



# BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER

Intercultural Competency  
in Congregations

# CULTURE AND MINISTRY

Definitions and background



All of us  
in the Episcopal Diocese of Olympia  
break Bread and share it...  
but how we do  
and why we do it  
looks different depending on our  
*culture.*



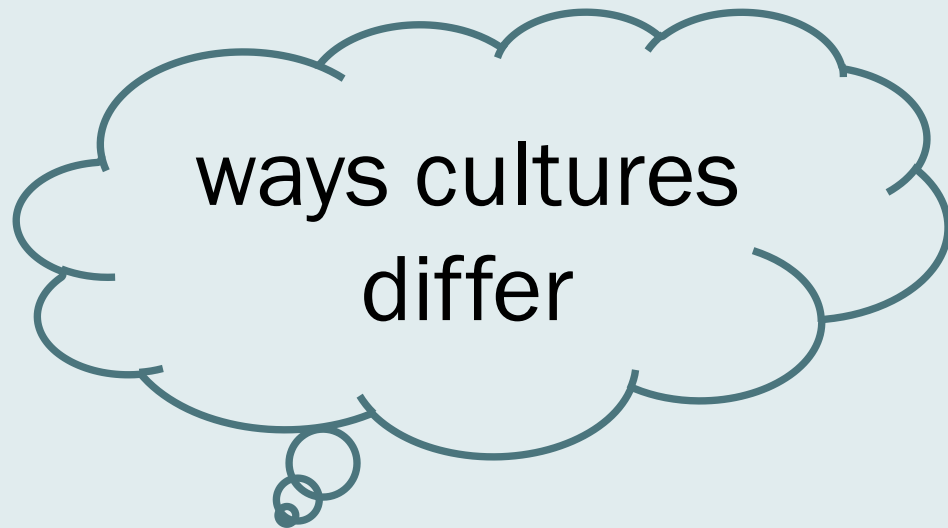
# What is culture?

Groups of people who adapt their behaviors to survive challenges

- Deep, broad, stable
- Learned
- Individuals perform them
- Only members fully understand a culture (but members may not be able to articulate it)
- Different size groups: families, churches, businesses, nations.

# Culture Specific vs Culture General

There are two kinds of cultural knowledge:



Culture General

Culture Specific



# How will this help my ministry?

- Raising awareness of congregational culture increases your options
- Increased Intercultural skills supports effective evangelism, outreach and communication efforts

# INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM

A developmental model for understanding Intercultural Competency

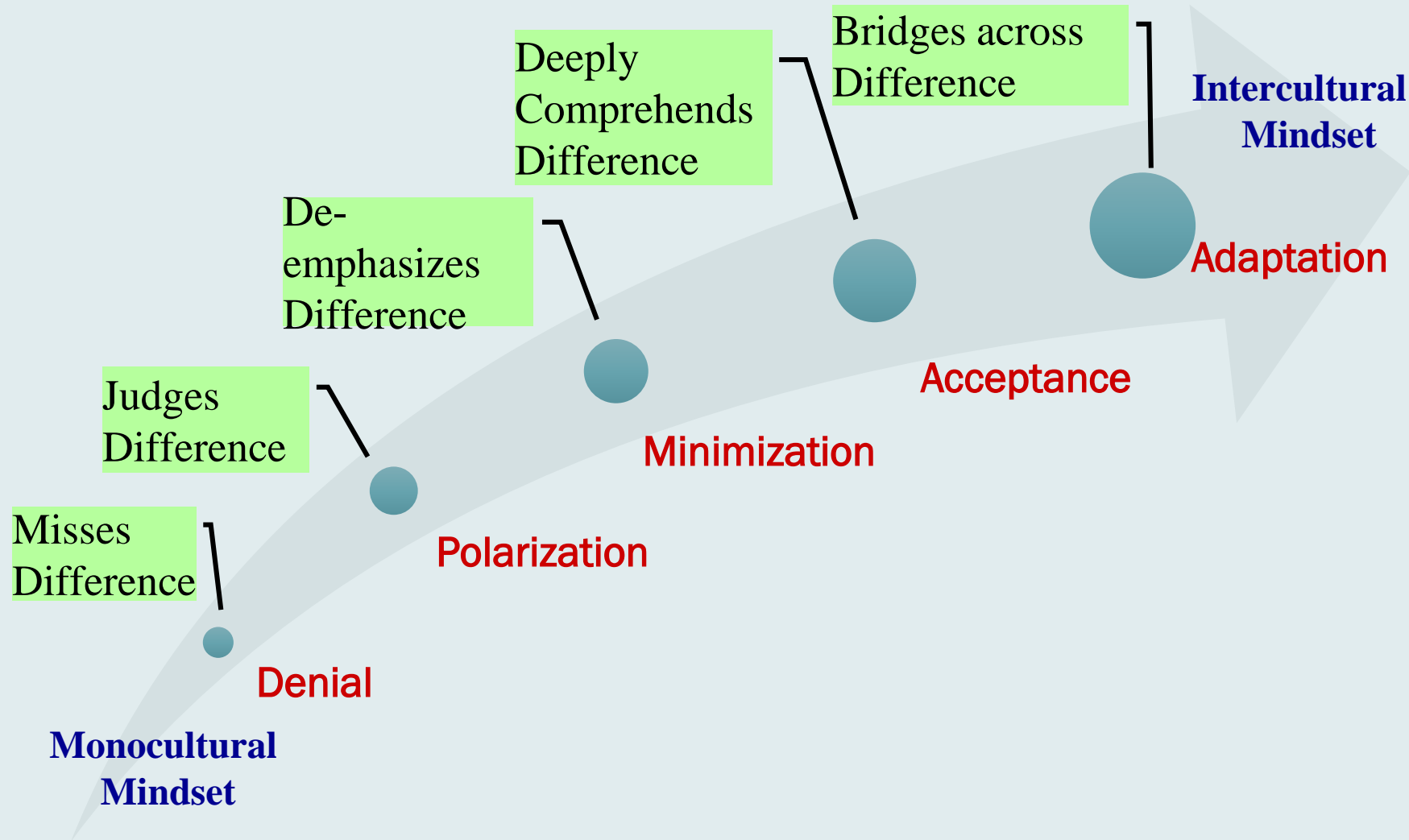




# Intercultural Development Continuum: Key ideas

- Experiences shape Intercultural Development
- Developmental Orientations aren't a moral judgment
- Awareness of our developmental orientation helps us identify new experiences and skills that would help us in our ministry.
  - *Individually*
  - *Organizationally*

# Intercultural Development Continuum: Primary Orientations



**aspects of culture we can see**

**Food  
Clothing**

**Values**

**Rituals**

**Unspoken  
beliefs**

**aspects of culture we can't see**

# Intercultural Development Continuum: Denial

An orientation that notices the cultural differences that are easily seen, but not the deeper differences.



# Intercultural Development Continuum: Polarization

A judgmental orientation that views differences between “us” and “them”

Polarization – Defense

Us is good. Them is bad.

Polarization – Reversal

Them is good. Us is bad.



# Intercultural Development Continuum: Minimization

An orientation that highlights similarities and universal values in a way that can miss and mask important differences.



# Intercultural Development Continuum

## Acceptance

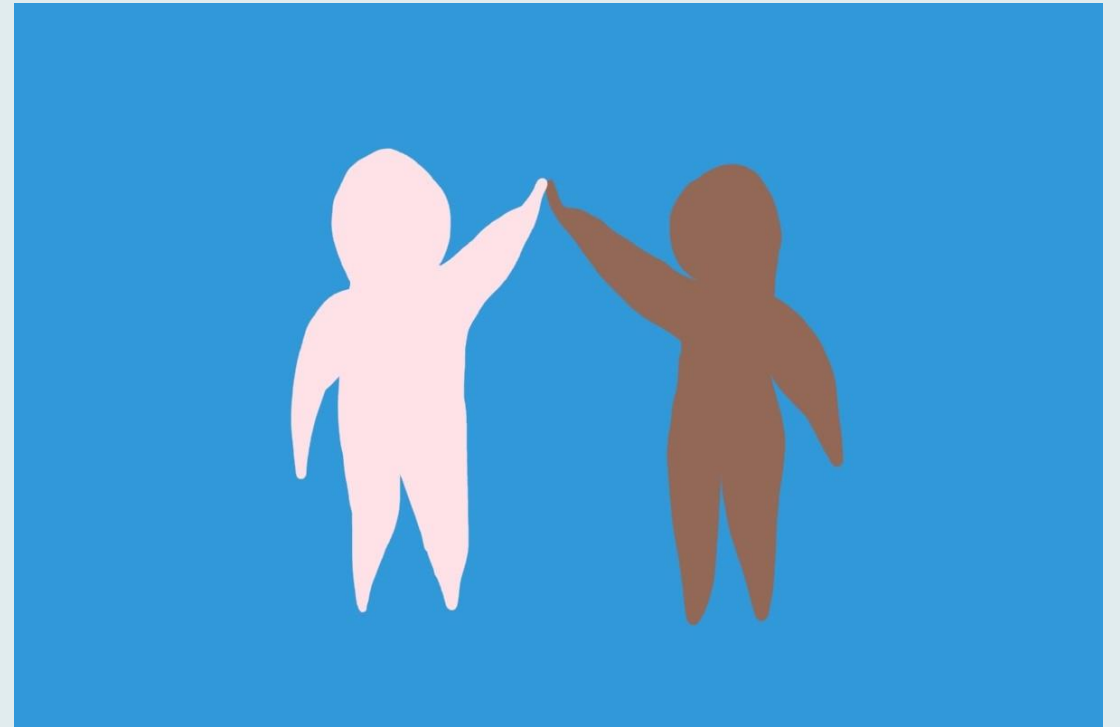
An orientation that recognizes and appreciates the differences in one's own and other's cultures.



**Seeing through  
the eyes of  
another culture**

# Intercultural Development Continuum: Adaptation

An orientation that is capable of shifting perspectives and changing behavior in culturally appropriate ways.



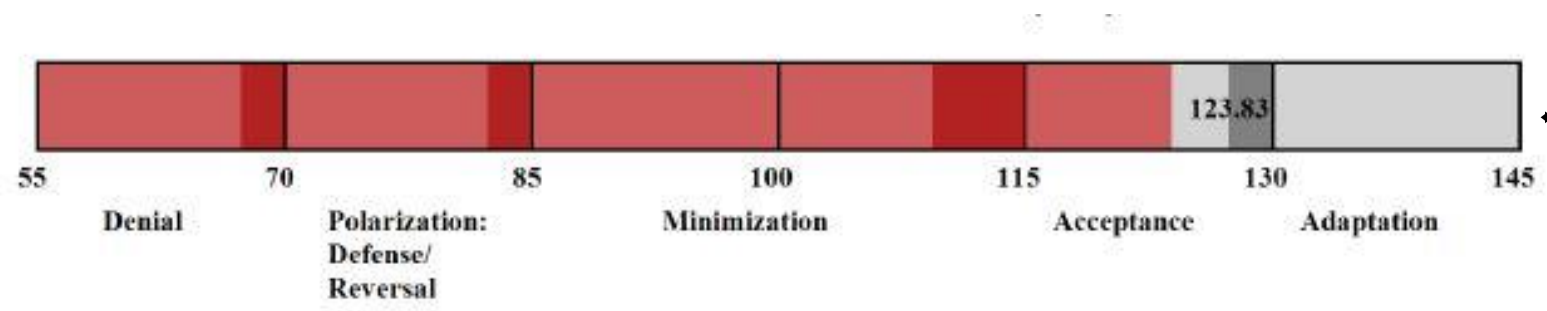


# HOW WE NAVIGATE SIMILARITY AND DIFFERENCE

Diocese of Olympia  
Sample size = 117

# Perceived Orientation

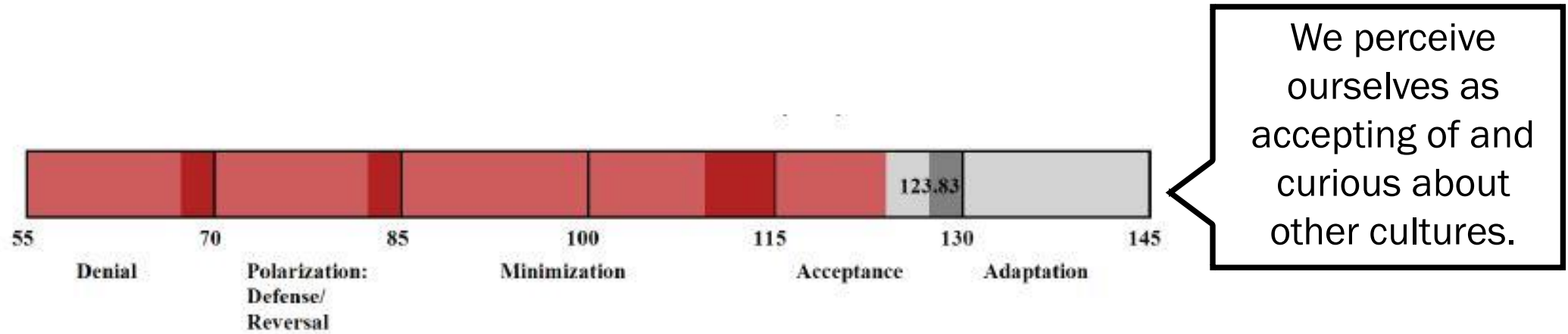
Diocese of Olympia



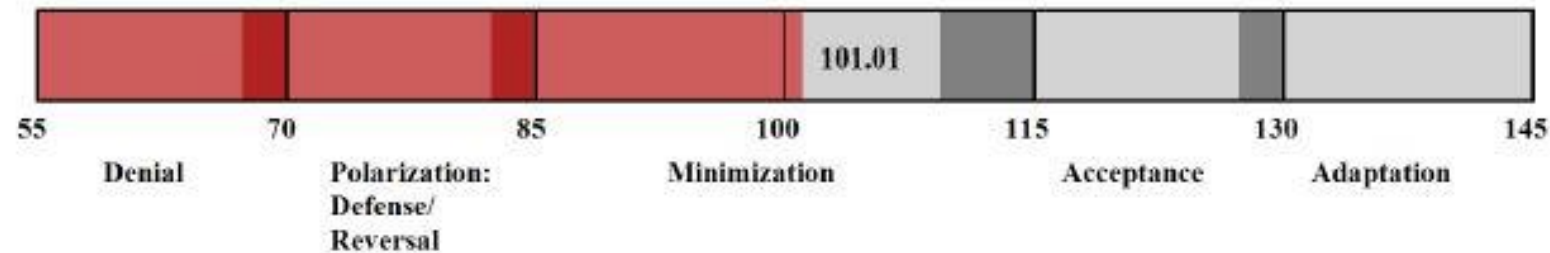
We perceive ourselves as accepting of and curious about other cultures.

# Developmental Orientation

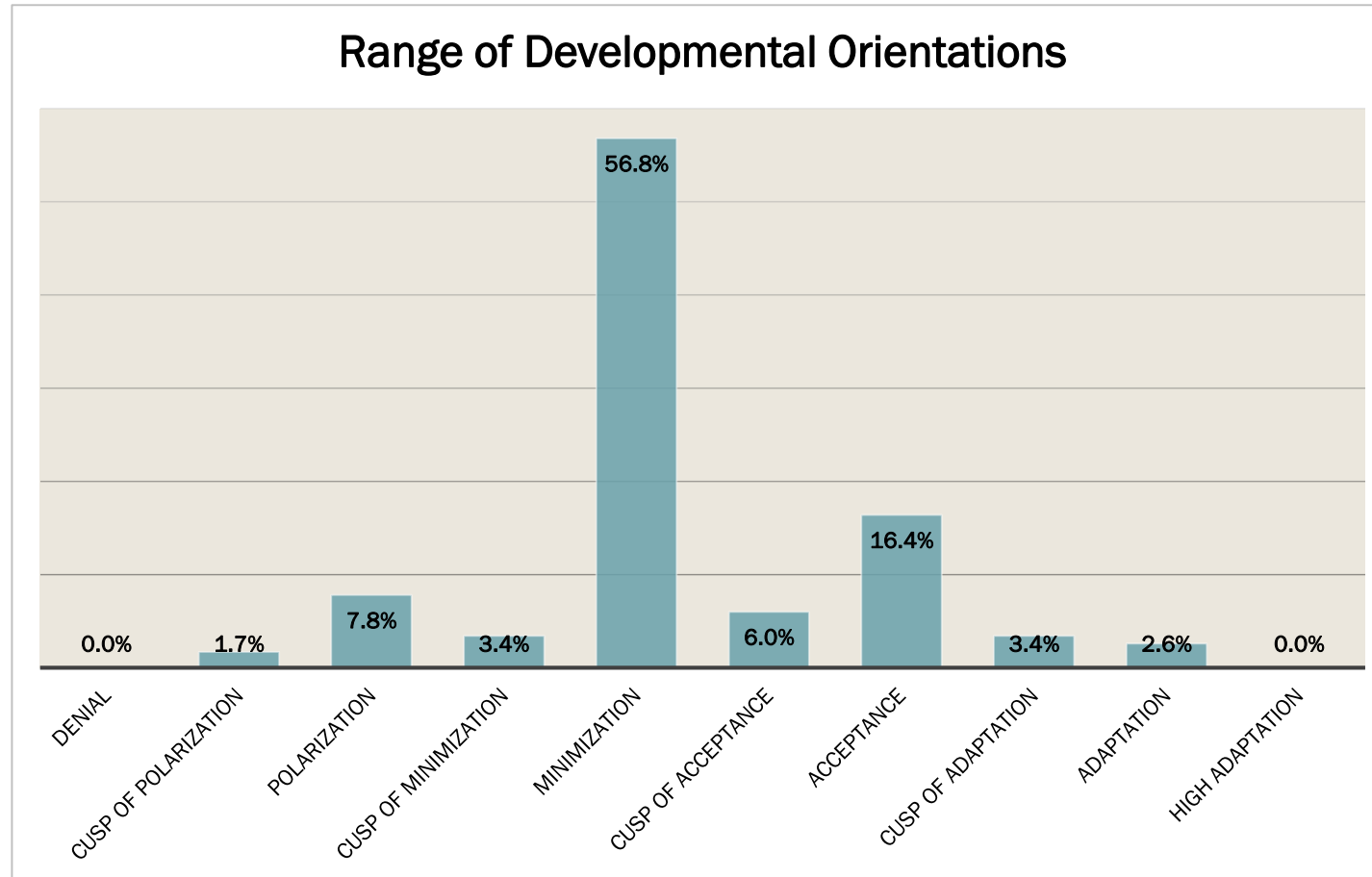
Diocese of Olympia



**Our actual experiences and behaviors highlight similarities between our own culture and other's, appeal to universal or shared values and sometimes miss important differences.**



# Our Range of Orientations



# Trailing Orientation: Reversal

Unresolved developmental tendencies for this group

When we are under stress  
or unsure how to manage cultural difference,  
We may engage in reversal thinking and behavior,  
**Uncritically accepting other's cultural practices and  
values**  
**While being overly critical of our own.**

# Table Conversations: Evangelism

What aspects of your congregation's culture do you value and want to share with others?

How might our group orientation towards **Minimization** make it difficult for us to minister to and build relationships with our neighbors who aren't already members of our congregation?

# Reflections on Reversal (Trailing Orientation)

Moving towards Acceptance and Adaptation requires that we learn how to...

Consider factors other than the reaction of our own culture when making moral, ethical and theological judgments.

# Reflections on Minimization

- Value our primary culture(s)
- Practice noticing both superficial and deeper differences in other's culture(s).
- Learn to be appropriately, not overly critical of our own culture.
- Discover similarity, don't assume it.



# In your context...

Use this model to be more effective in:

- Evangelism
- Multicultural or ethnic ministry expressions
- Outreach ministry development
- Group decision-making (BC, Vestry, Governing Bodies)
- Clergy and Leadership transitions
- Preaching and Formation

# Intercultural Competency Training & Coaching

Congregational Consulting Network: Offers workshops or training tailored to the intercultural ministry you are developing!

Individual Intercultural Development Coaching

College for Congregational Development Grad Unit:

Graduates can take our new Intercultural Competency Unit

Save the date: Jan 19-20, 2018 @ Dumas Bay