



SESSION 8:

Intercultural Dialogue —

How to Mediate Local & Intercommunal Conflicts Across Cultures

Tools & Skills

LOCAL AND INTERCOMMUNAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND MEDIATION
TOOLS, SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES

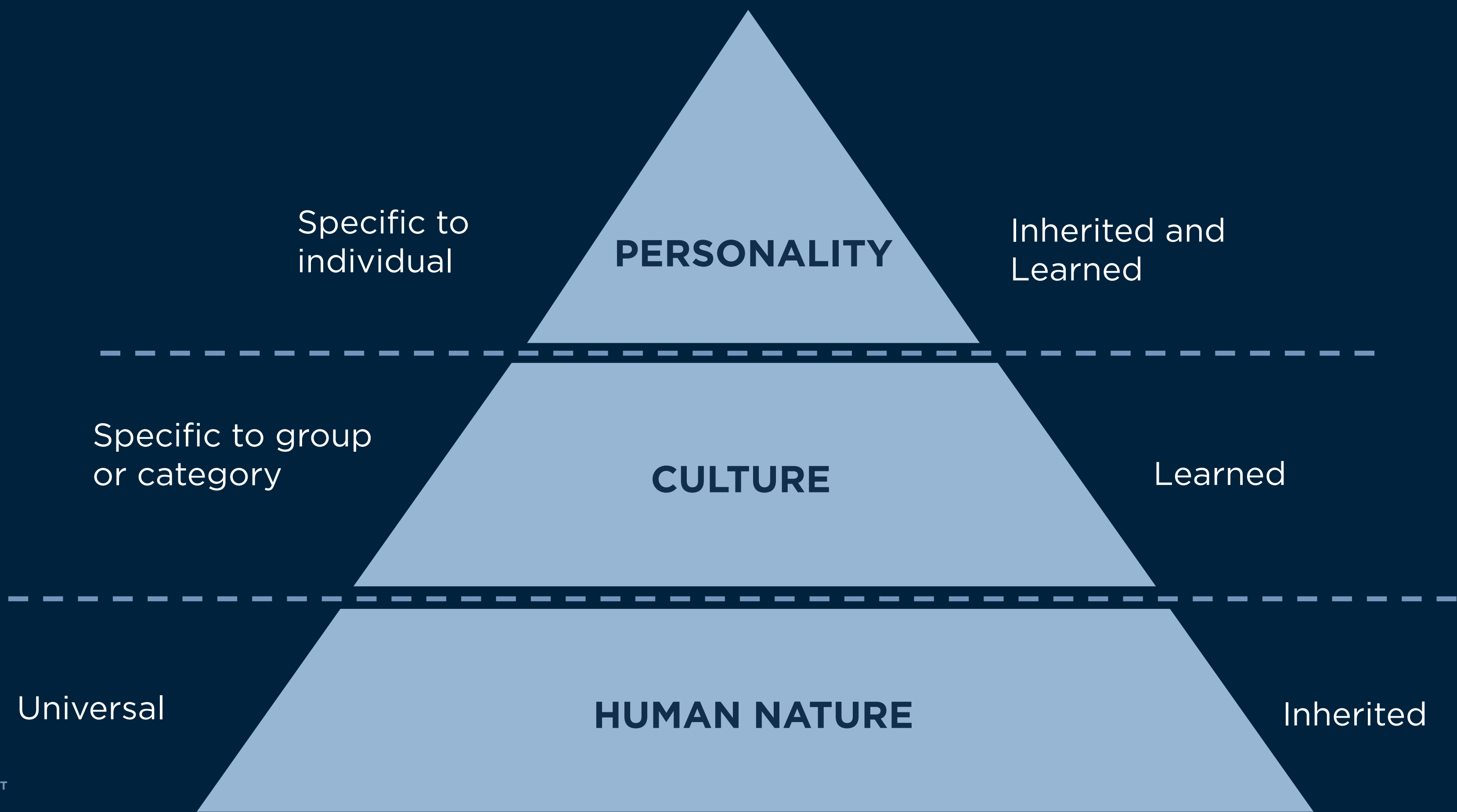
VIRTUAL TRAINING COURSE
9 – 12 OCTOBER 2023

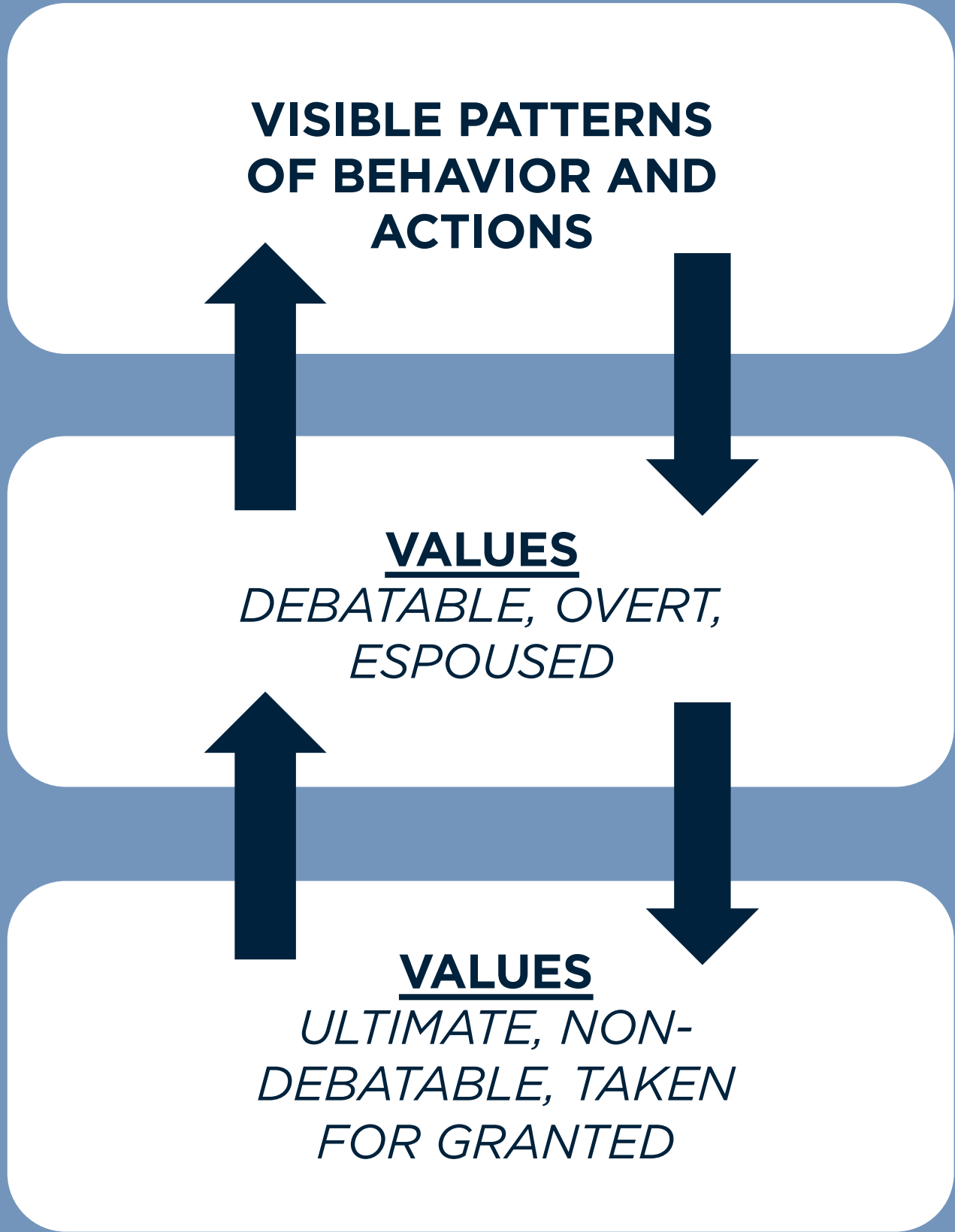
WHAT DOES

“CONFLICT”

MEAN IN YOUR CULTURE?







CULTURE IS MANIFESTED IN DIFFERENT LAYERS OF DEPTH

OBSERVABLE ARTIFACTS

Easy to observe, hard to interpret, obvious, explicit, conscious

OVERT ESPOUSED VALUES

Hard to observe, govern behavior, conscious, debatable

INVISIBLE ULTIMATE VALUES

Invisible, underlying, taken-for-granted assumptions, non-debatable, unconscious, implicit

OBSERVABLE ARTIFACTS

food

ethnicity

literature

art

dress code

emotional
intensity

race

visible patterns of
behavior and actions

dialects

statements of
philosophy

music

manner in which
people address
each other

stories

language

dance

OVERT ESPOUSED VALUES

beliefs

concept of time

attitudes to new things and change

values

family roles and responsibilities

courtship practices

religious beliefs

concepts of past and future

work ethic

relations to authority and hierarchies

attitudes

definitions of sin

traditional roles of men and women

concept of justice

meanings about clothing

INVISIBLE ULTIMATE VALUES

meaning making

nature of
reality

relationship to
environment

perceptions

feelings

nature of
human nature

thought patterns

nature of human
relationships

CULTURE AND NEGOTIATION:

1. COMMUNICATION STYLES

- High-context culture vs. Low-context culture





HOW CULTURE IMPACTS COMMUNICATION

High-Context Culture

Indirect, implicit, subtle,
layered and nuanced

Low-Context Culture

Concise, straight forward,
explicit, simple and clear



Low context communication.



High Context Communication



Where do you suppose the greatest likelihood of misunderstanding will arise?

- 1. One person from low-context culture negotiating (communicating) with a person from another low-context culture;*
- 2. A person from high-context culture negotiating (communicating) with a person from low-context culture;*
- 3. One person from high-context culture negotiating (communicating) with a person from another high-context culture;*



CULTURE AND NEGOTIATION:

1. COMMUNICATION STYLES

- High-context culture vs. Low-context culture

2. WAYS OF NAMING, FRAMING AND TAMING CONFLICT

3. APPROACHES TO MEANING-MAKING

- Universalist vs. Particularistic
- Specificity vs. Diffuseness
- Inner direction vs. Outer direction
- Synchronous time vs. Sequential time

4. IDENTITY

- Individualist vs. Communitarian



THE MURLE

Underlying cultural assumptions, perceptions, and understandings of conflict and conflict resolutions

Nilotic cattle-loving culture

An acephalous society (no hierarchy of leadership)

Dominated and targeted by larger ethnic groups - Nuer and Dinka

Spiritual authority, social legitimacy, political authority of the red chiefs

Young age sets not afraid to die

Age-sets (*buul*) main relationship

Red chiefs (*Alan Ce Merik*)
Alan=to rescue

Politically and economically marginalized

Feelings of resentment, distrust and marginalization

Decrease in the authority of red chiefs

Hierarchical Clan social organization (*kidongwa*)

OTHERS

Underlying cultural assumptions and perceptions about the Murle

Negative
stereotypes

Source of
instability

Generally
responsible
for conflict

Primitive and
ungovernable

Principal
aggressors

Exceptionally
violent

Unreceptive
to authority

CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR TALKS

N.B. Obstacles to open communication include not only words, but also non-verbal signals, social and behavioral cues

- Know their culture and communication style
- Be active, empathic listener
- Be open and honest about the aims of the encounter, and how you are going to use the results
- Agree on ground rules at the first meeting before substantive discussion
- Don't make impression that you are neutral (not caring)
- Avoid power asymmetry, and sounding superior or dogmatic
- Refrain from being judgmental or sarcastic in your responses
- Don't pressure them to talk or insist on straightforward answers
- Plan how to deal with silences or interruptions during the talks
- Be flexible about duration of the meeting, don't show haste
- Try to fix follow-up meetings



CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR TALKS

N.B. Negotiation is interactive. Words and non-verbal cues shape counterpart's goals and responses.

- ENCOURAGING: "Can you say a little bit more about..."
- RESTATING: "Do I hear you say..."
- CLARIFYING: "When did that happen..."
- SUMMARIZING: "These seem to be the key ideas in your statements..."
- PLACING DISAGREEMENT: "I understand your point, but also I think..."
- BUILDING RAPPORT: "I value your point, and want to add to it..."
- TURN-TAKING OR HANDOVER TECHNIQUES:
 - Wanting the speaker's floor: "If I may say something..."
 - Giving away speaker's floor: "What's your opinion about this?"



KEY POINTS:

- Analyze cultural norms, values and perceptions of the other party
- Identify cultural differences and their potential impact
- Be aware how the other party may perceive you and your culture
- Explore ways to bridge the cultural gap and find common ground
- Outline the issues of disagreement and their relative importance
- Assemble the team
- Design your negotiation strategy, style and tactics



WHAT WOULD YOU
CONSIDER TO BE

**UNIVERSAL
VALUES?**



- Peace
- Freedom
- Social progress
- Equal rights
- Human dignity
- Equality
- Solidarity
- Tolerance
- Respect for nature
- Shared responsibility
- Diversity
- Justice
- Morality
- Power
- Harmony
- Benevolence
- Honesty
- Loyalty



WOULD YOU SAY THAT
THESE VALUES ARE
**PERCEIVED IN
THE SAME WAY**
ACROSS CULTURES?



WHAT DOES

“PEACE”

MEAN IN YOUR CULTURE?

