speakers and nod, say "uh-huh," etc., to show they've understood.
- In other cultures, listeners tend to look silently away while someone is talking. A person from a different culture may interpret this as a lack of interest or understanding.

Speaking

- In some cultures, speakers tend to look away from their listeners. A listener from a different culture may interpret this as discomfort or avoidance.
- Speakers in other cultures tend to look at their listeners intently. A listener from a different culture may interpret this as aggression.

Expressing opinions

People in some cultures believe it's rude to complain or say "no." They signal discomfort in more subtle ways. A person from a different culture may miss these signals and assume all is well.

Working style

- In some cultures, people highly value "getting down to business" and "saving time."
- In other cultures, good relationships and a relaxed atmosphere may be more important than strict deadlines.



But, watch out!

Cultural background is only one thing that makes people unique. If you rely only on culture to interpret someone's words and actions, you risk creating new stereotypes.

You can get more out of relationships.

Here are some tips:

Be open about differences

-- don't ignore them. Share how your background has influenced you. Invite others to do the same.



Don't assume anything

-- check it out. For example:

■ Find out if David Harris prefers to be called "Mr. Harris," "David" or "Dave."

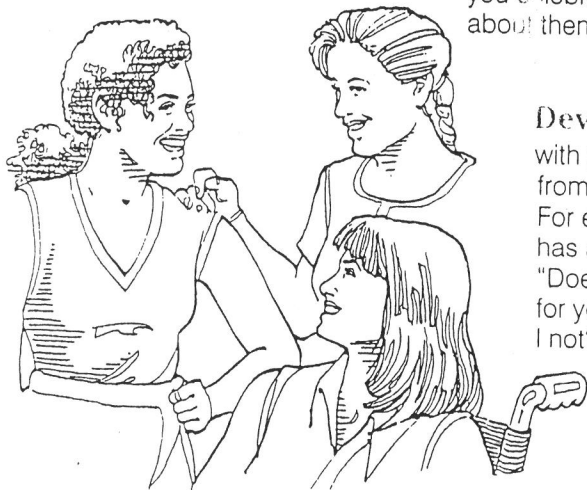
■ Ask a working mother if she'd like to work overtime or go on a business trip -- don't assume she'd rather be home.

Encourage questions

about the things that make you different. Ask questions in return. ("I'd like to learn about the holidays you celebrate. Will you tell me about them?")

Develop friendships

with people who are different from you. Share any concerns. For example, if a new friend has a disability, you might ask, "Does it help if I hold the door for you, or would you rather I not?"



Don't make someone a spokesperson

for his or her group ("So, what do Hispanics think about this?"). Don't suggest the person is an exception, either ("You're not like other African Americans I've met.").



Don't tell ethnic or sexual jokes

-- even jokes about your own group. They just encourage more of the same. Be careful with other kinds of humor (such as the "friendly insult") until you know how others feel about it.

Make your feelings known

if someone makes unfair remarks about a group.

Remember that mistakes happen; especially when people are under stress. Changing old habits and ways of thinking takes time.

- Apologize, if you've been unfair.
- Forgive, if you've been offended.



Get more information

about our diverse society:

Watch TV documentaries, plays and movies about different groups. (But don't assume a show about customs, dress, etc., in another country reflects the lives of its immigrants here.)

Listen to radio stations that broadcast ethnic music and programs.

Read magazines, books and newsletters written by -- and for -- people of other cultural backgrounds.



Attend workshops

on understanding diversity, communication skills, conflict resolution, etc.

Contact organizations that support different groups. They may offer literature, videos, exhibits or speakers.

Get first-hand experience

by traveling, attending cultural and community events, etc.



Celebrate diversity!



Take pride in your own uniqueness.

Welcome others as individuals with special qualities.



Enjoy your similarities

-- and your differences.



When you appreciate diversity, you enrich your world.