
**Fostering Citizen Diplomacy:
How Individual Conversations Drive Cultural Understanding**

**A Global Network of UNESCO Chairs on Children, Youth,
and Communities White Paper**

A White Paper for UNESCO and the United Nations Community

by

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with

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Foreword

I am delighted to present this White Paper, *Fostering Citizen Diplomacy: How Individual Conversations Drive Cultural Understanding*, as part of the Global Network of UNESCO Chairs on Children, Youth, and Communities White Paper Series.

Daniel Magerman presents a thought-provoking and important discussion, along with direct suggestions for application, that highlights understanding and fostering citizen diplomacy through conversation. While this concept and exploration may seem simple, is far from that. Communication, interaction, and conversations are routinely assumed to be a given characteristic and ability. In reality, the ability to understand, interact, and conduct conversations is a very complex and intricate process that needs to be clearly understood. If not, the implications for research, practice, and policy are significantly hindered and impaired.

It is important to point out the vital nature of effective communication and conversation in a variety of baseline settings, and beyond, that are essential to international development objectives.

The communication, cultural understanding, and interaction that takes place through effective conversations have been widely shown to be essential to community, regional, and national capacity building. In a variety of areas ranging from socioeconomic development to peacebuilding, interaction and effective communication are seen as the bedrock on which wider development efforts need to be placed.

Further, the information and frameworks shared in this White Paper are vital to our professional work (interacting and understanding each other and various cultures), our programs (understanding and communication are central to capacity building, program effectiveness, conflict mitigation at all levels) and our research (effective conversations are the foundation of our research efforts, whether they be highly structured (surveys, questionnaires) or more nuanced (interviews, focus groups, qualitative methods)).

Through this White Paper, citizen diplomacy is enhanced, while a range of essential research, program, and policy skills are advanced. We are honored to contribute to this important and timely dialogue and hope that this contribution will advance the rigor and impact of development efforts globally.

All the vey best,



Mark A. Brennan, PhD

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Introduction

A host of material on the Internet, created by experts and NGOs, provides important information on intercultural dialogue (Goman, 2011; Bergeson & Helgoe, 2012; Lubin, 2014). Likewise, UNESCO produces volumes filled with conceptual and operational frameworks for how to communicate with “the other” (Deardorff, 2011; Dragičević & Dragojević, 2011; Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013). These publications contain integral ideas for learning how to interact with members of other cultures. While one of these concepts – conversational ability – appears to many as a natural condition, it is in fact a craft and skill that must be cultivated. A mastery of this skill is essential for anyone actively engaged in international development activities. However, most of the readily available information on these topics focuses on how *organizations* can facilitate intercultural programming. This white paper will focus on the essential importance of communication within micro-level cultures: individuals, dyads, and small groups.

Why the Individual?

What can a single person bring to human interactions in an unfamiliar environment? What can a person learn? Any individual who travels in a new place – be it a city, country, or continent – can benefit from a little background knowledge. An individual who knows how and when to speak and listen will experience “the other” in an entirely new way. In this regard, intercultural competencies are especially useful skills. The notion of Citizen Diplomacy will also be explored, offering another toolset for starting a dialogue and taking action. This text will highlight the importance of these two subjects in terms specifically geared towards small group interactions.

With these themes in mind, readers are encouraged to converse. A simple conversation is an underappreciated tool in cultural immersion. It is an opportunity to set aside preconceived notions of the interlocutor and exchange ideas without judgement. This white paper explains how and why a conversation can be a step towards true understanding, one that removes the need to otherize in the first place.

Much effort has been exerted to teach diplomats, dignitaries, NGO volunteers, backpackers and world travelers how to interact effectively (Goman, 2011; Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013; Livermore, 2013). Conferences, training seminars, exchange programs, and international summits have brought those same interculturally curious people together, stuck them in a room, and encouraged them to dialogue. Often these events conclude with the organizers and participants

agreeing: “Mission accomplished! We’re culturally competent now.” Still, these lessons have not reached a global audience. Cultures continue to clash; from paupers to presidents, people vehemently disagree across streets and across continents. Even those who have been trained commit cultural faux pas. It’s up to the individual to understand what it takes to communicate interculturally, and then find another person to communicate with.

Individuals can and must take it upon themselves to start conversations, ask insightful questions, keep an open mind, and join the ranks of citizen diplomats. Even those individuals who already make it a point to reach out to strangers they encounter at home or in their travels will benefit from reading more about these terminologies and tools. The utility of intercultural competence spans beyond the individual and can be applied to communities, organizations, and governments. The members of those bodies can harness the themes in this text to enhance their formal research efforts, or simply utilize them in their everyday lives. In each case, the lessons contained within “Fostering Citizen Diplomacy: How Individual Conversations Drive Cultural Understanding” pervade human interaction at every level and help facilitate a more communicative and understanding world.

Part I: Frameworks

Part I of this paper begins by delineating two concepts in individualized intercultural communication: Intercultural Competency and Citizen Diplomacy. Similar publications have touched upon these topics before; however, Magerman and Brennan believe these topics are underrepresented, especially as they pertain to one-on-one and small group interactions.

1) Intercultural Competency

Intercultural Competency encompasses a wide range of concepts related to improving how we communicate with the world around us. The topic is so broad and varied, in fact, that oftentimes it is described in the plural, i.e. Intercultural Competencies. This section will begin by clarifying and defining some commonly confused terms in this field. Then, it will introduce the baseline skills (or “competencies”) as detailed by UNESCO in 2013 (Leeds-Hurwitz). Next, the authors provide information on outside resources that delve further in depth. Lastly, Section 1 ends with a look at how these competencies can be relevant in micro-level intercultural scenarios.

Definitions

When organizations discuss matters of culture and communication, many terms are utilized. The vocabulary is nuanced, so it's worthwhile to define some of the most commonly used concepts.

Cultural Intelligence ("Cultural Intelligence Center," 2016; Livermore, 2016) is a quantifiable trait that indicates a person's ability to relate and work effectively across cultures. Sometimes referred to as "CQ," cultural intelligence can be measured on a scale similar to an intelligence quotient. This concept is favored by international businesses, multinational education efforts, and governments.

Cultural Competency (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013) refers to the ability to understand and navigate within one's own culture. A culturally competent person knows the ins and outs of how their own identity coincides with the community around them. They are comfortable and confident in this environment, willing to collaborate within the group. These individuals are capable of effectively sharing information about their culture to members outside.

Intercultural Competency (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013) is the term upon which this paper will most closely focus. To be interculturally competent a person must first be competent within their own culture. Then, an interculturally competent individual can act as a bridge, capable of understanding, communicating, and establishing connections across cultures. (Intercultural competency is almost interchangeable with *cross-cultural competency*, although the latter is used more frequently in the business world.) Achieving a high level of intercultural competency requires a set of skills that will be outlined in the next subsection.

Skills

Many researchers have worked to spell out exactly what makes a person interculturally competent. As might be expected in a topic that pertains to communicating across the planet, authors from different continents and backgrounds determine different skillsets (Dragičević Šešić & Dragojević, 2011; Grimson, 2011; Holmes, 2009; Steyn, 2009; Youssef, 2011). In 2011, Dr. Darla Deardorff synthesized and simplified five regional reports into one consolidated list. UNESCO published a summary of those "skills and competences understood as the minimal requirements to attain intercultural competences":

- 1. Respect - the capacity to value others**
- 2. Self-awareness/identity - understanding and appreciating our own cultural worldview**
- 3. Seeing from other perspectives/worldviews - viewing the world from an outside perspective and comparing it to our own without judgement**
- 4. Listening - taking part in authentic intercultural dialogue**
- 5. Adaptation - making a mental shift into another perspective**
- 6. Relationship building - forging lasting cross-cultural personal bonds**
- 7. Cultural humility - valuing our own culture's importance while respecting the cultures around us**

These seven attributes are considered a baseline of intercultural competence from which to operate (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2013: 24). Each skill is equally relevant within large groups (e.g. the U.N. General Assembly), as it is between two international strangers meeting for the first time. However, it should be noted that this list does not represent a practice-based approach, but rather the principles that comprise effective communication.

Additional Research

Bloom's Taxonomy (Anderson, Krathwohl, & Bloom, 2001) lays the foundation for what many consider to be a model for modern education systems. It also helps frame questions of what students need to learn to succeed in an increasingly international world. The principles of the taxonomy posit that skills like cross-cultural competence, language proficiency, and regional knowledge cannot exist in a vacuum. In Bloom's terms, their uses overlap at the "receiving" and "knowledge" levels. As a result, efforts to evaluate these attributes often fall flat. Only real-world scenarios demonstrate how well a practitioner has internalized this set of competencies.

Still, for the purposes of pedagogy, Bloom's Taxonomy provides educators a way to organize the multifaceted elements of intercultural communication.

Some organizations expound and expand on Bloom's ideas in systematic research efforts. One such large, international research firm is GloBus. While GloBus does focus on international *businesses*, its contributions to global collaboration literature should be taken seriously. Their coaching program, Intercultural Communication and Collaboration Appraisal, is referenced in many other papers in the field ("GloBus Research," 2015). Outside the business realm, many institutes publish material on intercultural communication. There is citiZED out of England, the journal of the Staff and Educational Development Association, and the International Academy for Intercultural Research to name a few ("Citizenship and Teacher Education," 2015; "Staff and Educational Development Association," 2015; "International Academy," 2015). Of course, other resources made available by UNESCO also provide valuable insight into these topics.

Intercultural Competency on the Ground

Despite volumes of journals, films, lectures, blogs, conferences, and the like, it is still the individual that has to prove their competence out in the field. All of the background knowledge in the world does not supersede experience *out in* the world. At its core, culture is difficult to define and even harder to demarcate ("Cultural Diversity," 2016). An individual is as complex as the cultures with which they identify. Similarly, no publication can accurately portray the complexities of a region, nor are people culturally bound to their location. Preparation is important, but not at the expense of curiosity. The greatest mistake someone can make in intercultural dialogue is assuming knowledge about the interlocutors. Try to forget about the "effective" part of intercultural competence; the initial effort should be to get to know another individual, not the pursuit of some extrinsic goal. Part II of this paper will demonstrate one way to practice this highly personalized strategy.

2) *Understanding Citizen Diplomacy*

The concept of citizen diplomacy explicitly states the need for *individuals* to take responsibility for intercultural dialogue. Each person is regarded as a diplomatic, representing not only their place of origin, but also themselves.

Definition

The Center for Citizen Diplomacy (2016) provides us with a concise definition: “Citizen Diplomacy is the concept that every global citizen has the right, even the responsibility, to engage across cultures and create shared understanding through meaningful person-to-person interactions.” In other words, people on Earth have the opportunity – perhaps even the obligation – to reach out across perceived boundaries and foster connections with other people. The notion of being a “global citizen” is ascribed to anyone who recognizes that the needs of the world trump those of any specific region or community.

Getting Organized

Citizen Diplomacy regards the individual as the chief actor in intercultural encounters. Nonetheless, some organizations have taken it upon themselves to endorse the idea and promote it on a large scale.

Firstly, the aforementioned Center for Citizen Diplomacy derives its name from the term itself. Its mission since 2006 has been to: “promote, expand, and celebrate opportunities for all individuals to be exemplary citizen diplomats and affirms the indispensable value of purposeful global engagement” (“Center for Citizen Diplomacy,” 2016). Although the organization is now merged with PYXERA Global (another non-profit), it maintains the same aspirations to empower people through a network of international leadership programs, intercultural collaboration efforts, and business-centric forums.

Next, World Learning (“World Learning Inc.,” 2015) traces its history back to 1932 when it was known as The Experiment in International Living. Living internationally is no longer an experiment, but a reality for many people around the world. World Learning recognizes this fact and concentrates its efforts on “advancing leadership in more than 60 countries. [It] envision[s] a just world, driven by engaged citizens and thriving communities.” Much like the Center for Citizen Diplomacy, World Learning partners with other organizations to educate students of all ages and provides opportunities for people to work together who typically would not.

Finally, one more organization that places citizen diplomacy directly in its title is Citizen Diplomacy International (CDI). Its mission diverges slightly from the two above, but CDI recognizes the need for “the individual citizen to be personally engaged in international relations” (“Citizen Diplomacy International,” 2015). CDI pursues this goal by facilitating

exchange programs for the U.S. Government and the City of Philadelphia (which houses its headquarters). One of its most prominent person-to-person programs involves families who host “sponsored visitors” from abroad in order to share U.S. culture and learn from their guests.

Undoubtedly, there are other bodies that put the term citizen diplomacy to good use. However, well-researched literature on the results of their work is not widely available. As has been stated already, measuring the “success” of interpersonal interactions is logistically, if not ethically, challenging. Despite the difficulties of quantifying the effect of citizen diplomats, their impact is undeniable.

Models of Citizen Diplomacy

Robert W. Fuller traveled between the USSR and the USA frequently between 1970 and 1990 (“Dignity is Not Negotiable,” 2012). As an accomplished physicist and former President of Oberlin College, Fuller had formidable credentials, but his interests were not tied to a particular country’s agenda. Fuller worked independently to foster improved relations between the two nations steeped in the Cold War. The fruits of his labor yielded Internews, a global nonprofit corporation that promotes democracy through free media. Fuller spoke out against abuses of power (that he labeled “rankism”) and championed transparent communication. In 1981, David Hoffman cited Fuller’s work when he coined the phrase “citizen diplomat.” Robert Fuller went far out of his way to speak with “the other” – the perceived enemy – and found common ground. He continues to speak on behalf of Dignity for All.

Fuller created an entirely new framework for citizen diplomacy; however, this is far from the only route. One organization, entitled simply Global Citizen, empowers people around the world to consider their role as citizen diplomats. Their programs primarily involve taking responsibility for sharing (often through social media) the truth about issues of world hunger, youth education, and global health initiatives. They also provide a platform for voting and petition signing in support of these pervasive problems.

Recently, another individual combined the power of social media and the support of already existing organizations to combat insidious misconceptions about an entire group. The documentary, *Iran: Hot Tea, Cool Conversations*, “cuts through the political rhetoric of the day unveiling a country full of warm and compassionate people” (Hamilton, 2015). The film’s director, Brenden Hamilton, did not accept the typical American media portrayal of Iran; he

stepped in with a camera to give a voice to average Iranians. Hamilton acted as a citizen diplomat, had many humanizing conversations, and shared it with an international audience.

The Fullers and Hamiltons of the world are impactful, but citizen diplomacy can be quite simple. A diplomat need not establish an international organization or film their encounters. Results do not need to be shared on Facebook, Twitter, or cable news to be effective. The first step for all citizen diplomats: initiate a connection between themselves and someone else. Political, cultural, religious, racial, and ethnic divides can be bridged with an open mind and an open line of communication. What better way is there to begin a career as a citizen diplomat than to start a conversation?

Part II: The Conversation

“But how can conversations make so much difference? They can’t if you believe the world is ruled by overpowering economic and political forces... If that’s true you can’t change much. All you can do is have conversations which distract or amuse you. But I see the world differently, as made of individuals searching for a partner, for a lover, for a guru, for God. The most important, life-changing events are the meetings of these individuals.”

- Theodore Zeldin, *Conversation* (2000: 4)

Not every conversation will change the world. Not every conversation will be remembered by its participants. Yet, every time one person goes out of their way to say “Hello! How are you?” and honestly wants to know the answer, the trajectory of those individuals’ days have been altered. Every day brings another opportunity to engage with humanity on a personal level, to be a citizen diplomat. Having a conversation is the first and biggest step towards eliminating the need to otherize. Beyond geopolitics, religious zealotry, and cultural boundaries are words – simple words – that, when shared between two people, can motivate change. The implications of this for interpersonal dialogues, understanding, research, conflict resolution, and countless other areas can not be underestimated.

3) Back to Conversational Basics

There's no "right" way to initiate or maintain a conversation. There are, however, habits to avoid and red flags to watch out for, especially when the subject turns to something more serious than the weather. This section will describe the basic mechanics of how an immersive conversation with a stranger – at home or abroad – can go.

What, When, Where

For some, the "what" of a conversation seems obvious: two people are speaking and listening; words and ideas are exchanged. In its most common form, yes, this is a conversation. However, conversations are not the exclusive property of mobile, extroverted individuals endowed with all the faculties to talk, hear, and respond. Any pairing of people, as long as they share some degree of linguistic knowledge (i.e. they can communicate in *some* combination of languages) can engage. Beyond the spoken word, practitioners of sign languages engage in dialogue ("NIDCD," 2014). Every moment, the Internet plays host to millions of silent, but poignant text-based discussions. Although they do not have the vocabulary to add much nuance, even babies understand the mechanics of conversations and have been filmed "talking," gesticulating, and taking turns in a very adult way (Jayrandall22011, 2011). Of course not every conversation will occur between strangers, but for the purposes of this paper, aspiring interlocutors are encouraged to reach out to a completely new person and say "Hello," "Hola," or "Marhaba."

The "when" and "where" of conversation varies from place to place and person to person. International travelers will find themselves with myriad opportunities to dialogue with others in transit – in an airport, on the plane, waiting for a bus, and then most anywhere at their eventual destination. There's no need to search far and wide, however. In cities and small towns alike across the world, pubs, coffee shops, bookstores, bus stations, hotels, hostels, and, of course, queues provide environments that breed conversations. It's important to keep in mind personal space and privacy when entering into a conversation; not everyone wants to engage, but making an effort – whether it be a word with the guy at the corner bar or a chat with the grandmotherly woman waiting for the 5:30 flight to Houston – is the first step.

How

Many websites, blogs, and “conversation gurus” offer advice on how to achieve “expert conversationalist” status. Some focus on conversational tactics in international business (Lubin, 2014); others offer genuine advice, but to a limited audience (McKay & McKay, 2010; Bergeson & Helgoe, 2012). One goal of this paper is to shed away the specificity of conversation guides and embrace a few golden rules. These five ideas will serve interlocutors in any setting and in all encounters with anyone interested in dialogue. In fact, this list closely resembles Deardorff’s intercultural competencies in *Intercultural Competences: Conceptual and Operational Framework* (2013). This isn’t a coincidence: conversation between people and communication among cultures are both predicated upon respect, openness, and genuine curiosity.

1. **Break the ice.** This first step may seem daunting, but it’s the most important one. It doesn’t need to be complicated either. “Hi. Where are you from?” is always worth a try.
2. **Demonstrate openness.** During an in-person conversation, willingness to learn about new or controversial ideas shows in both verbal and nonverbal language (Charles, 2009). Try not to clam up or gasp after hearing something astounding. Reserve judgment or the conversation will likely stagnate.
3. **Ask questions.** This one seems obvious, but it’s so important that it warrants listing. Be tactful, but also remember asking deeper than surface-level questions is the only way to progress a conversation. It’s possible to ask intimate questions without being intrusive. Some cultures value learning personal details about a stranger after only a few minutes of talking.
4. **Listen.** “Active listening” and “full listening” are strategies that both promote being present when other parties are speaking (Ellis, 2002). Instead of formulating a response, wait, listen, and then speak. Don’t allow the conversation to dissolve into a debate or, worse yet, a series of monologues.
5. **Act natural!** If the preceding rules are forgotten, keep this one in mind. No conversation abides to a strict set of parameters, particularly when each party may be from a different country with completely different conversational norms. Don’t think too much about the rules. Remember that to be human is to have plenty in common.

Caveats & Regional Differences

Not all conversations will go well. Some may fall flat after an exchange of pleasantries; others won’t start in first place. Of course, starting a conversation – particularly with a stranger – is a bit of a social gamble. The odds are in favor of a chat lasting at least a few minutes, and an ideal roll-of-the-dice will result in a substantive, meaningful exchange. However, some parameters

cannot be controlled or accounted for. One huge caveat to consider is language. It could be said that native English speakers hit the linguistic jackpot, but even this highly global language has its limitations (Kirkpatrick, 2012). Conversations can peter out because the involved parties simply don't have the vocabulary to exchange complex ideas. Hand gestures and pantomiming can replace basic communication needs, but do not allow for a rich dialogue to develop.

It's also useful to keep in mind that across cultures, conversational norms differ. Specific regional differences can be broken down into three broad dichotomies: High-Context vs. Low-Context, Sequential vs. Synchronic, and Affective vs. Neutral (Goman, 2011). High-Context cultures (e.g. Mediterranean, Slavic, Central European, Latin American, African, Arab, Asian, American-Indian) tend to rely on interpretation of the listener to deliver a message and avoid hitting directly on the point. Low-Context cultures (e.g. most Germanic and English-speaking countries) deliver messages more explicitly.

In a Sequential culture (e.g. North America, England, Germany, Sweden, and the Netherlands), time can be "wasted," so a conversation may end or progress more abruptly. Alternatively, a Synchronic culture (e.g. South America, southern Europe and Asia) considers time as a more long-term and cyclical entity, potentially resulting in more drawn out, less rushed discussions. Affective cultures (e.g. Italy, France, the U.S., and Singapore) tend to emote a great deal during dialogue; Neutral cultures (e.g. Japan, Indonesia, the U.K., Norway, and the Netherlands) seem to remain more straight-faced. This outline merely presents the big picture. Individuals do not fit neatly into categories and assumptions about style should be avoided when entering into a conversation.

4) Conversation in Action

At their core, conversations happen between two people, each one bringing unique background and baggage to the equation. Through talking, commonalities emerge as well as differences; sometimes serious, ideological divides materialize. It's possible to harness these potential conversation-killers into a beautiful exchange between disparate opinions. Even those whose opinions spark contention can converse.

“Take ‘the Other’ to Lunch”

In December 2010, Elizabeth Lesser gave a TED Talk entitled “Take ‘the Other’ to lunch” (Lesser, 2010). The talk outlined a strategy for engagement with “the other.” Her suggested goal was, “to get to know one person from a group you may have negatively stereotyped.” Lesser did not claim that a single conversation would make a staunch Democrat and an ardent Republican see eye to eye. She did, however, posit that sitting down to lunch with that person (that “other”) is the perfect starting point for open and honest dialogue. If the need to eat is a great equalizer, then at the very least two people whose ideologies clash must take a moment to chew before rebutting.

Lesser laid down some ground rules for her lunches: “don't persuade, defend or interrupt. Be curious; be conversational; be real. And listen.” These guidelines, like those presented in 3B, can apply to any conversation. In addition, questions such as these can generate some stimulating thoughts: “Share some of your life experiences with me. What issues deeply concern you? And what have you always wanted to ask someone from the other side?” By the end of a lunch, both the ice and the bread have been broken. Both parties have learned a little more about each other.

“Who should you invite to lunch?” Lesser asked the TED audience. “Next time you catch yourself in the act of otherizing, that will be your clue. And what might happen at your lunch? Will the heavens open and ‘We Are the World’ play over the restaurant sound system? Probably not.” What happens, then? A conversation takes place that chips away at stereotypes and makes human what was once a just a set of disagreeable ideas.

Conclusion

It's easy assume that we've mastered conversation. After all, most of us have been talking since before we could even walk. Why, then, is it necessary to unpack the ins and outs of personal communication between people? For one, all kinds of communication are put under scrutiny and analyzed. Entire academic fields are devoted to the rhetoric of public speeches, literary texts, ancient writings, and internet exchanges. In fact, a sub-field of linguistics concerns itself exclusively with the science of conversations. (See “Recommended Reading” to learn more.) We study these subjects so that we can better understand ourselves and improve our ability to communicate. It is both possible and pertinent to delve into the nuances of conversation, outside of academia. The tools are already available. It's up to us to pick them up, find another person, and talk about it.

So, what can a citizen diplomat do right now to exercise their conversational muscles? They can “take ‘the other’ to lunch.” They can remember this one rule: upon meeting someone new, consider them as an individual before making assumptions about their identity and the groups they identify with. In other words, a citizen diplomat should do their best to withhold judgment about a person’s appearance, manner of speech, nationality, etc. and instead focus on them as an individual with a nuanced and impossible-to-guess background. Once that person has had the chance to identify themselves, then it might be appropriate to incorporate what is known (or believed to be known) about their groups into the conversation. This skill is important for everyone, but as leaders in a complex world, it is incumbent upon citizen diplomats to set the tone for an honest, open exchange of ideas.

Determining the efficacy of these conversations is part of the challenge. There is no metric for conversational success in every situation. It does not serve the interlocutor to rate an interaction with some kind of quantitative rubric. Nevertheless, it is possible to sense when a conversation has gone “well”: when the subject matter elevates beyond simple pleasantries; when rationality prevails over unfettered emotion; when both parties leave the conversation having learned something about the other. The result of each discrete interaction will not achieve the parabolic “world peace”; this is not the goal. However, the sum of these meaningful conversations are a world that listens more attentively, thinks more critically, and cares more deeply about the people who live on it.

Recommended Reading and Viewing

Conversation: How Talk Can Change Our Lives, a short book by Theodore Zeldin (2000, HiddenSpring). “The book that will forever change the way we talk to each other at home, at work and in love... This book will enable you to see more clearly what you want to talk about, and what conversation can do to your life.”

"Take ‘the Other’ to lunch,” a TED Talk given by Elizabeth Lesser during TEDWomen 2010. Lesser “shares a simple way to begin real dialogue — by going to lunch with someone who doesn't agree with you, and asking them three questions to find out what's really in their hearts.”

The Art and Science of Leadership, a textbook by Afsaneh Nahavandi (2014, Prentice Hall). “Suitable for any leader, or potential leader, who wants better decision making capability... [this] text has an application emphasis with a cross cultural perspective on leadership.”

The Handbook of Intercultural Discourse and Communication, a comprehensive introduction to the linguistic approach to cross-cultural communication. Edited by Christina Bratt Paulston, Scott F. Kiesling, and Elizabeth S. Rangel (2002, Wiley-Blackwell).

UNESCO World Report: Investing in Cultural Diversity and Intercultural dialogue, available for free online, edited by Kutukdjian and Corbett (2009, United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization).

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