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Intercultural
Communication
in the U.S.
Classroom

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Individualist

- Privacy valued
- Competition valued
- The individual is praised
- Loyalty to self and pursuit of own goals
- If I am healthy and happy, then the group will benefit

Collectivist

- Identifies self within a more important group
- Group decision making is valued
- Individual praise is uncomfortable, even shameful
- Group welfare is the goal (family, community, clan)
- If the group is healthy and happy, then I will benefit

Low Power Distance

- People are more or less equal or they deserve to be treated equally
- Any status is largely based on perceived merit of accomplishments and character
- Earned respect

High Power Distance

- Rigid hierarchies
- Status matters
- Status may be based on age, gender, income, family, general position of authority, etc.

Direct Communication

- One means what one says
- Does not keep one's feelings to oneself (positive or negative)
- Little guessing of another's meaning

Indirect Communication

- What is said is not necessarily what one means
- One must infer meaning
- Being too direct is arrogant and sometimes shameful
- 'Saving face' is valued

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Low Uncertainty Avoidance

- Comfortable with risk
- Differences among individuals and groups more easily tolerated
- Less regulation/control over life's situations

High Uncertainty Avoidance

- Risk averse
- Differences within or outside groups not easily tolerated
- Conformity is comfortable

Universalism

- Egalitarian
- Fairness above all
- Comfortable working in absolutes
- Seen as legalistic

Particularism

- Favoritism based on in-group
- Goal is group harmony
- "It's who you know"
- Hierarchical society

Monochronic

- "Time is money"
- **Punctual**
- Values time, appointments, and productivity over people

Polychronic

Relationships and spontaneity are drivers of one's time