Critical Incidents

GENDER

[English]

2013

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Quick summary of critical incidents related to GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belgium</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>France</th>
<th>Hungary</th>
<th>Italy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Little girl with make-up</td>
<td>Acculturation</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>The challenge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting at the Turkish home</td>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>Gendered grief</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework café</td>
<td>Seduction</td>
<td>Women’s role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forearms</td>
<td>Dressing up</td>
<td>Men’s role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually dressed in exam</td>
<td>Theatre workshop</td>
<td>The proposal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually provocative dress in library</td>
<td>Mixed playing</td>
<td>The woman trainer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interruption</td>
<td>Transgender mirror</td>
<td>Overdressed participant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese father</td>
<td>Transgender authenticity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Critical Incident: Sexually provocative dress in library

Name of organisation: mht
Country: DK
Date of recording the critical incident: 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Physical edu / sport</th>
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Sensitive zone
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,

- Exposure of sexuality in the public sphere.

Culture of the person experiencing the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

The narrator is a Danish female teacher, 58 years old. She is working at a language center. She is used to work with students from other countries and cultures for many years. She is known to be a very professional and experienced woman with high standards of professionalism – also with experience from staying abroad in various countries for some years with her family. She may be characterized – and would certainly characterize herself – as a feminist or at least a woman with a strong sense of gender equality.

Culture of the person “causing” the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

A Bosnian female medical doctor around her late thirties, learning Danish in the language
**Describing the SITUATION**

*Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.*

In our Language Center we have a special school library, where all our adult students have the opportunity to work with assignments on an independent basis. One or two language teachers – also being supervisors and consultants - are always present in the library to guide and support the students in their studies.

One day I was on guard in the school library, where a group of about 10 adult students were working. All of a sudden I registered a certain unbalanced atmosphere. The source seemed to be a Bosnian female student, who was sitting at a table wearing a very low-necked dress. The female student was from my knowledge a Muslim.

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<th>1. Elements of the SITUATION</th>
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<td>How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). <strong>Who were the protagonists?</strong> <strong>Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.</strong> <strong>Relationship between the two groups (eg. colonial history, majority – minority)</strong></td>
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<td>The incident took place in the library of a language center. Present in the library was the female language teacher/consultant. Apart from the teacher were about 10 students present in the room, 8 male and 2 female students – all adult students. The male students circled around the table with the sexually dressed Bosnian woman.</td>
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<th>2. EMOTIONAL REACTION</th>
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<td><em>How did you feel in this situation?</em></td>
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<td>As the teacher and consultant in the school library the female teacher felt herself to have a professional responsibility to keep a certain calm, quiet and concentrated working atmosphere in the library. Thus, the teacher was annoyed by the behaviour of the Bosnian female student for obviously disturbing the concentration in the room. The teacher felt a little bit offensive, while this woman was so openly challenging the male students in a sexual way - and dressed up for a party.</td>
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<th>3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in you?</th>
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<td>The teacher expressed her own preference for a daily work dress code, being different from the way people dress up for parties. Actually, the language center has some dress code among the teachers. It is not a very formal dress code. It allows the teachers and other employees in the center to dress casually to some extent. The teacher herself was used to dress rather casually and not specifically feminine. Also, many of the adult students – both male and female – come from countries, where it would be rather offensive and even forbidden to dress up in a public institution in sexually challenging way. In addition, this incident also brings about more general reflections on the “backdrop” of the normative reactions in the situation: <strong>Formal equality</strong></td>
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<td>The Danes emphasize equality in all spheres of life. The ideal is that everyone is equal and must have the same rights regardless of gender, social or ethnic background. This might transfer also in the academic</td>
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sphere. The dress code in Denmark is rather informal, but the students are still expected to adapt neat, modest and casual attire.

**Acculturation**
The narrator considers the adaptation as non conscious phenomena that takes place almost automatically as we learn the new lifestyles, rules, priorities of the new environment. She maybe expects that Bosnian women would adapt to Danish lifestyle and take up established cultural norms quickly but may not consider the fact that cultural adaptation is learning process that in most cases happens through a long period of time.

**Stereotype about a muslim woman**
The Danish teacher’s surprise might also be caused by widely established beliefs and stereotypes about how typical muslim women should look. Many times the image that first comes to our mind is that of a fully covered woman, in a traditional dress (‘burka’). We do not think that there might be women, who do not follow this dress code, but are nevertheless Muslim.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image do you have of the other person? e.g. postive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.

The impression of the Bosnian female student was actually rather negative and offensive. The perception was that this woman did not distinguish properly between working life and private life with regard to the dress code. She allegedly attended the school and the library in order to do some serious language learning, being highly educated from her homeland, and therefore with a clear interest in learning Danish in order to promote her own employment opportunities in Denmark. Dressing up like this she seems to be inappropriate in the environment. This may surprise me even more as she is actually highly educated from her homeland – and also a muslim.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis !)

**Display of femininity**
At scientific conferences in Eastern Europe, many female scientists appear very femininely dressed. It seems to be usual to stress your femininity in public, not to be as much a taboo as in many of the modern Western countries. One explanation for that could be that this trend of gendered dressing is a consequence of the forced emancipation during the socialist period. In general compared to Scandinavian cultures most Eastern European cultures are far more masculine in the sense of greater division between gender roles.

**Multiple cultural references**
Each of us has several cultural identities, and our behaviours, values are negotiated between the different cultural positions. The woman in this case, is both Bosnian and Muslim, and her behaviour, dress code does not only reflect her religion (or our representation of it) rather the larger cultural era where she lives. Also, apparently there is no discrepancy between being a Muslim and being a woman dressed in a very female and sexual manner.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

**Muslim/Religious beliefs**
Even though Islam is a prevalent religious belief in Bosnia, the country has been subjected to a lot of influence from the West, therefore the attitudes towards religious practice seems to be more flexible comparing to some other countries that are traditionally muslim. Therefore it might not be unusual that a woman of muslim beliefs dresses up in clothes that are not usually associated with muslim practice. It may also be possible that other beliefs and values are more important to young Bosnian woman (e.g. such as fulfilling the role that is traditionally expected from woman in Bosnia).

Gender Hierarchy
Bosnia is one of the countries which is still primarily patriarchal. Balkan family structure was traditionally based on a male-dominated system of regulations in which the worst position in the hierarchy was that of a young woman. Her most important role was seen as a mother and children breeder. Woman who failed to fulfill this role were often seen as worthless and faced discrimination from society, as ability to attract men audience was seen crucial to her identity.

Even though nowadays women are gaining more power and independence and are taking up roles others that those connected to family life and structure, their inability to attract men might still be frequently looked down upon.
The incident described by a Danish woman should therefore be seen in this socio-cultural context, in which women are still highly influenced by prescribed traditional roles. Although the incident described happened in Denmark, the cultural patterns are often internalized and the transition to more egalitarian society often does not bring the change in perception of women’s own role and place in society. Many women still seek their acceptance by following the traditionally prescribed social norms. For a lot of them an exception from this existing socio-cultural model would have had much worse consequences than remaining in a subordinated position.

Masculinity
In addition to this, despite the fact that women are increasingly gaining access to higher education, higher position in society are still many times reserved for men and women often face – or touch – the so called ‘glass-ceiling’.

In conquering this obstacles women might sometimes try to use different strategies. Exposing body parts and dressing seductively could be one of the ways used for that purpose. The described behaviour of young Bosnian women could therefore also been seen as their way to earn a respect.
Country: Hungary
Date of recording the critical incident: 13 April 2012, Budapest
Ars Erotica Foundation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional domain of the narrator</th>
<th>Gender edu</th>
<th>Health edu</th>
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Sensitive zone

What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication)

gender relations, body image, gender roles

Culture of the person experiencing the shock

What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)

40-year-old, educated, middle-class woman, psychologist open to LGBT issues,

Culture of the person “causing” the shock

What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)

Young transgender woman (a man with a female identity)

Describing the SITUATION

Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

A lesbian film club plays films about the life of lesbians and the problems they have. Afterwards the films are discussed by the audience with the involvement of subject-matter experts. Last time I was moderator of the discussion as a psychologist. In the audience there was a transgender woman (a man with a female identity) who actively contributed to the discussion. In one of my interactions, when I wanted to pass the floor to her, I said: “Now let’s listen to a man’s opinion.”

1. Elements of the SITUATION

What happened? Where did it happen? Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural?)? Try to be as objective as possible.

1. (What happened?) Incident with a transgender man who has a female identity
2. (Who?) The narrator (psychologist but a moderator in a film club) and a transgender woman.
3. (What exactly happened?) The narrator made reference to the protagonist’s original gender, ignoring her self-image.
4. (where) It happened in an open discussion in a film club.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

How did you feel in this situation? The narrator is answering.

I was embarrassed and wanted to correct my mistake so I called her female name.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?
Acceptance of diversity, endorsement of claimed identities:

- Trainers working in the multicultural field are expected and expect from themselves the endorsement the identity positions chosen by participants, be that cultural, sexual etc. This is a kind of occupational criteria.

Professionalism:

- As a psychologist intervening after films dealing with sexual orientations the narrator was embarrassed by her own reaction of not attributing the appropriate gender identity to the transgender participant. She may interpret this incident as a lack of professionalism.

Gender is not biological, but social and can be changed:

- Our societies have (to some degree) accepted the idea that people can freely chose their gender identity.
- Nevertheless, research has shown that we categorise the people we meet in a matter of seconds without conscious effort according to three criteria: age, ethnicity and gender. Although gender is cultural, making the difference between man and woman seems to be a very basic categorisation in our social perception. In this incident the basic categorisation according to some primary signs preceded the more elaborated learnt categorisation (whereby gender is not biological but chosen).

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person? e.g. postive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.

For the narrator the transgender woman was neutral.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis !)

Identity threat:
For any person being addressed as member of the other gender directly questions and threatens their gender identity. Most transgender women face that threat more often than other people due to some of their primary masculine characteristics (height, voice etc.). Furthermore whenever they are addressed as men they can never exclude the intentional re-categorisation and intentional refusing to accept them as women.

Gender identity is cultural not biological:
For transgender people gender is defined by culture, by subjective identification rather than the primary biological signs. This focus on the cultural aspect of gender is one of the reasons why transgender people do not necessarily opt for the biological transformation via surgery.

Between relativisation and essentialisation of gender:
The transgender position assumes that gender is always cultural. At the same time it also assumes a male/female binomial opposition, which is different from the contemporary tendency of conceiving gender as not just two extremes but a variety of nuances between the two and that each of us makes their own gender mix. Transgender people move from one gender identity to a precise other gender identity, and for the movement to make sense that other gender identity has to be well defined, not relativized. A male to female gender transition cannot take place of the destination position is a relativized feminine-masculine position, only if it is a somewhat traditional conception of femininity.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?
“I had a cognitive dissonance: my slip of the tongue revealed that unconsciously I had a traditional gender conception.”

The narrator’s comment points to the fact that up to the present, most people in modern western societies could say the same, having deep down a traditional gender conception. This is reflected by the research on perception, which indicates that we categorise others in terms of gender automatically, without conscious effort and immediately. Whoever slips this categorisation stops the process of automatic perception and we find ourselves wondering: “is this man or a woman?” And though our conscious mind has learnt that gender is indeed cultural and that we would like to have and give the freedom to move between genders it takes time until this acquired freedom is reflected by our automatic perception functions.
Date of recording the critical incident: 2012
Country: DK

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive zone</td>
<td>x</td>
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What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,
- Decoration and exposure of the (female) body.
- Sexualisation of children – especially girls.

What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)
The narrator is a female young nursery teacher. At the time of the incident she was 33 years old and herself a mother of 2 small girls, at that time the age of 4½ and 2½. The nursery teacher and her family can be described as modern middleclass. Her husband was also educated in nursery and pedagogy. Thus, the family is highly engaged in childrens development and educational and parental principles.

What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)
A Palestinian mother, estimated around 35 years old - and her daughter, 3 years old.

Describing the SITUATION
Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

In the kindergarten, where I work, I received a mother with a Palestinian background, who delivered her 3-years old daughter in the kindergarten in the morning. The mother was – and she is in general - well dressed and elegant. The mother usually wears a scarf around her black hair.
This particular morning the little girl was wearing makeup - a heavy eyeliner as well as mascara and lipstick.

1. Elements of the SITUATION
How many people were present? How many women / men?
What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible)
Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.
Relationship between the two groups (eg. colonial history, majority – minority)

The incident was told to take place in the hall of the kindergarten. Many other parents and other adults were delivering their children at the same time. The institution is divided into groups, and the family did not belong to the same group as the nursery teacher. Thus, the nursery teacher was not in the situation very familiar with the family, though she has, of course, seen the little girl and also her mother on other occasions. Due to illness among the other professionals the nursery teacher took over in one of the other groups and received the family this particular morning.
2. EMOTIONAL REACTION
How did you feel in this situation?

The narrator was very amazed and found it wrong to put makeup on such a small girl. She actually found it repelling, because the makeup made the little girl almost look like a sex symbol. But the narrator didn’t say anything or react in the situation. She just took the girl with her into the room to the other children.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in you?

The incident made the narrator upset from two angles:

- The health angle.
- The sexual angle.

**Seen from the health angle**, the narrator is strongly aware of the discussions from the recent years in Denmark about the effects of cosmetics as for allergic reactions and environments etc. In Denmark many consumers and especially parents, are very observant about avoiding parabenes, perfumes and hormone disturbing ingredients. In the kindergarten and other institutions most of the personnel like the narrator are discouraged from using it for children. Make up may often be part of games in the kindergarten, but then the professionals only use special ecological materials used for games and theater etc. The narrator was especially conscious about these matters, being allergic herself and having two small girls loving to dress up and paint themselves etc.

**Seen from the sexual angle**, the narrator is also influenced by the sexualized signals that the use of an “adult” of make up on a little girl may send.

In the light of traditional gender roles, the use of cosmetics is associated to feminity and seduction power. In the traditional view it is a way to enhance the natural female beauty. But from this angle small girls wouldn’t need make up used in the “adult” way. They should not worry about being beautiful and sexually attractive as a female – since they have no awareness and maturity to understand what signals they may be emitting.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image do you have of the other person?

e.g. postive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.

The narrator had a negative image of the mother in the situation. The narrator found it ethically wrong and irresponsible of the mother to put make up on a small girl. For the narrator, the mother seemed in this respect to be a bad or at least careless parent. The narrator also notices that mother herself seemed to be vain in her clothing and make up. Though the narrator herself usually is aware of her own clothing, she had the negative impression that this mother was not able to separate her own need for an attractive appearance from the image of her small girl.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience?

(Hypothesis !)

It might be important for ethnic women to wear make up, perfume and jewellery in order to be appealing to men in societies where men obviously are dominant to women, concerning social and societal prestige and position.

We may expect muslim families to have especially strict norms and values about the display of the body and the female beauty. But a closer look may show that the sexualisation of women – and even small girls – are more universal. From educational contexts etc. it is known that muslim women – being in
female environments – may be rather bold and not at all modest in their ways of thinking and discussion sexual oriented issues. It is quite common that muslim women may on the one hand wear traditional clothing hiding their bodies – and on the same time wear heavy make up as an female attraction and kind of sexual exposure.

In this logic, beauty and sexual attraction may be seen as an expression of power opposite to societal power.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

There is a cultural discrepancy concerning the relevant age for using cosmetics and gender-accessories. But the question may be, if there are so great differences, in general, among immigrants and Danish/Western people concerning the emphasis of especially the female sex in various ages.

Thus, in modern Western societies the sexuality is not a taboo anymore. Mass media are contributing to spread sexual messages, advertisement, movie clip in all kinds of way, including the sexualisation of very young girls – in accordance with the “Lolita syndrome”. This phenomenon is emerging in many ways all over the world, for instance in the promotion of very young stars, where rather small girls are being dressed and maked up as adult women.
Name of organisation: mht
Country: DK
Date of recording the critical incident: 2012

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Sensitive zone
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,

- Gender relations in the public sphere.

Culture of the person experiencing the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

The narrator is a Danish male social worker, 45 years old at the time of the incident. The social worker is used to deal with integration efforts as part of his professional tasks. He has earlier had some contact to ethnic minorities in the local society, but he is a bit unfamiliar with visiting representatives from the ethnic minorities in their own environments.

Culture of the person “causing” the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

A number of Turkish men and women in a Turkish House of Culture in DK.

Describing the SITUATION
Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

I was going to deliver a speech at the local Turkish House of Culture in order to propose a new community project together. I was accompanied by a female colleague with Iranian background. The new project was going to involve both men and women from the ethnic minority groups in our local society.

When my colleague and I arrived at the Turkish House of Culture the meeting room was already full of men, but no women to be seen. I was a little surprised by this attendance, since I had expected to meet – and talk to - both men and women, in accordance with the project idea. I asked one of the spokesmen from the Turkish community, why no women were present. He answered that the women were present alright, but they were seated behind a curtain.

1. Elements of the SITUATION

How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.

Relationship between the two groups (eg. colonial history, majority – minority)

The incident took place in a Turkish House of Culture within a rather large meeting room. Apart from the narrator and his female colleague, the assembly included about 50 male listeners, sitting in rows in the meeting room. The participating women could not be counted, as they were hidden behind a curtain.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION
How did you feel in this situation?

The narrator found it very strange and alienating to be speaking to participants, who were sitting behind a curtain – and in fact being invisible. This feeling of alienation was that much stronger, while the speech was especially targeted the women in connection with the new local project being announced at the meeting.

Thus, the narrator felt really uncomfortable in the situation. He was also somewhat confused and a bit strayed, while he and his female colleague didn’t get a chance to go into a dialogue with the women about their needs and expectations from the new project. He didn’t get any feedback as expected from the meeting. All his plans for a democratic discussion and consultation went down the drain.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?

First of all: An open, democratic communication was not possible. The narrator and his colleague did not get a chance to have feedback from the female attendants. As a social worker in vulnerable residential he had strong principles about democratic communication forms and empowerment in decision making in local communities. He was a supporter of “bottom-up” models instead of too strong “top-down” models in community efforts. Especially he was eager to build up trust and inclusive citizen practice towards ethnic minorities in the local society.

All these principles were strongly challenged, when he had to face the fact that the local Turkish community didn’t play after the same rules as for women’s democratic rights.

Instead, the narrator experienced an example of a gender division that he had not seen in such a clear form for many years, if ever in his work.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image do you have of the other person?

*E.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.*

The narrator had a negative image of the male participants, since they so clearly were dominating the women in a patriarchal way, making them literally invisible and thereby reducing them to silent statues.

As a “soft” modern Danish male the narrator felt sorry for the women, who were deprived of personal independence and possibilities to speak out their reactions and expectations of the new project – a matter concerning their daily lives.

At the same time the narrator had a feeling of helplessness, since he didn’t know how to protest and insist on the women to be part of the direct meeting.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis !)

Maybe women have to be covered in the presence of other men. But it may also be that this particular immigrant environment was especially traditional and old-fashioned in respect of the gender division.

Men and women are very often separated in Muslim countries in the public sphere as well as in more private parts of everyday life: while they are praying at mosques, at political demonstrations on busses and ferries, swimming etc. Sometimes women even live in separate areas of a house. It is a religious prescription as well as a sign of religious fidelity like wearing the Islamic veil.

In the case of the critical incident the Turkish women are immigrants and might need a continuity in their religious practice. Evolving in a country where the values appeared being so far from their home country.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

It is a problem if a man cannot have a conference with Muslim women on subjects concerning their specific welfare as well as the family welfare.
But by second thought the incident also reflects the need of a stronger sensibility for “state of the art” in more traditional Muslim communities, functioning as “parallel societies” without much social and cultural exchange with the surrounding society.

In this case, the narrator might have suggested that his female colleague got the opportunity to go behind the curtain and have a more direct communication with the women. Actually, afterwards the narrator and his colleague succeeded in arranging a special meeting for the women, where only female social workers were present. It turned out to be a great success and the start of a good collaboration for some years thereafter.

Thus, the initial recognition of the local rules in the Turkish community may have paved the way for a collaboration between the ethnic minority communities and the local authorities, which also included the women’s voices at a later point.
Name of organisation: mht consult
Country: DK

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Sensitive zone
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,

- Norms of young girls and women’s behaviour in the public space.
- Cultural conceptions of health versus disease.
- Health’s impact on everyday’s activities.

Culture of the person experiencing the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

Danish female librarian, 63 years old at the time. The Danish librarian had plenty of experience due to the intercultural meeting with other ethnic-cultural traditions and norms. The Danish librarian had expressively wanted to work in a ghettoised environment in order to build a bridge to the Danish society for local families.

Culture of the person “causing” the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

An Arabic mother around 40 years old and her young daughter around 12 years old.

Describing the SITUATION

Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

I was in charge of a homework café in a local library, located in the centre of a larger residential complex, where a great many of the immigrant inhabitants of the city used to live (and still are living). The residential complex was designated as a ghetto area, which had actually led to very large investments in housing quality and outdoor environments over a longer period. In addition, a lot of social and cultural activities were launched in the complex. Thus, all together the complex was known and also appreciated as a nice and safe place to live for all residents. For instance, the many children in the area were safe to move around etc.

I had over the years been one of the pioneers in relation to integration and inclusion of immigrants in the community. Apart from working in the main library of our small city, I had founded the homework café in this residential complex in order to help especially immigrant children to a better education. A large group of homework helpers volunteered in the café once or twice a week. Most of the families in the complex knew me. They had confidence in me and appreciated all the activities in the homework café. Many of the immigrant parents – both mothers and fathers – came around from time to time in order to have some help themselves in translating public letters etc. It was a safe and accepted place. Immigrant children from various homelands as well as a number of Danish children frequently used the homework café without any problems – apart from general hustle and bustle now and then.

Then one day an Arabic mother came to see me in the homework café, bringing her young daughter at
around 12 years old. The mother asks me, if I can deliver some electronic learning materials and links on
the Internet that may support her daughter in her homework. I confirm that there may be some e-learning
materials. But since the mother and daughter actually are visiting the homework café, I also encourage the
daughter to use the homework café, where a number of adults are ready to help her with all school
subjects. The mother shakes her head very vigorously and tells me firmly that this is out of the question.
Firstly, her daughter is not allowed to visit the homework café on her own – and secondly, the mother
herself is too ill to escort the daughter to the homework café. Therefore, she wants materials that gives the
daughter an opportunity to train the school subjects on the home computer.
I keep myself from going into further arguments and promise the mother and the daughter to look up some
links and materials for the “home-based homework”.

1. Elements of the SITUATION

How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it
arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any
history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.

Relationship between the two groups (eg. colonial history, majority – minority)

The incident took place in the homework café which was established within the framework of a local library
in a larger resident complex inhabited by many immigrant families and immigrant children. Besides the
protagonists – the leader of the homework café and the mother and her daughter – a number of probably
20-30 children were present in the situation together with about 3 or 4 volunteers helping the children with
their schoolwork.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

How did you feel in this situation?

When the mother refused to let her daughter use the homework café, the narrator sort of lost her voice.
She was astonished and a bit confused, why the mother actually came to the homework café very close to
the family’s home, asked for support to the daughter’s homework and at the same time refused to take
advantage of the facilities that the staff could offer in the café.

The narrator then secondly felt a bit of indignation of the mothers refusal. At the same time the narrator
felt pity for the daughter, not being allowed to benefit from the facilities in the homework café as well as
from the social community that the café also represented for the children.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in you?

The narrator knew from many years of engagement in the local integration efforts in this area of the city
that a great many of the immigrant children had a major need for school support as well as a significant
need for social relations to attentive adults, showing interest in the childrens everyday lives.
It also touched the “feminin heart” of the narrator that this girl aged 12 years old or so, was not allowed to
move around on her own in a wellknown and safe environment close to the home.
Furthermore, the narrator was annoyed to hear the mothers attitude to her own health. It did not seem
credible that the mother should not be able to follow the daughter the few steps to the homework café.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image do you have of the other person?

e.g. postive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.

The narrator got the image that this woman – and mother – was somehow working against her own and
her family’s integration and inclusion in the Danish society. The narrator had over the years seen many
examples of this way of behaviour. The mother – and many migrant women like her - suffers from social
isolation. They sort of flee into diseases as an explanation of their isolated lifestyle and lack of contact to
the surrounding community and society. In this situation the mother was inflicting the same social isolation
on her daughter. The pattern thus may just continue from mother to daughter.
5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? *(Hypothesis I)*

The incident reflects an intercultural dilemma which is both about integration strategies, gender strategies and health strategies, which are closely linked:

- **On the integration level** the leader of the homework café is shocked (or at least surprised) while the immigrant woman so significantly refuses to accept and benefit from the good opportunities for her daughter to break the social isolation and be part of a local community. The homework café represents at one hand an opportunity for the daughter (and the mother herself) to strengthen her qualifications and learn more about the Danish society, the educational system etc. The homework café also represents a social opportunity for children and adults with both immigrant and Danish background to get together in a safe and appreciative community.

- **On the gender level** the leader is even more alarmed, while the mother by her refusal banishes the young daughter to the same social isolation that the mother herself suffers from. The consequence may ultimately be that the daughter is excluded from the rights and opportunities of other young women in the Danish society. But the point is that this is a kind of self-inflicted exclusion which cannot just be attributed to the general exclusion and discrimination of the Danish society and an insufficient integration policy etc.

- **On the health level** the leader in the situation recognizes – and reacts strongly on - a general “strategy”, seen among immigrant women with poor connections to the surrounding society. They typically live in the so-called parallel communities in rather deep social isolation, with a low sense of belonging to the new homeland, a feeling of alienation, accentuated by poor language skills, lack of knowledge to basic possibilities in the surrounding society – and often a strong feeling as well as experience of exclusion and discrimination and *otherness*. The “health strategy” – or rather disease identity – offers a kind of legitimacy and even status. Being ill You cannot be blamed for not being in school, being working and contributing to a welfare society with increasing ideological consensus that citizens can only enjoy when they also provide. Thus, the health strategy and disease identity is on one hand seen as a kind of defence position among immigrant women with no prospect of getting education or jobs etc. On the other hand, the health strategy and disease identity is also due to the fact that many of these women have been working hardly in the origin countries since their early childhood. They are worn out, maintained in a cultural and gender-related pattern of being total responsible of all domestic tasks etc.

Thus, all together, this incident appeals to many paradoxical feelings and experiences for the leader of the homework café.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

As described above, the incidents stresses the importance of being aware in the general integration- and inclusion efforts of the integration strategies, gender strategies and health strategies among ethnic minority women and families. Those are strategies that exist informally and may not be visible for more inexperienced eyes. But nevertheless, they may have a deep impact on the future possibilities for the children of these families, especially the girls.
**Name of organisation:** mht consult  
**Country:** DK  
**Date of recording the critical incident:** 2012

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**Sensitive zone**  
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,

- Religious as well as gender-related restrictions to expose parts of the body in a public space.
- Cultural-related sexualisation of all parts of the female body.

**Culture of the person experiencing the shock**  
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

A Danish male director of a local Integration Centre. The director is 62 years old at the time, married and having both adult children and grandchildren. The wife of the director is also well known in the Integration Centre.

**Culture of the person “causing” the shock**  
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

A Palestinian woman in her late thirties, being one of the adult female students and users of the Integration Centre. The Palestinian woman has a Muslim background. She is married and lives in a family with more children.

**Describing the SITUATION**

*Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.*

As the overall director of the Integration Centre I was one late afternoon attending the activities in the absence of the female teachers and adult supervisors. The adult female users of the Centre had all left except for one woman, who usually stayed in the Centre late in the afternoon, until she was picked up by her husband. The woman suffered from depressions at that time, but in shared agreement with herself, her husband and her caseworker, it was useful for her to get away from home for a few hours each day, even when the rest of the female users had left. Thus, she usually spent a couple of hours together with one or two of the teachers, while her husband had the opportunity to go shopping and picking up the children from kindergarten etc. Her husband was very pleased with this solution and had a very high opinion of the Integration Centre. He also knew that there was a man – and actually an older man - in the management of the Centre.

The incident took place in summertime, and this particular afternoon the weather was very hot and sunny. But the woman was – as usually - wearing a veil and long black dress. Therefore, before leaving the Centre for a professional meeting – the female teachers had persuaded the woman to sit outside in the sun with exposed forearms. Apart from the heat, an argument was also that this woman – like many of the other immigrant women in the Centre – suffered from lack of vitamin D.
Knowing about her situation I would like to communicate with her and also ask, if she needed something to drink or eat etc. So, I went outside the Centre to sit beside her for a while. But as soon as she saw me, she rapidly covered her arms and looked frightened.

1. Elements of the SITUATION

How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.

Relationship between the two groups (eg. colonial history, majority – minority)

2 persons were present in the situation:

- A male Danish teacher/overall director of the Integration Centre, replacing the usual staff one afternoon, but being known by all users in the Centre.
- A Palestinian woman, being one of the users of the Centre on special terms, where she attended the Centre after the normal training and opening hours as a result of her disease and family situation.

The woman was sitting outside the Integration Centre, and the male teacher/director went outside in order to communicate with her and assist her professionally. The woman knew the director beforehand and has been informed properly that he’ll be present all afternoon, while the female teachers were attending a professional meeting elsewhere.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

How did you feel in this situation?

The male director had a very odd and strange feeling, because the mere presence of his person seemed to represent a challenge to the woman. As a professional with many years of psychological and pedagogical experience he wanted to help and assist her. But she reacted as if he were an enemy.

The director did not at all pay attention to the exposed forearms and would never dream of touching the woman or sit too close against her will.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in you?

In a way the male director felt professionally castrated: He has attained a high level of professional competence, which he cannot use because of his gender.

Also he felt a bit stigmatised as a male, as if he would automatically be sexually interested in woman by the very sight of her forearms. He somehow felt reduced to a “sexual creature”, being as a man only occupied by the woman’s body and sexuality.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image do you have of the other person?

e.g. postive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.

The director felt sorry for the woman, because she could not allow herself some sunshine on her forearms in the presence of a male professional. He felt that she had chosen to be somehow a victim of traditional religious-cultural restrictions and commands.

The director also felt that the woman in a way reacted in an ostentatious way that did not necessarily correspond to her real feelings about exposing her forearms. The director intuitively got the feeling that her reaction was like a kind of grandstanding.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis I)

The main norm may be that Muslim women in principle have to cover themselves outside the family. This is a general norm that is in particular enhanced in the presence of other men. Exposing any part of the body –
even the forearms – can be seen as a display of the female sexuality and represent a lewd behaviour that in worst case limits to adultery.

### 6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

The exposed forearms become **on one hand** the symbols of the forbidden and tempting female sexuality, **But on the other hand** it seems appropriate to interpret the situation as a sexualisation of the female body, which in this case the woman imposes on herself. In an intercultural light it may be said that the woman with her reaction takes over the traditional male condemnation and ambiguous attitude towards the female sexuality.

The Danish professional, on his side, feels himself brought into a dilemma, where he is somehow forced to respond on the woman as a sexual creature. He becomes involuntarily a part of a cultural “gender-game” that might not even occur if the woman had exposed some other parts of her body.

Thus, somehow the protagonists are both victims of cultural and gender related norms, which prevent them from communicating in a appreciative way as adult people.

It can furthermore be added that the Muslim Palestinian husband really wanted his wife to visit the Integration Centre, even though he was perfectly aware of the fact that she might encounter male professionals. He was very worried about her depressive isolation, and apparently he would approve of any communication with male or female professionals that might facilitate her situation.

Despite this the woman chose to react from a number of general norms in the situation. Her reaction reflects that people can to a certain degree choose their ethnic-cultural identity, depending on how standards and social control works in the local environments. Perhaps the local standards made this woman choose a rather rigid and compulsory interpretation of the religious commands in the situation, where she in a way was forced to spend some time alone with a Danish man.
**Name of organisation:** mht  
**Country:** DK  
**Date of recording the critical incident:** 2012

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**Sensitive zone**

What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,

- A presumption of women obtaining benefits from exposing their sexuality.

**Culture of the person experiencing the shock**

What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

The narrator is a Danish female teacher, 42 years old, working at a language center where she is teaching adult students, both immigrants, refugees and foreign workers. She also takes the adult student through their examinations, often supplied by external examiners due to the rules for Danish language education. The female teacher has been teaching for many years and during the years she led many adult students to examination – male as well as female students.

**Culture of the person “causing” the shock**

What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

The protagonist in this incident was a female language student from Ex-Jugoslavia. It is unknown how old she was more exactly. But from memory she would be in the late thirties. Due to her background and usual appearance she was supposed to be a muslim.

**Describing the SITUATION**

Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

As a language teacher for foreign adult student in our language center I was in charge of the examinations of some of my teaching teams. This time it was one of the examinations where an external examiner was attended the examinations, participating in the marking.

Then one of the female student with a muslim background - who is normally very discretely and decently dressed - turned up for the examination very sexually dressed in a short and low-necked skirt, high heels, strong makeup, new hairstyle etc.

**1. Elements of the SITUATION**

How many people were present? How many women / men?  
What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.

Relationship between the two groups (eg. colonial history, majority – minority)

The incident took place in the language center, more specifically outside the examination room. The female teacher was coming out of the examination room to meet the next examinee. The external male examiner...
was sitting inside the examination room, waiting for the next examinee to enter the room. Outside the room were gathered an unknown number of other examinees apart from the female student, arriving to the examination area in her special outfit.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

How did you feel in this situation?

The female teacher was a bit shocked to see the female student so completely changed at this special occasion. In the very moment the teacher had the impression that the female student appeared to be a totally different person and she used to be in the every day language teaching.

The female teacher added that she could not help to notice the reaction of the male external examiner.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in you?

The situation and the female student’s change – almost transformation – seemed provocative from more angles:

The femininity angle:
It was provocating to feel that this female student apparently used her sexuality as a kind of a “tool” in the situation of an examination with a external – male – examiner, taking part in the examination grade. This raised the norm of women taking advantage of their sex to gain benefits, when men are part of the evaluation. She thereby confirmed a very old conception of women as sexualized beings, but also women playing on their gender, when it pays.

The formality angle:
There is in general no formal dress code for examinations – and especially adult learners are in principle free to choose their own dress code in such a situation. But nevertheless, there may exist an informal and tentative dress code, which is about finding a proper balance between one’s “authentic” outfit and a neutral appearance in that kind of situation, where You are supposed to be evaluated from Your skills and not from Your appearance.

The acculturation angle:
The narrator considers the adaptation as non conscious phenomena that takes place almost automatically as we learn the new lifestyles, rules, priorities of the new environment. She expects that Bosnian woman would adapt to Danish lifestyle and take up established cultural norms immediately but may not consider the fact that cultural adaptation is learning process that sometimes happens through a long period of time. Even so, the female student in this case did not catch up properly on the fact that many female students, youngsters as well as adults, may seek for a “balanced” appearance when being in a examination situation. Many Danish women would be afraid to raise the opposite effect, where a sexually challenging outfit would rather cause a disadvantage than an advantage.

The stereotype angle:
The Danish teacher’s surprise might also be caused by widely established beliefs and stereotypes about how typical muslim women should look. Many times the image that first comes to our mind is that of a fully covered woman, in a traditional dress (‘burka’). We do not think that there might be women, who do not follow this dress code, but are nevertheless muslim. But on the other hand, this female student usually dressed very descreetly. So, from this experience the teachers reaction seems understandable and may not be attributed to stereotyping.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image do you have of the other person?
The teacher had a negative impression of the female student in the situation. The student caused confusion, while she was dressing in such an unusual manner, very different from the way she usually dressed in the training courses. This change of style did raise my suspicion. In the teacher’s eyes the female student somehow deserted her gender by this behaviour.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? *(Hypothesis!)*

**Separation of sensuality from formal occasions:**

Some female Danish students also dress up for an examination. Maybe it is a more general behaviour in Eastern Europe for women to dress in a sexual way on ceremonial occasions.

**Muslim/Religious beliefs**

Even though Islam is a prevalent religious belief in Bosnia, the country has been subjected to a lot of influence from the West, therefore the attitudes towards religious practice seems to be more flexible comparing to some other countries that are traditionally Muslim.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

It is important to investigate a little closer why the female students change their dress code so dramatically in connection with examination. We should not judge them too quickly, but build up a more nuanced picture of traditions for dress codes in these situations.

**Gender hierarchy**

Bosnia is one of the countries which is still primarily patriarchal. Balkan family structure was traditionally based on a male-dominated system of regulations in which the worst position in the hierarchy was that of a young woman. Her most important role was seen as a mother and children breeder. Woman who failed to fulfill this role were often seen as worthless and faced discrimination from society, as ability to attract men audience was seen crucial to her identity. Even though nowadays women are gaining more power and independence and are taking up roles others that those connected to family life and structure, their inability to attract men might still be frequently looked down upon.

The incident described by Danish woman should therefore be seen in this socio-cultural context, in which women are still highly influenced by prescribed traditional roles. Although the incident described happened in Denmark, the cultural patterns are often internalized and the transition to more egalitarian society often does not bring the change in perception of women’s own role and place in society. Many women still seek their acceptance by following the traditionally prescribed social norms. For a lot of them an exception from this existing socio-cultural model would have had much worse consequences than remaining in a subordinated position.

**Masculinity**

In addition to this, despite the fact that women are increasingly gaining access to higher education, higher position in society are still many times reserved for men and women often face so called 'glass-ceiling'.

In conquering this obstacles women might sometimes try to use different strategies. Exposing body parts and dressing seductively could be one of the ways used for that purpose. The described behaviour of young Bosnian women could therefore also been seen as their way to earn a respect.
CRITICAL INCIDENT: Interruption

Country: DK  
Date of recording the critical incident: 2012

### Professional domain of the narrator

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### Sensitive zone

What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,

- Gender hierarchy in an intercultural perspective - and assumption of and identification with male dominance among female professionals.
- Lack of respect and recognition among female professionals.

### Culture of the person experiencing the shock

What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

The narrator is a young Danish female psychologist, aged 25 at the time for the critical incident. She can be described as a rather ambitious young woman with high professional qualifications. In general, she is good at putting herself through in discussions and dialogue. She would probably not characterize herself as a feminist in the sense that she is not a formal member of feminist organisations. But in practice, however, she has a strong self-awareness and also from a gender perspective.

### Culture of the person “causing” the shock

What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

The other protagonist in the critical incident is an Iranian female psychologist, around 50 years old at the time. The Iranian psychologist has been living in Denmark for about 10 years, when the incident takes place.

### Describing the SITUATION

Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

We were having a meeting at my office – a psychological clinic. I was responsible for one of two group discussions about a new journal system for psychologists. We were 6 psychologists in my group, myself inclusive. We had 20 minutes to discuss the issue before presenting it to the other group. I started with my first question trying to give each member of my group some time to express their opinion. But my Iranian colleague kept on interrupting me and the other colleagues in our group. I tried nicely to take the word again to ask the others about their opinions. But the Iranian colleague did not respect that. A couple of weeks earlier she had told me that in Iran it is difficult for women to be heard. As a result she sometimes talked a lot and also loudly in order to feel sure of other people’s respect for her. In our group session I was thinking that this was one of these moments for her, even though she was usually very respected and recognized in our working place.

1. **Elements of the SITUATION**

How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.
**Relationship between the two groups (eg. colonial history, majority – minority)**

A group of all together 6 psychologists are gathered in a group session as part of a larger meeting about a new journal system. The 6 psychologists are going to discuss some points about the new system and then afterwards give back a record to the rest of the meeting. The narrator has been chosen as the group leader, and the group was sitting in the narrator’s office.

The group consisted exclusively of female psychologists, of which one had an Iranian background, while the others all had a Danish background.

### 2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

**How did you feel in this situation?**

The narrator became very annoyed and even angry in the situation, where the Iranian colleague actually didn’t take any notice of the other professional’s point of views and need to express their meaning etc.

I was also very frustrating for the narrator and the other colleagues present to experience that the Iranian colleague ignores all their friendly attempts to stop her and give space for the rest of the group.

### 3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in you?

The narrator – and also the rest of the group – acted from a norm of being polite and not starting an open conflict among colleagues. The narrator also emphasized the norm of not telling the Iranian colleague directly in the situation that she was being rude and disrespectful towards the other group members. Instead, the narrator – and the rest of the group – tried to convey their irritation in a more indirect manner.

This may be common for at least some Danish people that they try to avoid open conflicts, if there is a possibility to obtain some kind of solution or compromise etc.

Another important value in this incident may be the fact that in general, Danish female professionals expect to be heard and recognized in professional discussions etc.

Very paradoxical, the Iranian colleague threatened this value while treating the female colleagues as if she herself were an Iranian male professional with the habit and the “right” to interrupt and ignore female colleagues in her homeland, Iran.

### 4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image do you have of the other person?

*e.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.*

The incident left the narrator with a very negative perception of the Iranian colleague on the personal level. With her behaviour in the group session the Iranian colleague did in fact provoke, frustrate and hurt the narrator in such a deep way that the narrator ever hereafter has tried to avoid the Iranian woman - in order not to be touched so strongly on profound values as she experienced in the session.

### 5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis 1)

The incident shows a paradoxical behaviour when the Iranian woman on the one hand has described the oppressive treatment of female professionals in her homeland, Iran – and when she on the other hand repeats this oppressive pattern towards other female professionals in the Danish context. From the gender perspective we may say that the Iranian woman takes over a male attitude towards her new female colleagues in Denmark, where this kind of gender-related behaviour has become a taboo in many professional contexts – at least on the surface and especially among younger women.

### 6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

Apart from the paradox concerning the gender perspective as mentioned above, the incident also gives rise to reflections on the impact of different communication styles and acculturation. So, the incident can be analyzed from various perspectives:

- A communicative perspective.
In the Gender equality perspective the incident shows a paradoxical behaviour when the Iranian woman on the one hand has described the oppressive treatment of female professionals in her homeland, Iran – and when she on the other hand repeats this oppressive pattern towards other female professionals in the Danish context. From the gender perspective we may say that the Iranian woman takes over a male attitude towards her new female colleagues in Denmark, where this kind of gender-related behaviour has become a taboo in many professional contexts – at least on the surface and especially among younger women.

In the communication perspective the incident illustrates that different norms and values around communication style may disturb and even destroy the communication. But at the same time it is important to be aware of the fact that different communication styles may also sometimes lead to a culturalisation, where other norms are interpreted merely within a ethnic-cultural framework.

As in the incident the taboo of interrupting is one good example. Some cultures may allow (and prefer) interruptions, while in others we have to wait until the other finishes her/his speech to be able to answer, or propose a new idea. How we take turns is similarly orchestrated: who speaks, how long, with what rhythm. Some approaches prefer formal equality in participation: everybody should add their contribution and people should take equal rounds. Such an approach would reflect the preferences of a society valuing formal equality (creating the formal conditions for equal opportunities). The lack of enchained comments may suggest the Iranian woman that nobody else has anything to add, so she proposes her ideas.

On the other hand, this incident may be an example, where the one person – the interruptive Iranian woman – on a personal level has difficulties in showing proper respect for other people in a dialogue. In this light, it would be a culturalisation to speak about specific ethnic-cultural communication norms.

In the cultural perspective the incident may be seen in the light of acculturation. Adapting to a new society’s cultural patterns, values is neither an automatic nor an easy process. It takes observation and reflection skills that people possess to different degrees. What’s more, acculturation – and our ways of learning cultural patterns in general – always depend on personality as well. All this implies that the Iranian psychologist may not have yet picked up the right level of assertivity and the right communication style preferred in Denmark.

From a personal perspective, we cannot exclude completely the possibility that the best explanation for the behaviour of the Iranian psychologist lies in personal rather than cultural predispositions. It is indeed a risk of cultural analysis that we may contribute traits to culture when in fact we should talk about personality. Personality is often reflected in the choice of destination country for migrants. According to Ward’s “cultural fit hypothesis” some personality traits may be more dominant in one culture than in another – and sometimes we can just imagine so. A woman with a more assertive, self-imposing predisposition may find the need to leave a culture where women’s roles and characters are expected to be closer to “traditional femininity” and may look for a society where she expect the gender roles to be more equal. That does not mean that her interpretation of gendered behaviour will be necessarily compatible with the new society.
CRITICAL INCIDENT: Lebanese Father

Name of organisation: mht consult
Country: DK
Date of recording the critical incident: 2012

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<th>Professional domain of the narrator</th>
<th>Gender edu</th>
<th>Health edu</th>
<th>Sexuality edu</th>
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<th>General intercultural edu</th>
<th>Physical edu / sport</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive zone</td>
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What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,

- Professional integrity.
- Gender hierarchies.
- Threats to male identity.

Culture of the person experiencing the shock

What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

The narrator is a Danish female librarian, 38 years old. The narrator was working in a local library, located in a local residential.

Culture of the person “causing” the shock

What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

A Lebanese man, 37 years old, owner of a fast-food restaurant in the same area as the residential and the local library.

Describing the SITUATION

Please give a short account (10–15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

A Lebanese boy (7 years old) had on several occasions been loudspoken and disturbing in the library. We had asked him to calm down, but in vain. Little by little the problem had increased, at therefore, I finally went to his father’s fast food restaurant in order to involve the father in a solution. When I arrived in the restaurant, I informed the father quietly and politely about the situation. I furthermore asked him to ensure, that his son would behave normally in the library.

The father reacted with rage and shouted that I could expect retaliation, if I dared to treat his son badly.

1. Elements of the SITUATION

How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.

Relationship between the two groups (eg. colonial history, majority – minority)

A Danish female librarian sought a Lebanese father in his own restaurant and confronted him politely with his son’s behavioural problems and disturbance in the local library. As the situation took place in the restaurant it happened in front of a number of guests and customers, several of whom probably knew the father and his family rather well – among them several male acquaintances.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION How did you feel in this situation?

The narrator felt deeply shocked and almost paralyzed by the father’s violent reaction. The narrator invited...
the father politely to collaborate in solving a problem concerning the behaviour of his son. But instead by his reactions he gave the narrator a feeling of being the problem herself, as if she were the one who behaved offensively. At the same time the narrator had a strong feeling that the father tried to exercise male dominance, showing especially the male guests in the restaurant his ability to put a woman in space.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in you?

The fathers offensive reaction actually hit the narrator on several levels:

- Firstly, her professional integrity was hurt, since the father did not respect that she came in a professional errand, being responsible for the environment in the library.
- Secondly, her gender integrity was hurt, and she felt that a male chauvinist tried to whip her into line as a woman.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image do you have of the other person?

e.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.

The narrator expressed a spontaneous feeling like standing face to face with a real patriarchal and chauvinist male. In the eyes of the narrator, the father, in a way, represented the worst preconceptions of male dominance and oppression of women in the Middle East.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis 1)

As head of the family the father may feel that he had to defend members of his family against accusations, attacks and threats from the majority society – especially when the situation was linked to a son.

As owner of a restaurant in the local environments he may also have to demonstrate his male dominance and even contempt for a woman daring to accuse his son of misbehaviour.

As a member of the local Middle East community the father may belong to one of the more traditional parts of this minority environment, where men in general receive no reprimands from women.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

In a intercultural perspective, the incident may illustrate the contrast between a local male-dominated minority environment and a public welfare system that in Denmark is characterized by many female professionals and officials.

The father in this incident probably holds a certain respect and authority being the owner of a small restaurant – and thereby being self-supportive from a financial point of view. From a cultural point of view, however, he is in the situation confronted with the lack of control over his son’s behaviour. There is a stain on his reputation and his male authority is indirectly called into question in front of his own guests and acquaintances. It is all the more humiliating, when the message is brought by a woman.

In this case, the invitation is experienced as a menace to male supremacy, especially because the Lebanese father cannot allow himself to lose face in front of other men.

In another setting the father may have been more cooperative and responsive to the problems. In this light the female professional may have shown a greater intercultural understanding – and instead, she should have had an appointment with the father and the family outside his working hours without guests and acquaintances from the local environments being present.
**COUNTRY:** France  
**Date of recording the critical incident:** 2012

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<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Language class for foreigners</td>
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**Sensitive zone**
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (e.g: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,)

Individualism, women’s emancipation, acculturation, women’s identity

**Culture of the person experiencing the shock**
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

37-year-old woman, Austrian origins, who has lived in France for 5 years. Has worked as intercultural trainer for 10 years. Has many experiences of international mobility (lived in several European and African countries). Lives with her partner, but has no children. Identifies herself as universalist-feminist.

**Culture of the person “causing” the shock**
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

Women of 60-70 years old, of Tunisian, Algerian and mostly Moroccan origins who have lived in France for more than 10 years. Married mothers with adult children. Most of them have never worked outside of the home. Their French language skills are very basic, they attend a special French language class developed for them.

**Describing the SITUATION**
*Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.*

We are invited by an association as guest trainers for a session within a linguistic workshop. The class is for women migrants coming from Maghreb countries. Most of them have lived in France for more than ten years, yet their level of French is very basic, as their life in France has first of all been the life with their family at home, their main mission being raising their children. When these children grew up, suddenly they became free to start to open themselves up to the new environment. Our mission was to offer a special session for Women’s Day.

The incident takes place when the third exercise is proposed to the group: to make a collage on « their own Women’s Day ». This is explained as a day when they could do whatever they wished. We invite them to create a visual representation of this day using pictures from magazines and drawings, then explain how they would spend the day. Several women start to create a collage on a dinner at home and housekeeping tasks. I try to make them understand that they could really do whatever they wished for, that it could be a day not like every other day, but they don’t understand, or do not want to.

So we helped them to create the collage on housekeeping tasks and dinner at home. Suddenly I realized the mistake we made when we expected them to take an individualist position of ‘emancipated woman’ who has individual projects for « herself ».  

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Critical incidents GENDER  
www.bodyproject.eu
### 1. Elements of the SITUATION

**How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.**

**Relationship between the two groups (e.g. colonial history, majority – minority)**

| Linguistic workshop in the language school, within a small town of the Parisian metropolitan area. There are about 9 participants, their usual facilitator and two guest facilitators. The room is small but participants seem to be at ease in it, there is a sense of ownership of the space. They exchange smiles, chat in French – and a bit in Arabic. The climate is welcoming for the two guest trainers. |

### 2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

**How did you feel in this situation?**

Surprised then immediately ashamed for not being able to anticipate what would happen, embarrassed for not having reflected on my own ethnocentrism.

### 3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?

**Individualism:** in a society where individualism is the main tendency it is very easy to imagine an individual point of view (in fact it is the easiest). Easy to talk about “freedom of choice” and “autonomy”. We use a lot the word “I” and “me.” We express our needs, it is even expected from us to be able to express our individual desires. Career planning, family planning, all departs from the individual. The narrator has seldom been challenged in her own individualist position; she expresses and follows her own needs quite autonomously.

**Women’s role, women’s emancipation:** In modern European societies gender equality is a must (even if it may not yet be the rule everywhere). Women are encouraged by the society to engage in work, and even in careers traditionally considered masculine. When it comes to gender identity, for the narrator, the “norm” is that every individual could construct their own masculinity and femininity according to their own choices and paths. The narrator does not have children, and she is a fervent fighter for the equal distribution of housekeeping tasks at home (tasks that she despises and considers a necessary evil). Accordingly for her a day for oneself would most logically entail reading books that one always wanted to read, learning to parachute, going dancing or any other activity involving personal development and discovery.

**Acculturation:** As an intercultural trainer – and migrant herself – the narrator considers adaptation as a non-conscious phenomenon that takes place almost automatically as we learn the new lifestyles, rules, and priorities of the new environment. To let yourself be changed by the new environment is perceived as positive: we become permeable to the new environment, we build on it, we change and develop through it.

### 4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?

**e.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.**

Negative, then neutral

### 5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience?

(Hypothesis!)

**Collectivist tendencies, centring on family and community rather than the individual:**

Moroccan culture – especially in the period when the participants emigrated is probably much less centred on the individual than French culture. It is less automatic to take the individual desires and projects as a priority before the family’s or the community’s projects. There is less talk of « I » and « me » and more talk of « us ». The « success » of an individual is not so much her/his own individual achievements and satisfaction, but the respect s/he inspires in her/his community.
Traditional women’s role: According to Hofstede’s results, Moroccan culture is more characterised by masculinity than French culture. This implies that a greater differentiation and separation of the roles assigned to / taken up by the two genders. The tasks traditionally feminine tend to be monopolised by women. Working outside the home in the generation of the participants was very rare. Their main mission was being a good wife and a good mother. Life revolves around these roles, which are not perceived as oppressive but as reasons for living. An elderly lady would pride herself of having been a good mother and a good wife. It is this image that earns her the respect of the community as well.

Acculturation: Research showed that acculturation is not an automatic nor a linear process. The women in the incident probably did not have a « full immersion » in the French culture and the cultural model of the emancipated woman. Their migration project at the beginning was for a limited period and focusing on work, with an idea of return. They spent most of their time in a cultural environment dominated by members of the same or similar cultures. And even supposing frequent contacts with the French models focusing on freedom of choice and independence of women, nothing guarantees that that model would seem to them as something desirable. It is indeed a model that depreciates what is most important for them: the family and the role taken in keeping the family. The fact that the basic orientation is less individualistic seems to suggest that the idea of the emancipated woman is one that would not be easy to integrate.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

There is no absolute rule for acculturation – we cannot expect that after this or that number of years a migrant would become « adapted » or « acculturated » to dominant patterns of the host culture, even when it is a cultural pattern that to us seems to be a desirable one, such as the empowerment of women, which is the fruit of many years of struggle.
| **Country:** France  
| **Date of recording the critical incident:** 2012 |

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sensitive zone</strong></td>
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<td>Artist in attendance</td>
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</table>
| What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,)  
| The question of gender. What an African woman can’t say to/in front of a man. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture of the person experiencing the shock</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>French, 59 years old. Ten years experience as a storyteller. Previous leading of workshops/training on storytelling. Experience as an actor. Professional goal: develop a training linking storytelling with the teaching of French as a foreign language. Jean works with a lot with people of different ages/backgrounds. He has an “international identity card of world citizen.”</td>
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<th>Culture of the person “causing” the shock</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women from sub-Saharan Africa (Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, etc.). Mothers between the ages of 35 and 40 (the workshop was supposed to take place between when they dropped their kids off at school and when they went to pick them up. In general, they are Muslim and wear veils, but not necessarily ones that cover fully (the veils cover their heads, but we can see a little of the front of their hair and their neck). African-style clothing that is long and baggy. They speak French just well enough to make themselves understood.</td>
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**Describing the SITUATION**

*Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.*

As part of a story collecting project, two storytelling colleagues and I led a workshop in the commune of Trappes (a suburb of Paris) to teach young trainers how to collect stories and lead workshops so that the stories could be circulated among the inhabitants of the Mureaux neighborhood. We had formed a partnership with a women’s association. The workshop was open to everyone, but we only had female participants (apparently culturally, this couldn’t be a mixed activity). It was the first time I had worked with African women. The first workshop with these women was led by my colleague T and myself. After a few games and exercises (including a visual memory game), my colleague and I told a few stories and then asked the participants if these stories reminded them of any that they already knew to encourage them to share their own stories. We noticed that they were rather embarrassed. The women said that they didn’t know how to tell stories in French. We thus invited them to tell a story in their own language (Peul, etc.), but they said that they didn’t remember, that they were children’s stories from a long time ago, etc. We said, “Exactly. Tell us a story that you tell your children.” But they said that they were stories for children.
We thus thought that they were shy, especially since it was the beginning of the workshop and we decided not to insist anymore and to continue telling stories ourselves and to do the activities in which the women participated without any problem. I then talked to my colleague P., who had more experience than us working with African women. She said that they definitely had stories to share and that we just needed to insist.

The second workshop came along and this time, I was leading with my colleague P. She emphasized her position as a mother and spoke a little Bambara, which facilitated communication with the participants. Still, we found ourselves in the same situation as the first time where the women would not tell stories. This time, however, P. insisted that the women tell stories, so they finally admitted to her that they couldn’t tell stories in my presence. “Where we’re from, you don’t tell stories like that in front of a man,” they said. Nevertheless, we found common ground by having them sing French songs they knew like “A la claire fontaine” (as long as we stayed on our own cultural ground for them, there was no problem). We also did a massage exercise, taking care not to ask them to massage me. I massaged my colleague and she did the same for me.

In the third workshop, only my female colleagues (P. and F.) were present. Later I learned that the participants had easily agreed to tell their stories, which were not about anything private. They only told traditional tales (animal stories, etc.) and sung traditional songs. Nothing new for us storytellers.

1. Elements of the SITUATION

How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.

Relationship between the two groups (e.g. colonial history, majority – minority)

The workshop was held in a small room made available by the association. No furniture. Everyone was sitting down on the carpet. While Jean was careful not to put his feet in the direction of these African women because he had heard that it was frowned upon in some countries, he was surprised to see that these women were completely at ease sitting on the floor with their bare legs facing the storytellers.

The most important thing regarding the location is probably the fact that the workshops took place in the Mureaux district of Trappes. This is the area where cars were first burned in France (during riots). The media picked up the story and the neighbourhood had this negative reputation for several years. Thus, for the storytellers, the goal was to collect life stories that go against this negative image.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION How did you feel in this situation?

At the first workshop, my colleagues and I thought it was probably because of timidity that the women didn’t tell stories, especially with it being the beginning of the workshops. Then I understood at the second workshop that it was my presence that prevented participants from telling their stories. So, at first I was amazed/surprised at the reaction of the participants and in particular had a feeling of discomfort from a pedagogical point of view. It was a momentary feeling of being at an impasse: how would we continue if the workshop participants refuse to tell stories? But at the same time, I felt a sense of respect for the desire to preserve a tradition (women do not tell stories in front of men in a public space). It was a rewarding experience because this incident was an opportunity for me to learn something new in my storytelling career.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?
As a French, Parisian, contemporary storyteller, Jean is heavily influenced by a modern Western culture in which words are shared without it being a matter of gender. His modern education makes him see the woman as equals to men. They have just as much right to speak to him, both in the public and private space. Why should it just be that men can tell stories and not women?

However, due to his role as a storyteller, Jean has great respect for traditions and for people who honour their ancestors by respecting their traditions. The refusal of these women drew respect from him because he felt that this tradition was "almost in their fibers and their atoms! ". Jean is always touched by manifestations of these traditions. For him, Honouring this little tradition that comes from so far away is a reminder of respect for several generations of ancestors. For him, it is worthy of respect even if it goes against his own values. These are values of equality coming from his own ancestors: generations of women who fought for the right to vote so their voice could be heard in the public space.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?

* e.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.

Positive (refusal was polite and have a sense of respect for these women who honour the traditions of their ancestors).

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience?

(Hypothesis!)

Following these workshops, Jean did some research on the incident in order to understand what had happened. In his readings, he found that indeed, African women only told stories to their children (in an educational dimension, among others) and to other women. They never told them to men and especially not in a public space/outdoors because only men could tell stories in the public space (for men and sometimes for children). In addition, the relationship to the spoken word and to history is different in many African cultures: it is more private/intimate. Some stories even have a sacred character: we do not tell anyone, anytime, anywhere. They are told in a certain context (or secret ritual, etc.).

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

Yes, because if the purpose of these workshops was to collect life stories, it would have been annoying for storytellers if participants refused to tell stories. Jean would have been obligated to be less involved or even remove himself completely from the workshop to allow for the collecting of stories. Fortunately, it was only a classic storytelling workshop that didn’t require any collecting. Jean was able easily to adapt to the situation and find a compromise (the songs in French). Indeed, he thinks that in this kind of situation, one shouldn’t search for the right thing to say or try to insist on a point when it’s not working. In this particular case, he knew he just needed time and complicity. It was also necessary to accept who these women were and to show respect for their position.

Jean has said that the next time he works with African women, he will perhaps be take a secondary role to prevent his presence from being a hindrance. But the best would be to try to provide a little more time to build a relationship of trust with this kind of public or prepare workshops before-hand to ask those working in local organizations about the cultural characteristics of the target audience because they know the terrain and know immediately, for example if there shouldn’t be any men involved, etc.

So, Jean now knows that when he receives specifications for the collecting of stories, he must first know if the public is willing to talk and tell their stories. There may be cultural or religious constraints or obstacles. He needs to have the prerequisites before-hand because collecting life stories isn’t possible with just any audience anywhere (in prison, for example, people tell crimes, etc.).
**CRITICAL INCIDENT: Seduction**

**Country:** France  
**Date of recording the critical incident:** 2012

<table>
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<td>Theatre workshop</td>
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**Sensitive zone**

What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication, ...)

The relationship to seduction / sensuality in verbal and nonverbal communication among African women staying at Emmaus.

**Culture of the person experiencing the shock**

What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

The narrator is French. He has significant experience (about 30 years) in theater. He directs a theater company that participates in a number of social activities with the goal of giving at-risk populations (whether that be those physically lacking in resources or psychologically vulnerable groups) access to culture and the arts. As an actor and trainer, he regularly works with individuals staying at Emmaus (a French charity that provides shelters).

**Culture of the person “causing” the shock**

What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

African women (from various countries) who were between 30 and 40-years-old. Staying at Emmaus (the center is not only for foreigners), these women have mostly lived on the streets. Most of them do not have family in France and live alone. The date of arrival in France differs between participants. Generally, they have immigrated fairly recently. Depending on the country of origin, religion could be Islam or Christianity, etc.

**Describing the SITUATION**

*Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.*

We had to act out a scene from *The Dispute* by Marivaux. One of the characters in it began to feel the first stirrings of love and discover the strategies of seduction. The participants were supposed to act out this seduction and it was to be reflected in their body language. The goal was to teach them how a woman could seduce someone without being a "nymphomaniac". To help them get into the role, I asked them what they would do to seduce someone. The participants were not at all comfortable. One of them (the one who played Eglé) decided to stop the workshop and never returned.

**1. Elements of the SITUATION**

- How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.
- Relationship between the two groups (eg. colonial history, majority – minority)
The activity takes place at an Emmaus shelter. Several people are present without having explicitly chosen to come to the workshop. Seeing the workshop as they pass by, they either decide to participate or not. The doors are left open.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

How did you feel in this situation?

Disappointment. This event made me realize that, in addition to the theater workshop, important work must also be done on the body. I decided to give them a parallel activity in a fashion show. This would give attention to their bodies while helping each woman cultivate her singular expression.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?

The narrator has a Western conception of the theater and of the relationship to the body acting. According to this conception, the actor must put his body in the service of the text. In addition, acting does not involve the person behind the actor: if you try to seduce someone on stage, it does not mean that you are trying to seduce him "for real." Acting is just a "game". Philippe has also noticed the lack of emphasis on the body in his own culture. The latter is dominated by the intellect. The body itself seems to be more present in African cultures (especially sub-Saharan Africa, and North Africa), even if religious and cultural constraints bring certain limitations when it comes to seduction/sex. Indeed, for him, these last two notions are neutral or even positive, while they may be very negative connotations in some cultures for religious reasons. From his point of view, sensuality and seduction are a part of life. He thinks it is a shame to repress this natural need. Except in the case of certain mental disorders, seduction shows that we feel good enough about ourselves to think that we can seduce someone.

In theater, especially in the “commedia dell’arte”, seduction occurs in the body of the actor through the movements of the chest and pelvis. When a character turns his chest towards another, this demonstrates this erotic attraction. In contrast, when the chest moves, it is a sexual attraction. The influences of the commedia dell’arte appear clearly in the characters of Molière and Marivaux. This is what he was trying to find in his workshops through putting emphasis on the contribution of the body. It was also to encourage the participants to regain some confidence and show them that a woman can seduce without being a nympho (or anything else). Obviously, the concept of freedom is also at stake here because, from the point of view of the narrator, seduction implies a certain moral freedom and religious freedom which acting requires (at least in the West).

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?

Slightly negative

e.g. postive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis !)

Even though they are still young enough to seduce, these women did not give attention to their bodies and were closed up/guarded because of past traumas but also because of a lack of resources and especially a lack of self-esteem. Sometimes, having lived on the street for a long time, these women had learned to hide and conceal their bodies by wearing baggy and heavy clothes to protect against the cold and some men who might try to abuse them. They have developed a kind of denial of the body probably already present in their cultures of origin. Indeed, the cultural aspect (required modesty of women) prevented these women from indulging themselves in the practice of seduction and sensuality. Coming from Christian or Muslim backgrounds, these women seem to have integrated the negative connotation that seduction and sensuality have in monotheistic religions. Women caught in the act of seduction are considered as being nymphomaniacs or even worse...

Finally, there is the notion of the status of the actor and of the work of fiction: in the West, the work of the
actor remains in the realm of fiction. Feelings and gestures have no relationship with the person who act and no moral implication. This is not the case in other cultures where the boundary between reality and fiction is not as clearly defined.

In the specific case of the participant in question, Philip think that after all this work on the body, she obviously did not want to continue to act because it went too far for her considering her cultural frame of reference (the place of the body in her native culture) and her experiences on the street. Being used to hiding (or denying) her body, she was afraid of revealing herself while acting.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

Yes, it is important to restore the concept of "innate culture" at the center of cognitive, motor, sensory and aesthetic transformation processes. It is therefore crucial that a trainer adapts his methods and exercises to the target audience:
- A keen sense of observation (to identify the manifestation of differences including non-verbal differences)
- Empathy: instead of ignoring the manifestation of a difference or force the other to comply with the requirements of an exercise, we should try to put ourselves in that person’s place to understand what the problem is for him/her.
- Negotiating skills: Trying to find a compromise that allows for the accommodation of this difference.
CRITICAL INCIDENT: Dressing Up

Country: France
Date of recording the critical incident: 2012

Professional domain of the narrator: Other
Red Cross Agent at the ZAPI (Waiting Area for Persons With Pending Cases)
X

Sensitive zone
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication, nonverbal communication, relationship to dress/physical appearance nudity, behavior in the ZAPI.

Culture of the person experiencing the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)
24-year-old intern. French. Studying intercultural communication at INALCO. Working in the social and humanitarian field for the first time.

Culture of the person “causing” the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)
Two young Nigerian girls, 14 years old, recently arrived in ZAPI.

Describing the SITUATION

Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

Sometimes a few people ask us for a t-shirt or other item because they have not yet received their baggage and their clothes are being washed. That day, there were several Nigerian 14-year-old girls and two of them wanted a t-shirt and jeans. I go with them, for the first time, to the room where clothes are stored (they are gifts). Despite only being 14-years-old, the girls are taller than me (I measure 1m72!) and are twice my build. I know they had a lot of character but do not really know their history.

I start pulling out fairly basic t-shirts in their sizes as well as dresses and pants (the choice is quite limited). Often people take the first garment offered to them because it is just to help them out. The two girls, however, barely look at what I present and return the piles of clothing back to the shelves, as if they were shopping a sale at a store or a garage sale. Communication is awkward because they speak almost no English and I felt tiny beside them.

I spot a nice tank top and then realize that it is too small (even for me). Yet one of the girls takes it from my hand and puts it on. She turns and returns to the approving eye of her friend. She is sausaged into the sequined top, leaving her navel visible and showed her very large breasts as it clings to her body. The second took a pair of jeans in 38 (she a good size 42) and immediately tried them on in front me. The open fly is ready to explode but apparently it does not bother them. After they try on several pieces, I make them understand that they need to clean up their mess a little. They look at me with a smile (I really think they were laughing at me) and take 2 or 3 t-shirts.

1. Elements of the SITUATION

How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any
The scene took place in a 2 or 3 square meter room in a building that seemed like a combination hotel/prison. There were the two Nigerian girls and the narrator.

### 2. EMOTIONAL REACTION How did you feel in this situation?

I was "frightened" to see one of the girls in this tight sequined top, which showed her navel, her very large breasts and clung to her body. I felt that I should not let them dress like that but after only 1 hour spent in their company, I did not want to insist.

I felt a generation gap (even if it is only 10 years difference) and a gap between the two cultures. The word "culture" does not only refer to an "ethnic" culture but also the lifestyle of these young girls, their perception of their body and what they make of it.

I suddenly felt "old" and totally out of touch. All the clothes they looked at were things that I found vulgar and..ugly! But I left them alone because I did not want to impose my style and I thought that they would thus respect me better in the future (which was the case).

I tried to hide my surprise and the fact that I did not understand their choice. I half-heartedly held out their tiny clothes hoping they would not like them... I did not say anything when one turned towards me, bounded up in a bustier ready to crack.

### 3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?

The narrator seems to regard adolescence as an age marked by being carefree ("at age 14, I climbed trees!" she said) and where the desire to seduce and develop one's body is not present. In addition, wearing tight clothing is not a way for her to showcase her body, but rather to degrade it, thereby making it "ugly". The narrator has a certain image of femininity in which it is associated with a certain modesty and decency that involves not wearing too tight clothing that show her breasts and navel. It is this image of femininity that she associates with beauty. The opposite, however, is associated with a certain ugliness and vulgarity.

The narrator has a pragmatic view of the situation, thinking that the girls should only take what was necessary/vital. But she had the impression that they had actually "gone shopping." The narrator found herself destabilized in her role as representative of the Red Cross because she had the impression of being in the shoes of a saleswoman who was waiting for her customers to make their choices.

This was not only a problem of professional identity but also of authority. Indeed, in her role as representative of the Red Cross, even if she was just a trainee, the narrator thought she had some authority over the people staying at the ZAPI. Unsure of herself at first, little by little she had to learn to stand up for herself when some wanted to do as they please.

However, faced with these two girls, she had the impression that her Red Cross vest no longer meant anything. She felt that these young Nigerians had more power over her than she had over them.

Going into the room with them to get the clothes, she thought looking at t-shirts together would perhaps create a link between them. But, on the contrary, it only widened the gap she felt already.

In the end, there was a big gap between the image that the narrator had of these young people and the reality that she saw when spending time with them. In fact, she had imagined that these recently-arrived minors were fragile and "cute." However, after spending time with them, she decided that this was not the case. The narrator says that she didn’t perceive this tough attitude as an inner strength/resistance to hard shocks of life (as she had thought) but rather a sign of carelessness, insouciance and cheek.

The narrator is nevertheless aware that by working in ZAPI, she must move past her cultural frames of reference. "We must," she said, “because otherwise, you won’t last long! " . She says she faces situations that ordinarily would have made her run away but she gradually learned to adapt. She admits that a few months ago, she had many prejudices but since she’s been studying intercultural communication, she tries to “make them disappear”. The ZAPI, she says, is the perfect place for this exercise.
4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?

*E.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.

For the narrator, this experience generated a rather negative, surreal image of the two girls.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? *(Hypothesis!)*

A number of hypotheses are possible to explain the behavior of the two girls in the situation described above. The narrator later learned in talking with colleagues accustomed to such scenes, that in reality, these girls were quite possibly part of a prostitution network that was very active in France and that they were just waiting for a lawyer to legalize their situation. In fact, she later learned that the girls were forbidden from wearing this type of clothing in the ZAPI because they used them to entice the men and that some even engaged in prostitution inside the building in exchange for money or cigarettes. Despite their current nonchalant and provocative behavior, the narrator feels that these girls are victims of prostitution and that they were hardened at a young age. The narrator believes that in the beginning the girls were probably innocent like she was as a girl, but that they have now lost their innocence and their ability to form attachments.

The narrator saw the clothes in this situation simply as a means for the girls to protect themselves from the cold and to have something to wear while awaiting a more permanent situation. The girls, however, seemed to see the clothes as a means to be more seductive so that they could get what they wanted. Because of their age, they may not have been fully aware of the seriousness of their situation and of their status as refugees. Moreover, the narrator believes that in Nigeria, clothing is usually very modest (no shorts or mini skirts, etc.), which explains that for these adolescents, coming to France may be a way to escape the clothing/moral restrictions of their native country.

From a cultural point of view, knowing that Nigerians (whether Muslims or Christians) tend to be devout practitioners, we may wonder whether strict moral and/or religious codes from their family or from society at large made the girls more vulnerable to possibly being “recruited” into prostitution.

Another hypothesis is that the age of sexual maturity in Nigeria could be earlier than in France. It is also possible that these young people had some financial responsibility for their age and the relationship with money is probably different because of poverty and/or education they have received in their country (Nigeria is a very poor country). These girls have probably not had the chance to know the carefree time that the narrator associates with their age.

Cultural codes regarding nudity/the body could explain why the girls felt comfortable changing in front of the narrator or even seeing their bodies as a tool to get what they wanted. They may have also felt the need to repress feelings of sorrow or fear related to their situation for a variety of reasons.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

This incident prompted the narrator to reflect on her role in the ZAPI. The staff suspected that upon leaving the center, the girls would end up on the street, but there was nothing they could do about it. The narrator thus realized that the ZAPI staff have a rather detached role, only intervening in the lives of the people they help while they are at the center. The ZAPI is just a place of passage for these people, providing clothes and addressing other immediate needs, but it cannot help them with the problems they may face after leaving. No follow-up is done to see what happens once an individual leaves the ZAPI and only formal documentation regarding changes in their legal status is available. This is very frustrating for the narrator who has questioned the real value of her professional role in such a context.
### Critical Incident: Theatre Workshop

**Country:** France  
**Date of recording the critical incident:** 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional domain of the narrator</th>
<th>Gender edu</th>
<th>Health edu</th>
<th>Sexuality edu</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visiting storyteller</td>
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**Sensitive zone**  
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (e.g. sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication, Artistic questions about gender and the mingling of the public and the private spheres.

**Culture of the person experiencing the shock**  
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

French. 59-years-old. 10 years of experience as a storyteller. Previous experience as an actor. Leading workshops/training courses about storytelling. Professional project: build a training course combining storytelling and teaching FLE (French as a Foreign Language).

**Culture of the person “causing” the shock**  
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

An unspecified number of fathers and young men of varying ages of African descent. (North African and Sub-Saharan Africa).

### Describing the SITUATION

*Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.*

When I was an actor, I organized a 6-week theater workshop in Bobigny for young people with professional and social difficulties. These workshops were paid for by Pôle Emploi (French national employment agency) and were designed to motivate young people between the ages of 16 and 25 who had dropped out of school and/or were unemployed.

We had created a play together and held two performances: one for the teachers and the other students and one for the families. The latter was held at the foot of the high rises in Bobigny. I had asked the young participants to get their families to come along: fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters. Only the women came with their very young children. The fathers, brothers and teenagers watched the show from afar, at the foot of the high rises, on the other side of the square, in a row. I can still see myself waving to them to come over. They politely waved no. I then asked one of the youngsters who was with us why they refused to come and he told me that the men (young adults and fathers) would not come while the mothers were present because you do not mix private relationships with the public arena. If they were to come over, they would go right to the back and not with their mothers because “they’d be ashamed....”

### 1. Elements of the SITUATION

*How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible. Relationship between the two groups (e.g. colonial history, majority – minority)*
It took place in a room where the chairs had been taken away. The room was in a hall used by local associations where various different activities were held. There was a table football in the room, bookshelves on one side, computers, a badminton court, etc. There were also workshops with help on how to write a resume...lots of different activities for young people, women and families in general.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

*How did you feel in this situation?*

I felt slightly disappointed and a bit confused until I was able to get an explanation from the trainees themselves.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?

As a contemporary French Parisian artist, Jean is steeped in modern Western culture where art is not about gender. His modern education makes him see women as equal to men. Why would a man be ashamed to be seen with his wife in public? This goes against his values.

Values of equality between sexes that come from his own ancestors: generations of women who fought for the right to vote in order to have the right to be in the public arena on the same footing as men.

However, Jean is aware of the necessity to disregard his assumptions, letting go of his presuppositions. Fortunately, his potential for adaptation and strengths in listening to others (the result of having participated in several trainings on listening techniques) help. He was very attentive, listening to what was said in the room, and observing expressions, with the distinct impression that he was in a context radically different from what he is used to (he lives in the suburbs and comes from a middle-class background). The first day of the workshop, he was very attentive with his work because he knew he was not on his "territory" and that he was only accepted as a visiting artist involved in the ASSEDIC training.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?

*e.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.*

Neutral, slightly negative

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis!)

We do not know whether there is a religious dimension to this incident in terms of the question of mingling between men and women. However, we know that it is a very special cultural conception of art. Outside of these workshops Jean met young people from the neighborhood (the brothers and cousins of the participants) and he tried to invite them to the workshops. They declined, saying that such things were for women, children (considered to be sexless) or effeminate men. This is a fairly common cultural phenomenon (even in Western society in certain social categories) that associates art with the female gender (or homosexuals), with the emotional, the “unserious” and therefore the “unmanly”. The practice of art becomes therefore unworthy of a man who cares about preserving his virile image.

Teenagers especially try to distance themselves from their mothers in order to make the transition from childhood to adulthood (from the phase of child to that of Man). In the West, mothers often quickly lose this power, while African and Maghrebian mothers conserve this power for a long time, sometimes even after marriage. Their word is law and respected by their sons, even into adulthood. Adolescents therefore need this distance to affirm themselves, to join the men’s territory and to exercise their new power as men, out of the shadow of “Mom”.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

No, nothing like that. The presence of the people in question was not necessary for the workshop and performances to be done properly since they were not part of it. It would have been a problem if it had been a workshop for families because we would not have been able to be together in one place for the same artistic activity.
CRITICAL INCIDENT: Mixed Playing

Country: France
Date of recording the critical incident: 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional domain of the narrator</th>
<th>Gender edu</th>
<th>Health edu</th>
<th>Sexuality edu</th>
<th>Training concerning disability</th>
<th>General intercultural edu</th>
<th>Physical edu / sport</th>
<th>Other</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive zone</td>
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<td>Language teacher</td>
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What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,

Gender norms/equality

What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

Young French woman in her twenties; love of travelling and discovering new cultures. At the time of the incident, she had already lived in India for more than a year, but had moved from a more urban area to a more rural/traditional environment.

What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)

The students in question were from a rural more traditional part of India. They were from modest backgrounds and more traditional religious/cultural beliefs. They were young adults (late teens or early twenties).

Describing the SITUATION

Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

I was a teacher at an institute of technology in a small town in India. I wanted to organize a role-playing activity in a mixed class and the girls and boys refused to sit next to each other during the preparation of the activity. When we had completed the preparation, they also wouldn’t stand next to each other during the performance of the skit. It was embarrassing. I was not expecting this reaction to an activity that was supposed to be fun.

1. Elements of the SITUATION

How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.

Relationship between the two groups (eg. colonial history, majority – minority)

The class was relatively small (fewer than 20 students) and a balanced number regarding gender. The narrator, having already spent considerable time in India, felt that she had a relatively good knowledge of Indian culture. Though the year had just started, she got along well with her students, so she was not expecting any conflict.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION How did you feel in this situation?

Confused, embarrassed
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. What norms/values/representations did the incident touch/threaten/question in the narrator?</td>
<td>Western gender norms: In the narrator’s culture, it is not a problem for men and women to mix because they are considered to be equals. While she considered herself to be open to cultural differences, she was surprised that a mundane activity (standing next to someone of the opposite gender during a performance) would elicit such a response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?</td>
<td>Slightly negative</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. What could be the norms/values/representations of the other person/culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience?</td>
<td>The students in question, coming from a more conservative/modest background had different religious and cultural beliefs regarding the mixing of genders. For them, it was not at all appropriate for men and women to mix together in such a way, even if it was “just acting.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?</td>
<td>Yes. Having already lived in India, the narrator felt that she had grown to better understand Indian culture. This experience showed her how different local/regional cultures can be within a larger national culture. She had never had such a reaction from her students when living in the north of India and as such, wasn’t expecting it. This shows that it is important to consider how local context or even individual factors can play a role in cultural norms. As the school year continued, she would better acclimate herself to the local culture and be able to see the ways in which it was different from the area she had lived in when she first arrived in India. A broader learning outcome is that cultural difference can appear in any context, even within a national culture or within smaller subcultures.</td>
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### CRITICAL INCIDENT: Transgender Mirror

**Country:** France  
**Date of recording the critical incident:** June 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional domain of the narrator</th>
<th>Gender edu</th>
<th>Health edu</th>
<th>Sexuality edu</th>
<th>Training concerning disability</th>
<th>General intercultural edu</th>
<th>Physical edu / sport</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive zone</td>
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What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication,

Non-verbal communication and a transgender woman’s relationship to her body

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Culture of the person experiencing the shock</th>
<th>What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twenty-seven year-old Moroccan woman. Heterosexual. Left-wing. Studying intercultural communication. Working for an association specializing in interculturality, she co-led workshops on cultural differences surrounding the relationship to the body with people having an interest in these differences.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Culture of the person “causing” the shock</th>
<th>What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability, particular subculture, etc.)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G. is a transgender woman, probably around 40 years old. From what the narrator was able to understand, her change in sexual identity from male to female is pretty recent.</td>
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</table>

### Describing the SITUATION

*Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.*

Since it was a workshop on the body, the plan was to do some warming up exercising which would allow the participants to channel their energy, promote concentration and give a bigger place to the body, which is often dominated by the intellect. We first organized a game in which each participant was supposed to give their first name accompanied with the gesture of their choice. This gesture was supposed to allow the participants to memorize each other’s names. I noticed then that G. hesitated longer than the other participants and that the gesture that she ended up choosing illustrated this indecision (she scratched her head, keeping her eyes to the ground with a nervous smile). As a facilitator, I then asked the participants to form pairs to do a number of fun activities, including a “mirror” activity. This activity consisted of imitating the gestures of one’s partner and vice-versa. The person being imitated was to move freely without any directions. My partner, the transgender woman, was incapable of making even the simplest gesture. She stood still with an embarrassed smile and her eyes fixed on the ground. She seemed to be thinking about the first gestures to make, but was visibly unable to find one that suited her. To reassure her, I told her that she was free to move in whatever way she wanted and that there was no need to think about it so long. After a few seconds, she began to make a few timid movements, broken up by small moments of reflection. She became more and more at ease, particularly when it was her turn to imitate my movements.

**1. Elements of the SITUATION**

*How many people were present? How many women / men? What did the space look like, how was it arranged? (sketch of the arrangement if relevant / possible). Who were the protagonists? Was there any...*
The workshop on cultural differences in the relationship to the body took place in a large room of about 30m². The team of 3 facilitators had moved the tables and chairs to make a large enough free space for the exercises and interactions. The participants (about 6) had freely chosen to attend the workshop either because they worked in the diversity field or because they themselves represented a cultural diversity (in the broadest sense). The participants didn’t know each other before the workshop. The age range of participants was from the late twenties to mid forties and they were all either French or had lived in France for a number of years. All of the participants were women (including 2 transgender women).

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

How did you feel in this situation?

When I noticed the hesitation of the participant during the first exercise, I was a bit surprised, but since a lot of people hesitated during this exercise, it seemed rather understandable as it consisted of making a gesture that represented one’s first name and thus identity. On the other hand, after the second hesitation (a lot longer, during the mirror exercise), I was very surprised by the participant’s reaction because I thought that the first part of the exercise didn’t seem to present any particular difficulties given that it consisted simply of moving freely. I felt the embarrassment that this woman felt and tried to reassure her and encourage her to continue the exercise. Then, I took the time to analyze the incident.

3. What norms/values/representations did the incident touch/threaten/question in the narrator?

The narrator considers herself to be an open-minded person who is very interested in difference and intercultural communication. She is heterosexual and even though she doesn’t have any prejudices against transgender people, she had never worked with one or met one before. She was thus happy to have this new experience, but she also had a few apprehensions about her own behavior. She was conscious of the fact that she had to pay attention to how the situation presented a different set of codes and that she must be careful to avoid breaking them to have a successful communication. Notably, she had to avoid referring to the transgender participants in masculine rather than feminine terms.

With regards to gender, she didn’t have any idea what it meant for a man or a woman to become transgender. She didn’t know that changing gender meant finding a deeper identity that had been hidden by biological laws and social conventions or that it meant identifying with a gender that one preferred to belong to for whatever reason. She thinks that the traditional man/woman distinction was far from taking into account the numerous cases that illustrated the complexity of gender and sexual identity. Basically, she doesn’t think that one sub-group of human beings is 100% men and the other 100% women, but rather that there is a masculine and feminine part in differing levels in all of us. She also thinks that one’s biological identity/appearance doesn’t necessarily correspond with one’s internal identity.

Regarding the workshop itself, she had adopted the vision of the association that the contribution of the body through physical exercises made sense during a workshop focused on the body. Basically, this method seemed the most efficient because it allowed for a better interaction between the participants as well as a greater involvement of each person. But perhaps the participants were expecting the workshop to just involve « reflecting » on the body and were not necessarily used to non-formal pedagogical tools, notably the games and the exercises involving the use of their bodies,

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?

Neutral

5. What could be the norms/values/representations of the other person/culture that led to the
**specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis!)**

With the analysis of the incident, we were able to uncover some hypotheses concerning the participant in question. It is important to consider all possible reasons for the embarrassment of the participant and not just assume it is tied to her identity as a transgender woman. For example, imitating a gesture, or consciously “doing” something with the body can be embarrassing for many people and has nothing to do with gender and identity. In this particular situation, however, the narrator was able to observe that the participant brought her transgender identity to the forefront in her interactions and exchanges during the workshop. She freely discussed the difficulties she faced as a transgender woman with the other participants.

With this in mind, it becomes clearer how the participant’s transgender identity may have played a role in this situation. The change of gender/sexual identity (from man to woman in this case) implies several deep changes in her way of being, that is to say: the way in which she manages her speech, her movements, her gestures, her mimics, etc. It is thus probable that, even if the new identity corresponds with her deepest identity, she has to get used to behaving like a woman and the transition is not simple.

As the change in identity seemed to be recent, the narrator assumed that the participant was being very careful with the simplest movement that she made because for her, each movement represented her (new) identity in the perception of the others. There was thus no (or hardly any) room for spontaneity in the requested exercise.

We can also assume that the participant’s conception of femininity and more precisely of feminine gestures consisted in thinking that each movement that a woman makes must translate her femininity and that a woman must be careful of her simplest movements, particularly a transgender woman. Transgender women must thus show their femininity more than other women as a way of affirming an identity that certain people will continue to contest (according to remarks she made during the workshop). This hypothesis seems to be confirmed by the tradition and even caricatural vision of the woman’s role in a household (traditional household tasks, etc.) illustrated in her remarks and those of her friend (who was also a transgender woman).

Furthermore, this woman may not have expected to participate in physical exercises instead of just a reflection on the body.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certainly. In a general manner, this incident shows that those working with/on diversity must be prepared to face cultural differences that are not always easy to understand. Regarding gender, this incident allowed the narrator to better understand how gender identity can influence one’s relationship to the body. The analysis of this analysis taught the narrator how to practically address this issue from a professional point of view. She also learned that she must take the difficulties faced by each participant into account and take the time to define the “rules of the game” of any proposed activity as well as the methods and tools that will be used.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Name of organisation: Pince Ifjúsági Klub (“Basement” Youth Club)
Country: Hungary
Date of recording the critical incident: 15 April 2012, Budapest
Ars Erotica Foundation- Hungary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional domain of the narrator</th>
<th>Gender educ</th>
<th>Health educ</th>
<th>Sexuality educ</th>
<th>Training concerning disability</th>
<th>General intercultural educ</th>
<th>Physical educ / sport</th>
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Sensitive zone
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication, gender relations, perceptions of the community and family, aging)

Culture of the person experiencing the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)
highly educated, “white” 35-year-old woman, living in the capital city, left-wing, heterosexual, in a relationship,

Culture of the person “causing” the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)
teenage girl, belongs to the Gypsy minority group, uneducated, heterosexual

Describing the SITUATION
Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

Marika, a 17-year-old girl belonging to the Gypsy minority has been attending the Children’s Welfare Centre for 3 weeks. This young girl is hungry for love. She does not go to school and her family is rather unstable. However, she is a very active and trustful person, so we were willing to involved her in some of the centre initiatives. Marika is in a relationship with a young 15 years old boy called Sanyika belonging as well to the gypsy community and being attended in the Centre. He is a drug user with a difficult background and a rather complicated life. Since they have started to be together they are used to take on drugs together.

One day they were both in the office centre and I say to Marika : “Come and see us at the Club one day, we want to talk to you”. Sanyika, her boyfriend, was obviously disapproving. Marika seems to obey by saying: “I’ll come if my husband allows me to”. As an answer, Sanyika said : “you don’t go anywhere”.
Marika has hidden her embarrassment by giggling and I had the feeling that in some way she likes the tough behaviour he was adopting with her.
I finally said to Sanyika : “You can come, too, Sanyika. What do you think could happen there?”. But I realized that it would not change his mind even if was invited him too.
I have then decided to not insist anymore.

1. Elements of the SITUATION
What happened? Where did it happen? Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.
The situation takes place in a Children’s Welfare Centre in a corridor with others worker and clients of the
Youth Club walking in and out.
A Gypsy family is waiting, sitting, and among them Marika, 17 years old is holding his toddler nephew next to her boyfriend. A youth worker of the Club passing by and asks Marika to come one day at the youth club office. However, Marika’s boyfriend refuses her to go.

Place: Children’s Welfare Centre (CWC)
People involved:
- Sanyika, a 15-year-old Gipsy boy
- Marika, a 17-year-old Gipsy girl
- Jenny, a 2-year-old Gipsy toddler
- Lili, a 35-year-old youth worker in the Youth Club
- other workers and clients of the club walking in and out

Sanyika’s family probably has some business to attend to at the CWC, so they are sitting there. I say “hi” to them and tell Marika to come to the Club one day as I want to talk to her. Sanyika disapproves and Marika seems to obey, but then says: “I’ll come”. Sanyika responds: “You don’t go anywhere!” Marika is giggling in her embarrassment. One can tell that she likes his tough behaviour with her. But she also likes that fact that I add “You can come, too, Sanyika. What do you think could happen there?” But this sentence does not have any effect on him, it only upsets him so I give in and say: “Alright then, drop by if you can!”

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION
How did you feel in this situation?
I was upset thinking: “Is this 15-year-old junkie really giving instructions to Marika and she lets him do so? I don’t like this whole thing. They are not a good couple.” I am sad but I also understand why Marika holds on to this relationship so firmly. I feel helpless. I am disappointed.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?
Right to self-determination and Independence as a value:
Modern societies are raising individualism and free will as the main important values. Someone as individual has the right to self-determinate. The familial, moral or societal pressure have less impact on the person than the willing of happiness which lead to individual strategies. Being independent is a behaviour expecting from the modern society. In contrary being dependent of someone or of societal pressure can be seen as vulnerability. The narrator has been confronted to values completely different from his own. She would not imagine her partner restrict her liberty to go and come against her will.

Emotional dependence as a risk:
For modern societies the type of relationship might vary according to each individual. The goal of an emotional engagement is related to the own benefit of the individual and not build on a familial and patriarchal model. The mass media participate to raise emotional independency behaviour positively, and being exigent while we got engaged to someone. As the matter of fact being emotionally dependent prevent free will and personal development. The narrator through this experience saw a different model of emotional engagement. She has been raised in the idea of not holding to a relationship which is not satisfied herself as individual and looking for a person who is satisfied her the most.

Equal opportunities for women:
Equality of gender and the feminine emancipation in the modern society lead to a new definition of the women among the family. They are not only defined as a mother or as a wife. they do not forgetting herself for the benefit of her family and must be able to self-fulfillment. The narrator is the witness of a
woman submission to her partner and a restriction to the equality between gender.

<table>
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<th>4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The narrator got a negative image of the other person. She saw her as vulnerable and confused, capa-</td>
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<tr>
<td>ble of doing anything for a little love and feeling important. Disappointment for not asserting what</td>
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<tr>
<td>she really wants against the will of her partner. Pity and sadness because she could not understand</td>
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<tr>
<td>why she would hold to such a relation.</td>
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</table>

<p>| 5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis 1)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being in a relationship or belonging to a family is the greatest value:</td>
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<tr>
<td>In minority community and especially in the Gypsy one, the community come before the individual.</td>
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<td>The model of the family is patriarchal and the group is closed to “the outside”, people whose not</td>
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<td>belonging to their community.</td>
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<td>The role expected from the women and the men are different and separated. The woman has to be</td>
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<td>submitted to her husband and Gypsy traditions are emphasis this difference between them and their</td>
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<td>place in the community. For instance, the majority of the gypsy communities are evangelist believer</td>
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<td>and the woman before getting married has to be a virgin. Being not under the protection of a man is a</td>
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<td>negative sign, a sign of vulnerability.</td>
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<td>The notion of honour is as well really strong and a woman which would not respect the will of her</td>
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<tr>
<td>husband and then the one her community can appear as a disgrace.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The narrator trying to understand, for this young gypsy girl being in a relationship or belonging to</td>
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<tr>
<td>a family is the greatest value and such bonding are stronger than anything, even so its not a source</td>
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<tr>
<td>of personal satisfaction. With the toddler in her hands the young girl felt she had a family and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>expression of love for men from this community is expressed through possessing the woman.</td>
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</table>

<p>| 6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sure it does. It highlights the conflict between their values and my/our intention to create a</td>
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<tr>
<td>community which is not only based on kinship, but treats youngsters as individuals having their own</td>
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<tr>
<td>intention and will, and helps them accomplish their goals. It raises the question of how many of them</td>
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<tr>
<td>and how they will be able to get connected with today’s world which is based on relationships, and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mainly on family connections and kinship.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION**

We should try to reconcile the two in such a way that they influence each other positively rather than lead to a confrontation. Let’s look for what we have in common.
**Country:** Hungary  
**Date of recording the critical incident:** 13 April 2012, Budapest  
**Ars Erotica Foundation - Hungary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional domain of the narrator</th>
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<th>Training concerning disability</th>
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**Sensitive zone**

What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication, gender relations, non-verbal communication, conception of emotions, loss, body)

**Culture of the person experiencing the shock**

What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)

- 55-year-old, female, family counsellor, professional

**Culture of the person “causing” the shock**

What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)

- 38-year-old, male, husband, in a relationship, client

**Describing the SITUATION**

*Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.*

The incident happened in a perinatal loss support group (perinatal loss = death of an infant during pregnancy or soon thereafter). The husband reports that his wife is extremely sensitive, cries a lot even 3 months after her miscarriage. He tells her to surmount the grief over miscarriage and move on with their lives. The wife responds that “yes, but my husband is so insensitive, all he is saying that OK, it’s happened but let’s move on.” Another couple in the group is watching them with eyes wide open. The wife says: “Good. I’ve always thought mine is the only husband who is such a jerk.” The husband responds: “Oh. I’ve always thought, mine is the only wife who is so overly sensitive.” The incident revealed something I had already known in theory: the difference between how men and women respond to bereavement.

**1. Elements of the SITUATION**

What happened? Where did it happen? Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.

The incident takes place in a room with other persons asking for support and family counsellors leading the progress of the group session. All the persons attending to this group have lived the same situation: the death of an infant during pregnancy or soon thereafter. One family counsellor assisting the group will be the witness during this session of how persons in the same situation can help each other out by exchanging their common experiences. In this special case this awareness is related to the difference reactions between gender after a perinatal loss.

**2. EMOTIONAL REACTION**

*How did you feel in this situation?*

I was amazed. For me as a professional, it was interesting to see the differences in gender role behaviour between men and women. I was glad about the benefit that the situation generated for the couples. It was
an elementary experience for me.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women feelings:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| It might be relevant to underline that the critical incident lived by the narrator was more a revelation than a cultural or intercultural shock.
| After a loss it expected from the majority to show off his feelings.
| When a woman is pregnant, the baby is a integrant part of the mother. Mourn the baby loss is mourned as well a part of herself. Emptiness and culpability are strongly felt by women maybe more than men. |

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The narrator had a positive image of the other person. She has improved her perception of the men by realizing that they were not insensitive but only differently socialized.</td>
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</table>

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Repression of feelings from the man:</td>
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<tr>
<td>In our culture men have this tendency to repressed their feelings. While a prenatal loss, the support that try to give then man can appears like a lack of sadness. Moreover the attachment for the men to the baby is might less strong because of the lack of physical contact. This child which did not born can be a bit abstract for the man.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The behaviour of couples, the difference between how men and women respond to bereavement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During their socialisation, men learn they’ve got to be strong and move on, whereas women may express their feelings, they may cry, complain and live their grief completely. Looking from outside, your partner may seem insensitive or oversensitive. The two couples held a mirror up to each other which was an illuminating experience for all of them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General practice:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How persons in the same situation can help each other out by confronting their experiences.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CRITICAL INCIDENT: Women's Role

Name of organisation: Kék Pont Alapítvány (Blue Point Drug Consultation Centre and Drug Ambulance Foundation)
Country: Hungary
Date of recording the critical incident: 13 April 2012 / Ars Erotica Foundation

Professional domain of the narrator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender edu</th>
<th>Health edu</th>
<th>Sexuality edu</th>
<th>Training concerning disability</th>
<th>General intercultural edu</th>
<th>Physical edu / sport</th>
<th>Other</th>
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</table>

Sensitive zone
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (e.g.: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication)

gender relations, family values

Culture of the person experiencing the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)

non-Roma, woman, 31 years old, Jewish values, urban, highly educated, social worker, professional,

Culture of the person “causing” the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)

Roma man, 24 years old, client, low-educated, urban, heterosexual, living in a relationship, drug user

Describing the SITUATION
Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

By exercising my work as a social worker I have been in contact with a young man whose were applying for a diversion program. Before such consultations there is always a first interview. In the first interview he told me about his family, wife and son. At the moment they live separated, they had to move out of their apartment because they could not afford to pay the bills. The wife and the child moved to the wife’s parents, the husband to his own parents. He is now saving the money he earns in his new job so that they can move in together again.

Talking about these issues, he presented some of his views including: Women should stay at home and raise children, rather than go to work. Women should serve men (clean and orderly house, food). If a woman cannot cook, she is not a woman. Men may cheat on their wives, but a woman mustn’t do the same. Women’s emotions are different, “superficial” as he put it. Men have much deeper emotions. This is what he said: “We are not equal. A man is superior to a woman, he is higher in the ranking.”

1. Elements of the SITUATION
What happened? Where did it happen? Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.

A social worker is having a private consultation with a man. The social worker by listening his views in the consultation room is really shock by the man’s view.

The protagonists of the incident are the client and the social worker. He presented his views in a consultation room.
2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

*How did you feel in this situation? The narrator is answering.*

I listened to him, but also gave him feedback and presented him my set of values. While he was speaking, all kinds of thoughts were running through my head. I wanted to interrupt him, shout at him in the face and tell him that he was speaking bullshit. But I thought that it was not the purpose of this consultation. I am not here to shape his set of values. And if I did, would it help him in any way? So the only thing left for me was to give him feedback. On the other hand, being a woman, I felt really awkward. For some reason, it seemed that in that situation I was not a woman for him. Was my gender role superseded by my social worker status?

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?

**Equality of gender:**

The narrator evolves in a society where equality of gender is one of the common norms and where discrimination based on gender are socially or legally condemned.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?

*e.g. postive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.*

The narrator had a negative image of him and disliked him at first. With hindsight she became more neutral thinking that it was probably how he was brought up. She understood that he had been born into a culture where such views were completely natural for men and women. He was used to this way of thinking from his parents and grandparents and probably will pass the same values and customs on his own family.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? *(Hypothesis I)*

Men are higher in the ranking than women. So gender roles and the division of labour is organized accordingly.

**Patriarchal values:** Context of the Roma community where the gender role are clearly limited. The man and woman interest are different. The women are limited to domestic and family tasks.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

Stereotype and assumption are a part of our cultural heritage throughout individual life by learning norms and values which characterized the social group belonging.

Professional practice: It highlight that the cultural differences can lead to a confrontation where the trainers and the trainee cannot understand each other because of the cultural gap preventing a common understanding. It highlight as well as the professional is challenged even more when it feel concerned by the frame of the difference.
**Name of organisation:** Blue Point Foundation – Needle-exchange for girls only  
**Country:** Hungary  
**Date of recording the critical incident:** 13 April 2012, Budapest / Ars Erotica Foundation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional domain of the narrator</th>
<th>Gender edu</th>
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</table>

**Sensitive zone**

What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication, sexuality, gender relations, conceptions of the body)

**Culture of the person experiencing the shock**

What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)

34-year-old heterosexual, intellectual, middle-class, urban woman for whom the protection of any kind of minority is a mission, professional, family-counsellor

**Culture of the person “causing” the shock**

What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)

Roma woman with multiple disadvantages, lives in the “ghetto” of the 8th district of Budapest, intravenous drug user, in her twenties, sex worker, client

**Describing the SITUATION**

Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

Spring, 2011. Needle-exchange program for girls only. One girl came in the office for a needle. She was depressed. (Background information: she is an intravenous drug user, pregnant and sex-worker). I asked her what was wrong. She said she hardly had any work, so she had no money. Other girls had lots of clients when they were pregnant so she wanted her pregnancy to show as soon as possible. I asked her if her boyfriend had a job. With a smile on her face, she calmly said no, he was just idling at home all day long and does not seem to be bothered about whether or not she will be able to support them financially.

**1. Elements of the SITUATION**

What happened? Where did it happen? Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.

- Needle exchange program – “Needle swap for girls only” project, the conversation happened in the room where the program is held  
- Protagonist: 2 women  
- One of them is an intravenous drug user, Roma, 6-months’ pregnant, sex worker, in her
In her culture it is just perfectly normal that

1. a woman is subordinated to her husband

2. women do all the work: they do the household chores and they are the breadwinners, too. They are expected to make money even when they are tired, ill or pregnant.

Professional practice: It highlight that the cultural differences can lead to a confrontation or simply a distance where the trainers and the trainee cannot understand each other because of the cultural gap preventing a common understanding. It highlight as well as the professional is challenged even more when it feel concerned by the frame of the difference.
Name of organisation: Nyitott Ház Kh. Alapítvány (Open House Public Benefit Foundation)
Country: Hungary
Date of recording the critical incident: 13 April 2012, Budapest / Ars Erotica Foundation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional domain of the narrator</th>
<th>Gender edu</th>
<th>Health edu</th>
<th>Sexuality edu</th>
<th>Training concerning disability</th>
<th>General intercultural edu</th>
<th>Physical edu / sport</th>
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Sensitive zone
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (eg: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication)
Sexuality, gender relations, conception of family values, gender roles

Culture of the person experiencing the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)
Middle-age, middle-class, urban, educated, non-Roma woman, youth worker, trainer, volunteer,

Culture of the person “causing” the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)
45-year-old Roma man, low educated, father of a teenage girl, client

Describing the SITUATION
Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.
The father of a girl whom I know from work was ringing my apartment’s bell. He wanted to talk to me. He needed my help and advice to deal with the following situation: in the evening a Roma family from the neighbouring village will come to their home to propose to his 13-year-old daughter.
The father was desperate - not because his daughter would be taken away from home - but because the potential bridegroom was from a poor Roma family.
I was not able to give him good advice. Instead I presented a few rational arguments why it was a not good idea for such a girl of to marry (why marriage may not be such a good idea for a girl her age). But my arguments (representing my own set of norms belongs to some of the next points) didn’t really convince him. I haven’t talked to him ever since.

1. Elements of the SITUATION
What happened? Where did it happen? Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural?)? Try to be as objective as possible.
Protagonists:
- a father and a youth worker,
- and a 13-year-old girl (in an indirect way)
Place: the youth worker’s apartment (her private space – out of the professional area)
The father asked her for advice regarding his daughter and wanted her to reinforce (and perhaps support and legitimate) his decision.
Discussion and miscommunication between the two protagonists.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION
How did you feel in this situation? The narrator is answering.

I was shocked by the incident as a youth helper and as a mother of 3 daughters. I was confused and unable to find a good solution. I was taken aback by the incident. I was also a bit confused how to behave in my apartment – should I invite him inside or should we stand only in the door.
I also had a feeling of being helpless and unable in the situation to act more emphatic within a professional framework.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?
Violation of children’s rights

Sexuality, gender relation, family values, different cultural values

The norms and traditions of early marriage in some traditional Roma families is the central part of the incident. This tradition – and practice - is in general highly provocative and also taboo, since it has an interface of child abuse from a Western point of view and ethics.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?

E.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.

On the positive side, the narrator was impressed that her client’s father came to her privately for advice. On the negative side, she was not able to give him a comforting response or help him make a comforting decision, simply because she does not have sufficient knowledge of their culture.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis !)

In the Roma culture it is perfectly natural that Roma parents arrange marriage for their teenage children. Although the narrator at that very moment was aware of that, the fact that the father came to her apartment in person and that she knew her daughter from her work shocked her.

This may also be an example of the dilemma of personal and professional behaviour. On the personal side, the youth worker is repelled by the idea of this child marriage and all the abusive pictures this gave rise to. On the professional side, the youth worker should be able to use a more dialogical method to clarify the kind of help that was needed in the family – both father and a wider perspective the daughter.

The youth worker ended up acting rather evasive and even irresponsible in the situation.

This, in fact, confirms the need of solid guidelines for professionals.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

Acceptance of differences, knowing better other cultures surrounding us

As a professional it could helped the narrator if she was more prepared to questions like that. She was not prepared therefore she could not step over her own values and beliefs regarding children’s rights and gender values. She was emotionally shocked which blocked her in her professional work.
CRITICAL INCIDENT: Woman Trainer

Name of organisation: Adult education and training, trainer consultant
Country: Hungary
Date of recording the critical incident: 21 April Budapest, Ars Erotica Foundation

These keywords will be used to search our “database” of critical incidents. You may note several answers for each incident.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional domain of the narrator</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Sexuality</th>
<th>Training concerning disability</th>
<th>General intercultural</th>
<th>Physical edu / sport</th>
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Sensitive zone
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (e.g: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication, non-verbal communication, conception of gender roles

Culture of the person experiencing the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)
25-year-old, middle-class, highly educated young woman, trainer

Culture of the person “causing” the shock
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)
group of 35 men, mostly between the age of 35-55, electrical engineers

Describing the SITUATION
Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.

The incident happened in my first group: I had 38 participants (35 men and 3 women) for my training for a large company. The training company I worked for at that time was a conservative American company which favoured male trainers. However, the Swedish client favoured women for being more empathetic. Conservatism was also manifested in the dress code: dark suit, knee-long skirt, skin coloured stockings, classic business attire. So I found myself sitting in front of 35 men whose body language said: “Who are you, chick, and what have you got to say to us?! “All this happened in the early 90s. I was aware that from that time onward I would have to train them for 14 weeks every Tuesday and that potential future assignments for this client will depend on how successful I would be with them. After the third session a team of ‘ambassadors’ came to me saying: we won’t look at your legs only, but now we are ready to work with you.

1. Elements of the SITUATION
What happened? Where did it happen? Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.

Early 90s, Budapest.
A female trainer starts her trainer career.
She is 25 years old. She gets a group of 35 men, mostly between the age of 35-55, electrical engineers. They are in the first 3 weeks of a long-term (14 weeks) cooperation.
Are they going to accept her as a trainer in a completely new situation, where the purpose is to get them out of their comfort zone for skill development?
2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

*How did you feel in this situation? The narrator is answering.*

In the first three sessions I felt they refused me as a trainer. I was confident that that the method I wanted to use with them was good and would certainly help them in their work and private life. So their attitude made me upset, especially because I was aware that there was a 14-weeks’ training program ahead of us, focusing on attitude change.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?

The group challenged the trainer’s professional competence with their male-chauvinistic attitude. The narrator felt that the group even did not try to accept me. According to her value system, the trainer should deserve acceptance from the trainees.

“I was “just a woman” for most of them – a pretty young woman, acting like a “smartass”. - In the narrator women’s right to teach, to lead, to be independent, leaders or simply equal, intellectual partners to men were all threatened.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?

*E.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.*

The narrator had no positive image of them, as she felt their resistance.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (*Hypothesis !*)

- male-chauvinism
- make the other person feel that you are superior to him
- women should not be leaders, not even in a training environment!
- lack of openness and acceptance

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

Yes, particularly because the narrator’s mentor was a man, too, who – as a feedback - tore her performance as a trainer to pieces (beware that she was a beginner at that time): after one or two appreciative comments, he started to enumerate all the things that she should do differently. If her mentor had not been replaced and the team of “ambassadors” had not come to her, she might have stopped her career as a trainer. The consequences are that in a situation like that – as a trainer - it can be helpful to reflect on emotions and the possible differences between values in the group. As to mention it in front the group that “probably it is not common to invite female trainers in your company, but...” – sometimes this “running forward” (make the hidden conflict explicit in an open and friendly way) can extinct the possible tension coming from the group.

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

Although the incident happened in the early 1990s, the trainer still regularly keeps contact with 3 participants from that group. (They meet in person, exchange e-mail or talk on the phone.)
**Name of organisation:** general trainer, women’s groups, skill development  
**Country:** Hungary  
**Date of recording the critical incident:** 21 April 2012 Budapest / Ars Erotica Foundation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional domain of the narrator</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Sexuality</th>
<th>Training concerning disability</th>
<th>General intercultural</th>
<th>Physical edu / sport</th>
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**Sensitive zone**  
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident? (e.g.: sexuality, gender relations, aging, conceptions of the body, non-verbal communication)

gender relations, conceptions of the body, conception of female roles, femininity

**Culture of the person experiencing the shock**  
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)

35-year-old, middle-class, urban, educated woman who has issues on femininity by herself owner and manager in the services sector, trainer

**Culture of the person “causing” the shock**  
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience? (think beyond nationality / religion to also: age, gender, sexual orientation, political standpoint, disability particular subculture etc)

30-year old, urban, educated, middle-class female sociologist and manager

**Describing the SITUATION**

*Please give a short account (10-15 sentences) of a critical incident you experienced. Write from your own point of view. Include where and when the incident took place.*

I was participant at a training for trainers. A dispute broke out between two other participants and it made a great impact on me. After one of the training exercises someone criticized one of the trainees for showing off with her dress and she called her “overdressed” and “flashy”. Hearing this she got really depressed and asked other participants for help and support. The trainer failed to resolve the conflict which left a trace on the rest of the one and half years’ process. The trainer’s incompetency has not been resolved. The incident happened outside Budapest on a 3-day offsite course.

**1. Elements of the SITUATION**

*What happened? Where did it happen? Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural?). Try to be as objective as possible.*

The incident happened outside Budapest on a 3-day offsite course. A conflict broke out between the two trainees criticism about one’s of them clothing and behaviour. It happened during the training in the training room. The conflict impacted the narrator and half of the team (5 people out of the total 12). As time was passing, the emotional reactions started to grow. Discussion has started to evolve involved femininity, comfort, freedom, cooperation, ownership, personal congruence, the freedom of expressing one’s opinion, trainer’s responsibility, feedback, identity, attack as well in the “sensitive zone”.

**2. EMOTIONAL REACTION**

*How did you feel in this situation?*

The narrator strongly identified with the ‘attacked’ party. She felt the attack was addressed to her as well, although it was not directed at her personally. Before the incident, she had looked at J as a role model to
follow, partly for the things that she was criticized for. The narrator became upset and wanted to resolve the conflict.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?</th>
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</table>
| Question of femininity perception among the same gender:  
The same gender can have different views about the role they should play in the society and the representation of what is the behaviour expected from them. In the Critical Incident is it interesting to see that the training was not a place where the cultural differences looked so strong.  
Perception of what is femininity can change according to the cultural and educational background of each ones.  
For the narrator the freedom to dress and act according to your will is a part of femininity. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image does the narrator have of the other person?</th>
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</table>
| e.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.  
Positive image about the trainee who had been criticized she affirms her self-determination by wearing as she wants?  
Negative image about the trainer for being incompetent. |

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<tr>
<th>5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis I)</th>
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</table>
| Unfortunately it is unknown that the trainers were from a different country and culture? It could highlight the confrontation of values and the cultural shock.  
Assumption based on the external aspect:  
Assumptions about people is generally closely related to the external aspect. Someone who doesn’t follow the model of the majority might be victim of discrimination and stereotypes (Physical handicap, obesity, being part of a minority,...)  
When the differences result from a personal choice (wearing colourful and eccentric clothe, being pierced or tattooed, acting differently,...) those persons are often associated as free rider and as people rejecting the social model of the majority.  
In the professional background assumption of competency and qualifications are even more closely associated to the external aspect of the person. Qualifications and productivity are related to self-good presentation and discretion. |

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<tr>
<th>6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?</th>
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| It highlights the multidimensional aspect of confrontation of values which can appears either in a really different cultural group either among the same one.  
It highlights as well the primordial role of trainers and the necessity for them to develop skills and tools in the conflict resolution.  
Really knowing the other person is very important, just like feedback/asking questions back, and a receptive and open approach to people coming from a cultural background which is different from yours. |
CRITICAL INCIDENT: The Challenge

**Name of organisation:** CESIE

**Country:** ITALY

**Date of recording the critical incident:** 21st of March 2012

<table>
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<th>Professional domain</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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<th>General intercultural education</th>
<th>Support group for migrants</th>
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**Sensitive zone**

What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident?

Gender / Religion / Trust in capability / Relationship to others / Standards of concept of respect / Values regarding gender roles

**Culture of the person experiencing the shock**

What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience?

Sicilian / Woman / 46 years old / Heterosexual / Unmarried but living with the partner / trainer / Christian religion / first experience with the specific migrant target group.

**Culture of the person “causing” the shock**

What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience?

Moroccan / Male / Age 25 / Muslim / Living in a migrant centre / open-minded but with gender/intelligence prejudice.

**Describing the SITUATION**

I was training a multicultural group for about 5 months in Palermo, Sicily on intercultural awareness related to labour access for new-comers in Italy. During the first training sessions speaking about fears and expectation of their learning outcomes Mehmet was openly saying with a smile but still severe and aware about my possible reactions, that he doesn’t trust and recognize a woman as an educator. He will listen to the training but it will be difficult for him to accept and adopt what myself was going to teach them. I was astonished as well as most of the other trainees, even if belonging to his similar cultural background, none of us thought expected him to be that franc by telling his standpoint. I mean, we might have that kind of thoughts crossing our mind but most of the time we don’t pronounce it. I asked to deepen this concept towards the group. He replied: “It’s quite clear, in Morocco no man would follow a woman’s word”. He did not care of my knowledge input because I’m a woman and in his country no man relies on women’s teaching, suggestions, knowledge. The class was silent, no one expected this statement and none took position, whether men nor women.

**1. Elements of the SITUATION**

*What happened? Where did it happen? Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural?)? Try to be as objective as possible.*

**What happened:**

During the first introductory session of an international exchange a Moroccan participant aged 25, giving a first impression of being open-minded and quite integrated into the Palermitan society, says openly that he is not going to be cooperative by realizing that the trainer was a woman.

**Where did it happen:**

The critical incident happened in Palermo during a training with an multicultural group compositions in 2009, in a training room with the others participants and trainers.

**Who were the protagonists:**

(i) An Italian woman trainer in international exchange
A young man participant from Morocco

Was there any history between them (personal or cultural):
The protagonists while the critical incident occurred where starting to know each other in the context of an international exchange. There is a difference of status in the exchange as one of the protagonists is participant and another one is trainer.

2. EMOTIONAL REACTION

How did you feel in this situation?

First of all the trainer felt shocked, she thought that certain things you can think of - but never to loudly speak it out. She had experience working with people from other cultures but she had never before felt offended personally. As an Italian woman, even if they are a very low percentage of brain-workers that are recognized in society, at least this few have authority for their proofed knowledge. She felt “abandoned” by the rest of the group (men/women – Italians/migrants) due to the silence in the room. At the same time she felt surprised by the frankness and the audacity of the young man in expressing his thinking, almost admiring his verbal courage.

3. What norms / values / representations did the incident touch / threaten / question in the narrator?

The narrator’s emotional reactions were due to her, so to call “cultural standards

Patterns of Superior/Subordinate Behavior: western countries has a strong respect of hierarchy. Even with informal and momentary hierarchy (in the context of a training) keeping a distance and respect is important.

Respect for gender differences: Equality of gender in western countries is a valuable norms. It has been recognize through years the role of women as individual and her place in the professional market. Women are not only reduced in domestic and familial tasks.

Respect for proofed knowledge and competencies: Competencies should be beyond gender. Your experience is a way to be respected and valued out of any others considerations.

4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image do you have of the other person?

e.g. positive, negative, neutral, bizarre etc.

The image the narrator had of him was negative on one hand due to the concept in his statement and positive on the other hand appreciating his frankness in expressing his thoughts even aware of possible direct and indirect consequences on herself and the group.

5. What could be the norms / values / representations of the other person / culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience?

Patriarchal model: For some culture women and men as separated tasks and role in the society. Men is the decision-maker and women even with knowledge cannot expected to transmit her skills to a man.

Preference for Competition rather than for Cooperation:

A women teaching and training a men challenged his pride. It also can happen that this type of starting conversation is a culturally typical way of “testing” someone who is coming from another culture but we (as students, clients etc.) are somehow dependent on this person. Even though there is no need to belong to the an other culture this kind of behavior can be typical in some culture (like in Roma culture) among males, for example.

6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?

This Critical incidents was certainly highlighting problems concerning the professional practice, where the narrator can engage in a self-reflection process becoming more aware of her own self-hidden and unconscious prejudices. She identified and developed learning strategies and methods that helped trainees/learners to maintain their motivation and complete their courses, preparing them for further education and training. She could identify and develop ways to support and motivate learners with
migration background to fulfill their educational potential. Lat but now least together with some of the learners we could identify and develop strategies to tackle gender stereotypes in teaching, learning and career choice. As a solution where the cultural difference can appear in a client-helper, learner-trainer situation it can be helpful to reflect on this difference (as a group leader) openly and pose the possible questions accordingly. In this case, the next time may be useful to start the class with a short sentence that: “OK, I am aware of the fact that I am a woman and some of the participants’ countries it is not that common to accept a woman as a teacher, trainer etc. but now this is the situation lets’ see if there was a problem and if yes, why ....”. Or to ask questions concerning the differences between the cultural customs in training situations in the host country and in the countries from participants came from...
**CRITICAL INCIDENT: Introduction**

**Name of organisation:** CESIE  
**Country:** Italy  
**Date of recording the critical incident:** 20th of March 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional domain</th>
<th>Gender educ</th>
<th>Health educ</th>
<th>Sexuality educ</th>
<th>Training concerning disability</th>
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**Sensitive zone**  
What do you think are the “sensitive zones” that are the key issues of this critical incident?  
- Gender relations  
- Sexuality  
- The conception of the body  
- High structured Educational system/environment  
- non verbal + verbal communication

**Culture of the person experiencing the shock**  
What are the cultural reference frames of the narrator of the shock that may have played in the shock experience?  
Sicilian / Male / Man / Age 32 / Openness to cultural differences/religions/sexual orientation and open to dialogue/confrontation / used to work in intercultural contexts - International Italian Civil Service project in Alexandria, Egypt / Attendent Training Course “Efficient Communication” in Sicily, Italy / Hobby: reading, writings, cooking, fishing.

**Culture of the person “causing” the shock**  
What are the cultural reference frames of the interlocutor of the narrator who is at the source of the shock that may have played in the shock experience?  
Cultural reference of the interlocutor: closure to cultural differences/religions/sexual orientation. Female, Egyptian, aged 33, Muslim, married, migrant woman in Italy.

**Describing the SITUATION**

The critical incident took place in Palermo in 2009 during an Italian language course for adult migrants at the Italian Language School for foreigners/migrants. As Italian teacher, I was having a conversation with my students. I invited each participant to introduce him/herself, but one lady was reluctant to talk. I tried in several ways to convince her to take part in the conversation. I was joking with her and laughing with the other students. As a result she got offended, stood up and left the class.

My non formal way of doing (indented to encourage her to take active part in the conversation) was perceived at the beginning as an offence. It usually happens in educational context where cultural reproduction is traditionally placed in practices where the level of structuring is higher and students are not used to have a non formal conversation/relationship with the teacher. Indeed the lady probably got frustrated because of my jokes.

**1. Elements of the SITUATION**

**What happened? Where did it happen? Who were the protagonists? Was there any history between them (personal or cultural)? Try to be as objective as possible.**

What happened:  
A young Italian teacher was giving Italian lessons to foreigner and immigrants. While joking with them one of the student got upset and leave the room.

Where did it happen:  
The critical incident happened in Palermo in 2009 at an Italian language school for foreigner and migrants. The scene takes place in a classroom with others students from different background.
**Who were the protagonists:**

(i) A young men teaching Italian  
(ii) An Egyptian migrant women married  

Was there any history between them (personal or cultural):  
The two protagonists knew each other on a teacher/student basis.

**2. EMOTIONAL REACTION**

*How did you feel in this situation?*

The narrator felt embarrassed – He got the feeling to have done something wrong with her.

**3. What norms/values/representations did the incident touch/threaten/question in you?**

The teacher was acting spontaneously according to his cultural behaviour.

**Students-teacher relation:**

Joking is a way to create a safe and pleasant atmosphere among the classroom and therefore encourage the learning process. It helps to build complicity and make the students comfortable and develop their self-confidence to be active in class and exchanging freely with the teacher doubts and questions. Furthermore it often a way to keep the attention on the learner focus by entertainment.

**4. Based on the analysis of question 3 what image do you have of the other person?**

The narrator had a neutral image of the student.

**5. What could be the norms/values/representations of the other person/culture that led to the specific behaviour that caused the shock experience? (Hypothesis 1)**

The norm of the student from Egypt are related to a traditional culture. In Egypt the students are used to have a formal relationship with the teacher: Distance and sense of hierarchy are respected.

**Man and women usually keep physical distances between each other**

Arabic culture has strong cultural perceptions of difference of gender. Decency impose to respect some distance between a man and woman verbally as physically.

**Students are not used to joke with teacher/Jokes/humour easily get perceived as offences:**

Humour is often a sign of proximity and informality. Moreover humour can be really different according to the culture and be misunderstanding.

**6. Does the situation highlight any problem concerning the professional practice, or in general about the respect of cultural differences in intercultural situations?**

Intercultural educator should have specific knowledge, attitudes and skills on how to analyze different norms, values, behaviours etc. in educational contexts. This is in order to avoid misunderstandings / conflicts.

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