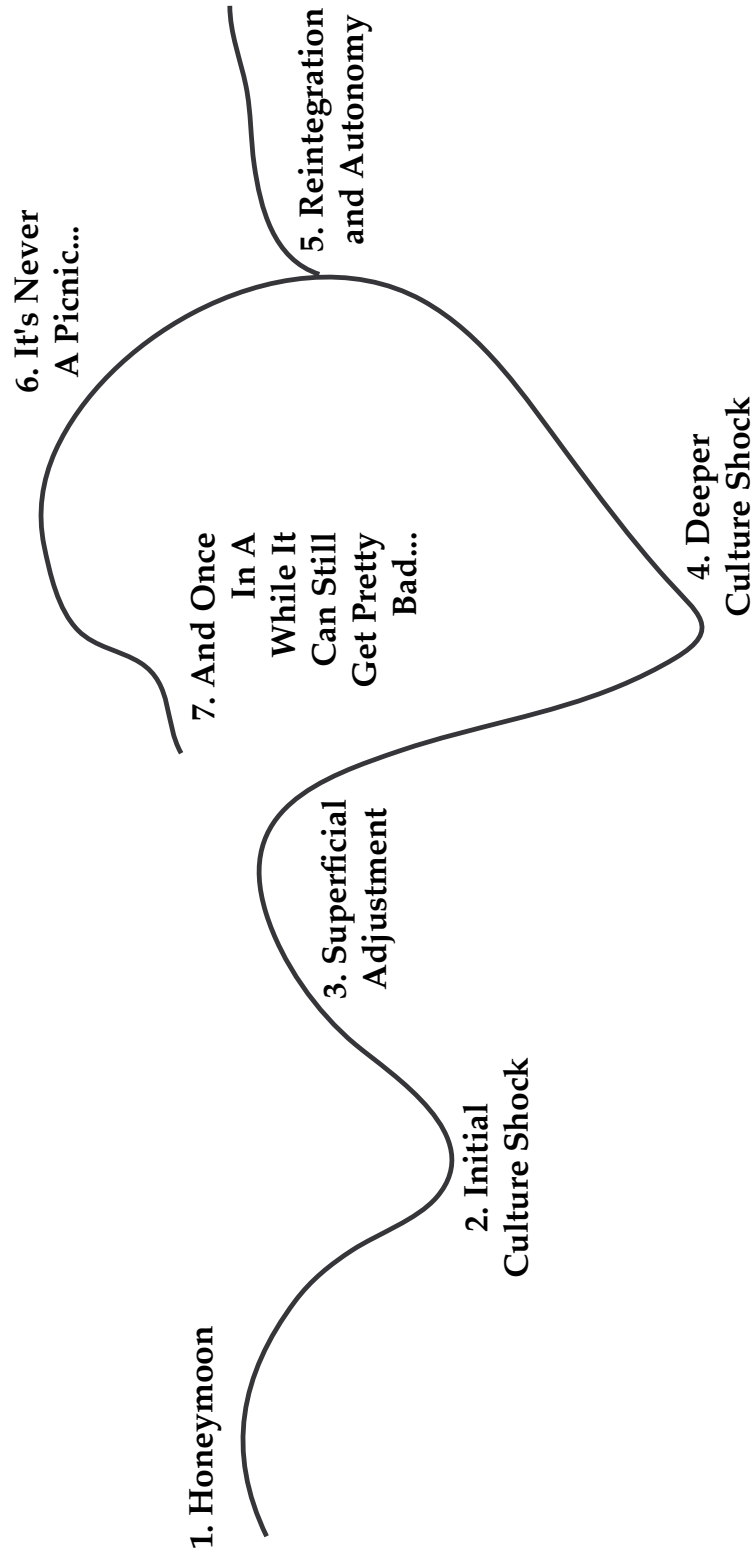


Stages of Cultural Adjustment*



* Adapted from *Managing Cultural Differences* by Phillip T. Harris and Robert T. Moran, Gulf Publishing Company, 1979.

This "W-curve" (and its predecessor, the "U-curve") have repeatedly been debunked by research, as described in Kate Bernardo's work, www.culturaldetective.com/transitions. Many people still find it useful as a conceptual and training model.

Level of Acculturation



Isolation/No Change

- Doesn't speak the local language; lives in housing designed for expatriates; associates only with those in the expatriate community.
- Visits expat clubs frequently; shops only at places that cater to foreigners.
- Lack of interest in local people and culture; feels his/her culture is superior.
- Contempt for other expatriates who "act like locals."

Total Assimilation/Isolation

- Speaks the language; lives in local-style housing; has local mannerisms.
- Eats only local food; associates only with locals.
- Emulates local culture and often has disdain for his/her home culture.
- Feels superior to other expatriates who may be less familiar with local culture.

Signs of Culture Shock



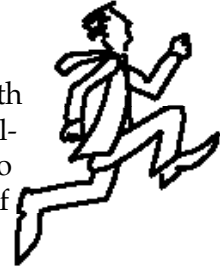
Physiological

General fatigue and sense of exhaustion
Susceptibility to diseases, such as common
colds or flu
Headaches or stomach upset
Insomnia
Excessive sleep
Lack of appetite
Compulsive eating
Weight loss or gain
Overuse of alcohol

Psychological

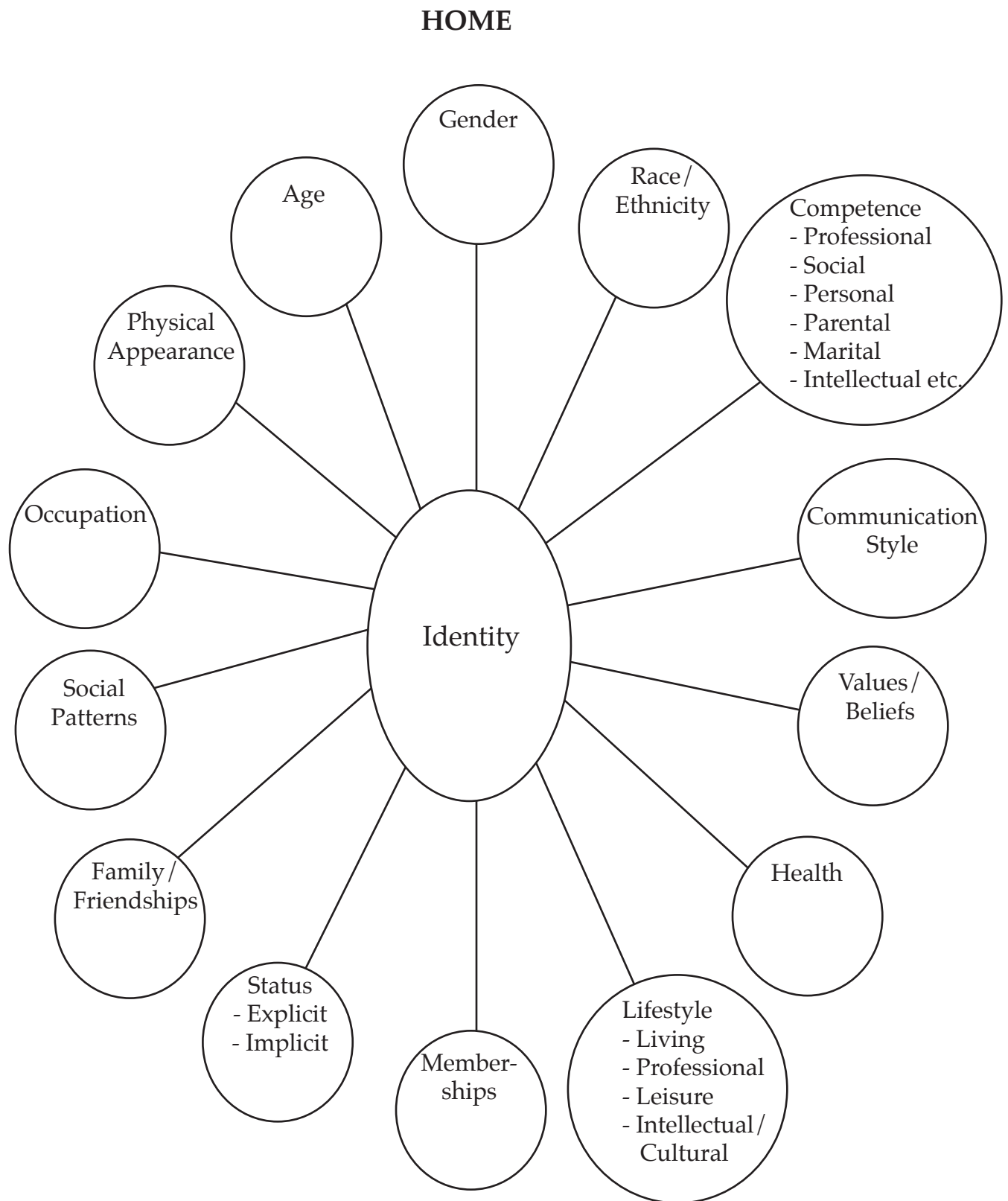
Homesickness
Loneliness
Apathy / boredom
Irritability
Self-pity
Depression
Withdrawal
Hostility
Preoccupation with health
and cleanliness
Marital stress
Family tension and conflict
Anxiety

Tips for Alleviating Culture Shock



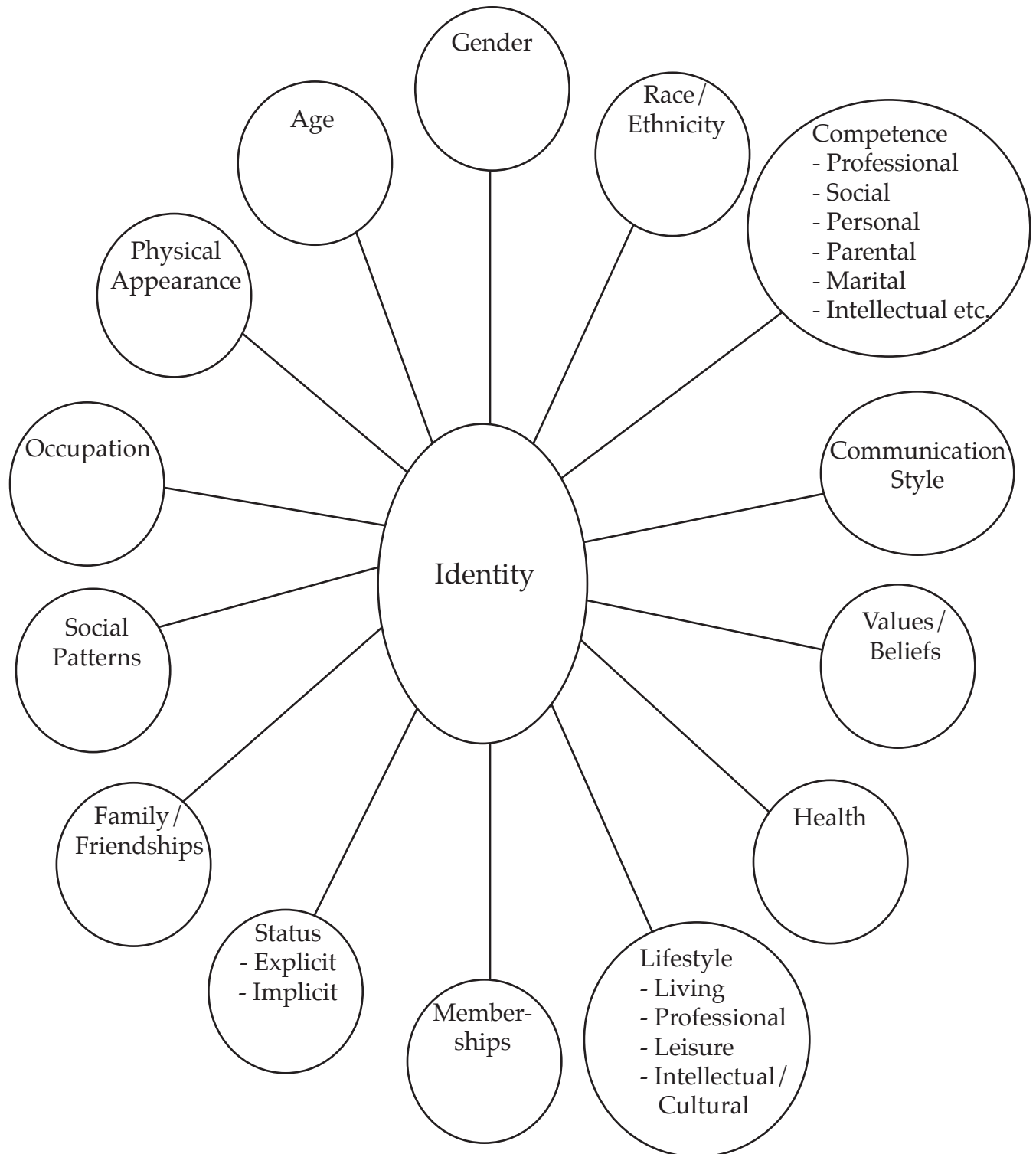
1. **Do your homework:** Learn about the host culture and become familiar with its customs, values and beliefs. If you know what you can expect realistically, you are likely to encounter fewer surprises. It is also crucial to learn about your own cultural values and beliefs, and to be aware of how they affect your experience in the new country.
2. **Get sufficient rest:** You will experience a lot of stress, both mentally and physically, especially in the initial phases of adjustment, due to jet lag and the daily struggle to understand an unfamiliar culture and informational signs and clues. Make sure to get plenty of sleep and avoid overworking.
3. **Have a list of relaxation techniques and leisure activities:** Look back on your own experiences and find out what relaxation techniques have worked for you in the past. Try to regularly engage in leisure activities, such as sports or hobbies, that you both enjoy and which will help reduce stress.
4. **Create a “comfort space”:** Decorate your new home in a way that makes you feel “at home.” Bring along familiar objects: the family photos, books and music that you love.
5. **Cultivate a network of people that you can turn to for emotional support:** Share your experiences with them, especially when things get tough. It is often comforting to know that others have gone through the same experience and can empathize with you.
6. **Remember the stages of cultural adjustment and be a *Cultural Detective*:** Think of your experience as a natural process of adjustment and do not blame yourself for the difficulties you are experiencing. When you feel hostile towards the host nationals during frustrating times, using a *Cultural Detective* Worksheet can help you to be less judgmental and emotional.
7. **Allow yourself to experience both positive and negative feelings:** Be aware of the various emotional states you are experiencing in the new environment and accept them. Do not be critically judgmental about your feelings.
8. **Keep a journal:** Writing down your experiences often helps you to be more objective and gain insights.
9. **Do not hesitate to seek professional help:** Do not consider seeking help from mental health professionals as a sign of weakness. Seek help before reaching a crisis point.
10. **Look at the opportunities instead of the limitations:** In Japanese, the word “crisis” consists of two characters, one meaning “danger” and the other “opportunity.” Think of turning crisis into opportunities for personal growth.

The Impact of Cross-Cultural Experience on Identity: Pre-Departure



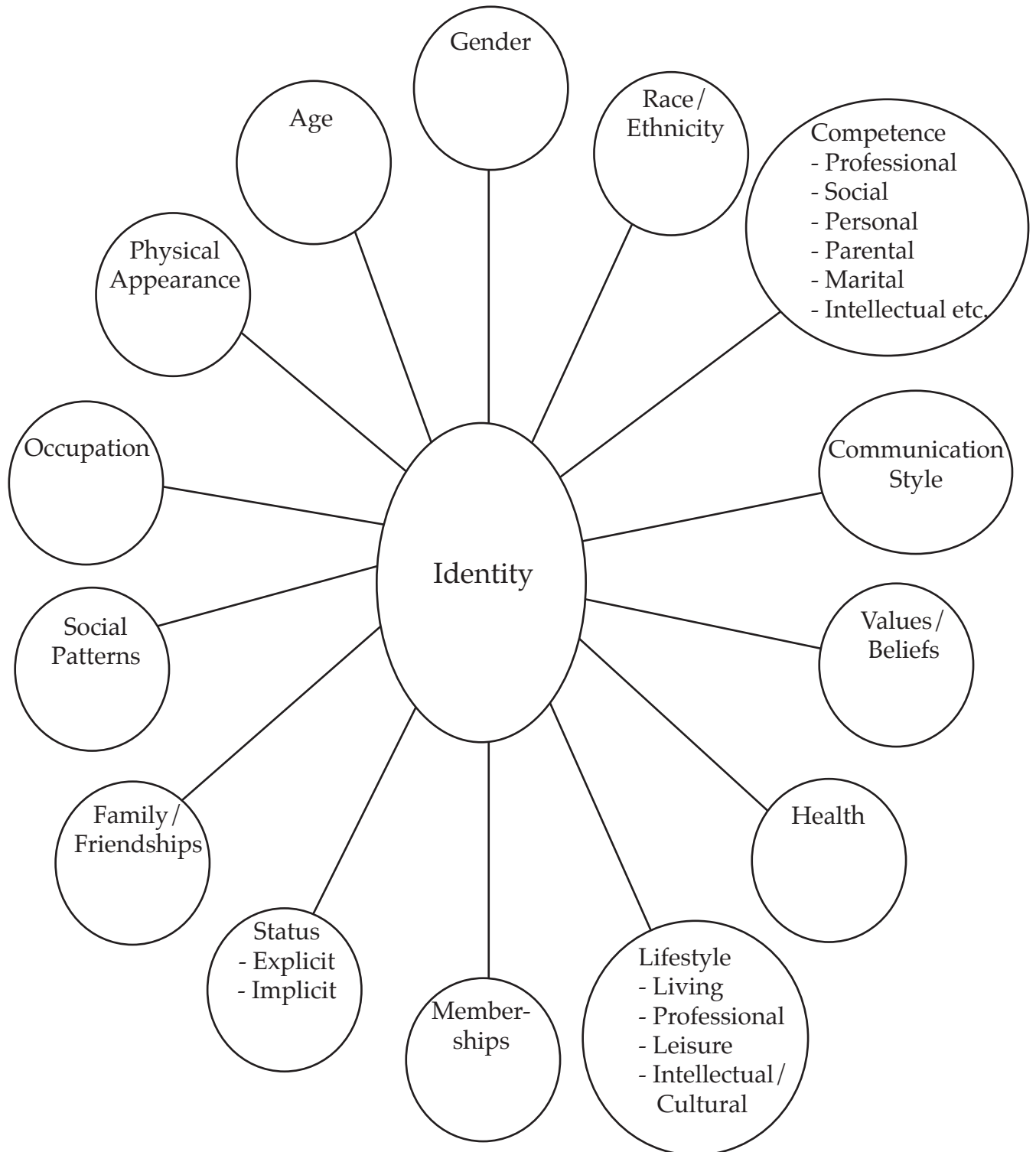
The Impact of Cross-Cultural Experience on Identity: Sojourn

OVERSEAS



The Impact of Cross-Cultural Experience on Identity: Reentry

BACK HOME



Cultural Values Checklist*

1. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
 People Dominate Nature | People and Nature in Harmony | Nature Dominates People
2. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
 Nature as Mechanical | Nature as Organic | Nature as Sacred
3. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
 Future Orientation | Present Orientation | Past Orientation
4. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
 People are Good | Good & Evil Inseparable | People are Evil
5. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
 People are Changeable | Somewhat Changeable | People are Unchangeable
6. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
 Rational | Intuitive | Irrational
7. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
 People as Powerful | Pantheistic | Supernatural as Powerful
8. (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)
 Independence | Contractual Relations | Obligation to Others

* Adapted from *Contrasting Cultural Values* by Kluckhohn, Gordon, Barnlund.

Culture as an Onion Skin

