**CHAPTER 10**

**What Are the Challenges in Developing an Intercultural-Intimate Relationship?**

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**Chapter 10: Learning Objectives**

As a result of reading Chapter 10 and participating in related class discussions and activities, you should be able to

1. Explain the culture-based value issues (individualism-collectivism and others) and their influence on intercultural-intimate relationship development.

2. Describe facilitating factors that prompt intercultural-intimate attraction, including physical, attitudinal, self-disclosure, and online factors.

3. Identify stumbling blocks experienced by intercultural-interracial couples such as prejudice, racism, and relational transgressions, along with effective coping strategies to help couples manage these issues.

4. Discuss practical strategies intercultural and interfaith couples can use to raise healthy children responsively.

5. Apply guidelines to deal with the boundary issues when developing your own healthy intercultural-intimate relationships.

**Chapter 10: Brief Outline**

Introduction section:

1. **Intimacy**: includes affection, inclusion, trust, depth (NOTE: This is a brief description; see the textbook for full definitions.)
2. **Intimate relationships**: romantic, close family, deep friend relationships
3. **Developing Intercultural-Intimate Relationships: Invisible Challenges**
   1. Cultural-Ethnic Membership Values
      1. **Individualists**: “I” identity, personal privacy and relationship privacy
      2. **Collectivists**: “we” identity, family and ingroup network connection
      3. All endorse as top mate-selection criteria: mutual attraction-love, dependability, emotional stability, kindness-understanding.
      4. Autonomy-Connection Issues
         1. **Autonomy**: need for privacy and “me” space in a relationship
         2. **Connection**: a sense of “we-ness” space, merging space
         3. **Independent-minded partners:** balance this theme as “me-we” dialectical forces
         4. **Interdependent-self individuals**: views “me-we-they-they” juggling act
      5. Uncertainty avoidance
         1. Weak uncertainty avoidance or uncertainty orientation personality: approach conflict in upfront efficient manner
         2. Strong u. avoidance or certainty orientation personality: may flee scene, need time to think, may seek third-party help
   2. Anxiety/Uncertainty Interaction Management
      1. AUM theory (Gudykunst): when encountering strangers or culturally dissimilar others, often experience anxiety and uncertainty
         1. *Anxiety*: affective feelings, uneasiness, stress
         2. *Uncertainty*: cognitive inability to predict, explain, interpret “bizarre” behaviors by others
      2. Three strategies to reduce uncertainty
         1. Passive: unobtrusively observe the behaviors
         2. Active: find out about person from another source
         3. Interactive: approach the person directly
   3. Love Attitudes and Expectations
      1. Western perspective on love: 3 components (intimacy, passion, commitment)
      2. Individualistic cultures:
         1. Most individuals typically “fall in love” first, then marry or move on
         2. High U.S. divorce rate due in part to exaggerated individualism
         3. In U.S. partners desire to “lose” themselves in romance, then struggle with desire for personal freedom
      3. Many traditional collectivists: value companionate love, the meaning of being *in love* develops over long-term commitment; continue to fall in love after marriage
   4. Voluntary Commitment and Structural Commitment
      1. **Voluntary commitment:** continue relationship based on emotional feelings and experiences
      2. **Structural commitment:** consider external social and family reactions to continuing or ending relationship
      3. “Hook up” culture: consensual sexual activity, no commitment
4. **Intercultural Relationship Attraction: Facilitating Factors**
   1. Perceived Physical Attractiveness
      1. Physical attractiveness: critical to initial attraction
      2. Perceived attractiveness (credibility and attractiveness are judged by the beholder and the culture)
   2. Perceived Attitudinal Similarity
      1. **Perceived similarity**: degree to which one thinks others are similar or dissimilar to oneself
      2. **Similarity-attraction hypothesis**: positive relationship exists between perceived similarity and interpersonal attraction (more similarity, then more attraction)
      3. Intergroup-interpersonal attraction: low-prejudiced individuals see race as nonissue. High-prejudiced individuals find race insurmountable barrier
   3. Cross-Cultural Self-Disclosure Comparisons
      1. **Self-disclosure**: intentionally reveal exclusive information about self
      2. **Social penetration theory**: self-disclosure progresses from superficial to deep
      3. Public self: facets easily shared. Private self: facets not usually shared.
         1. Japanese: small public and large private selves.
         2. U.S. Americans: larger public and smaller private selves.
      4. **Johari Window**: 4 panels
         1. **Open**: known to self and to others
         2. **Hidden**: hidden from others
         3. **Blind**: info not known to self but known to others
         4. **Unknown**: unknown to self and others
   4. Online Relationship Development, Attraction, and Disclosure: Five phasis of online/offline courtship: *attention*, *recognition*, *online interaction*, *face-to-face* or *meet-and-greet*, *resolution*
5. **Intercultural-Intimate Conflict: Stumbling Blocks**

Intro: **Intercultural-intimate conflict**: disagreement between two romantic partners due, in part, to cultural or ethnic group membership differences

* 1. Intercultural/Interracial Romantic Relationship Development
     1. Increase in intercultural intimate relationships, especially Gen X and Z
     2. Interracial couples’ four stages of “racial awakening:”
        1. **Racial awareness**: gradual awareness of other’s/society’s views
        2. **Relational stressors and coping**: internal and external strategies to manage relationship dynamics
        3. **Couplehood identity emergence:** announce relationship to ingroups, family, sense of relationship clarity
        4. **Relationship maintenance/repair and revisioning:** hard work in facing new challenges, revising, updating relationship
  2. Encountering Prejudice and Racism
     1. Interracial couples display obvious visible differences compared to interethnic or interfaith couples, who can choose to reveal or not
     2. **Racism**: power/dominance of a “superior” racial group over “inferiors”
     3. No guarantee that partners are free of racism themselves
     4. White privilege: invisible entitlement that confers dominance or power for Whites, particularly White males.
  3. Countering with Coping Strategies
     1. Interfaith couples: conflicts can occur over religious artifact decisions.
     2. Interfaith open communication: use of explicit support to support partner’s faith
     3. In prejudice situations, coping strategies include: ignoring/dismissing, normalizing, withdrawing, confrontation, educating, prayer, humor
     4. Couples report rewards: personal enrichment, lifestyle with greater diversity and emotional vitality, deeper relationship, open-minded resourceful children
  4. Relational Transgressions and Cross-Cultural Responses
     1. Most common college-age transgressions: having sex with or wanting to date someone else, deception
     2. U.S. college students prefer exiting relationship with anger. Chinese students prefer passive neglect and third-party help.
     3. White females encounter more racism with Black husbands

1. **Raising Secure Bicultural Children**
   1. Bicultural and Interfaith Identity Planning: biggest factor is raising children
   2. Developing a Secure Multifaceted Identity: 4 identity forms of bicultural children:
      1. **Majority-group identifiers**: identify with parent from dominant culture/ religion
      2. **Minority-group identifiers**: identify with minority parent
      3. **Synthesizers**: acknowledge and synthesize both into coherent identity
      4. **Disaffiliates**: identify with neither parent’s cultural background
2. **Intercultural Reality Check: Doables**

To manage diverse intimate relationship issues:

* 1. Attend to culture-based challenges
  2. Be mindful of different expectations regarding communication
  3. Be sensitive to family issues, individualistic-collectivistic value gaps
  4. Commit to deep friendship with partner as cushion for stressors
  5. Accept partner’s core personality
  6. Learn flexible decoding and code-switching
  7. Be responsive to emotional tasks in relationship
  8. Give emotionally supportive messages (need to deposit 5 positive messages to counteract 1 negative message)
  9. Think positively about relationship, and its memories

**Chapter 10: Chapter Checkup**

**Check out the following cultural literacy and self-assessment questions:**

**Figure 10:1** What is the name of the panel in the Johari Window that contains information about you that you know about but that others do not? Test your knowledge with the [**Figure 10.1 Quiz.**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/ting-toomey3e-student-resources/ting-toomey3e-figure-table-quiz-10-1?previousFilter=tag_chapter-10) To see the rest of the panels, check out Figure 10.1 in the text.

**QuikTrendz 10.2:** Can you name the top three Internet dating sites? Click on [**QuikTrendz 10.2.**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/ting-toomey3e-student-resources/ting-toomey3e-quicktrendz-10-2?previousFilter=tag_chapter-10)To see the rest of the top five, check out QuikTrendz 10.2 in the text.

**QuikPoll 10.1:** How do you express affection for your close friends on Facebook? Go to [**QuikPoll 10.1**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/ting-toomey3e-student-resources/ting-toomey3e-quickpoll-10-1?previousFilter=tag_chapter-10) to see if you can name the top three methods. To see the rest of the top five, check out QuikPoll 10.1 in the text.

**Chapter 10: Critical Incident Analysis**

**Check out the following intercultural scenario:**

(NOTE: See “Chapter 10 Class Handouts” for a printable version.)

**A CRITICAL INCIDENT: ARRIVAL OF THE IN-LAWS**

Ken and Kim have been married for six years. For most of those six years, they have been a happily married couple. Ken is a 33-year-old German American and works at a high-tech firm in Silicon Valley. Kim is a 30-year-old Chinese immigrant who is a pharmacist and works in a nearby hospital. The couple has a 3-year-old son, Kevin. For the past three years, Kim has spent countless hours at the immigration office, applying for her parents to emigrate from China to the United States. Ken has been very supportive of Kim throughout this process. At long last, her parents finally gained entrance to the United States. They have been here for eight months, living across the street from the couple. The grandparents are delighted to be reunited with their daughter, and they dote on their only grandson. While Ken and Kim are at work, the grandparents baby-sit Kevin. Because the grandparents do not speak English, they only speak Chinese to Kevin. To their delight, Kevin has been picking up Chinese quickly.

Recently, Ken and Kim have had many tense moments and communication difficulties relating to the in-law issue. To begin with, Ken feels he is never alone with Kim in the house anymore. His in-laws are always there. Kim and her parents chatter constantly in Chinese. They also laugh in that strange Chinese tone. To make matters worse, Kim has now started to speak to him in Chinese rather than English! Ken feels very left out in his own house. He hears the Chinese laughter from the kitchen and he feels like an outsider. He loves his family and he wants things back to normal—the way it was. He decides to have an upfront, honest talk with Kim about his frustrations.

He asks Kim to please tell her parents to reduce their visits from every day to only on the weekends. Moreover, they should really call them ahead of time rather than just popping in to visit. He asks Kim to register Kevin in a nearby English-speaking preschool so that he can play with other English-speaking kids. While Kim nods “uh- huh” to all his comments, nothing seems to change. Her parents continue to visit unannounced every day and often cook up strange-smelling Chinese food in the kitchen. Ken feels increased frustration in his own house.

Meanwhile, from Kim’s viewpoint, she cannot understand how Ken can be so selfish. Her parents are new immigrants to this country. They have no friends and they do not drive. She is glad that Kevin has a chance to learn Chinese from her parents. Before their arrival, she spoke to Kevin only in English so that Ken could be included in the conversation. Now that her parents are here, she feels that her Chinese roots are taking hold again. She hopes that by ignoring Ken’s “ridiculous” requests, he’ll eventually forget about them and come to his senses. Although at one point she yells back at Ken for raising his voice and making another of his “off-the-wall” comments, often she ends up only staring at Ken in silence. She does not want to upset her parents, who are playing with Kevin in the next room. Inwardly, Kim grows increasingly resentful. She loves Ken, but at the same time she feels that her marriage is spiraling out of control. She feels misunderstood all the time. She desperately needs some help and advice to handle her marital crisis.

How would you explain Ken’s frustration and Kim’s stress? Can you draw upon some of the ideas in Chapter 10 to help Ken and Kim to understand each other’s intercultural lens with flexibility?

**Interactive Probes for “Arrival of the In-Laws”**

(Ask yourself and probe your classmates’ reactions)

(NOTE: See “Chapter 10 Class Handouts” for a printable form containing these questions.)

1. To what extent can you relate to Ken? How so?

2. To what extent can you relate to Kim? How so?

3. Can you draw upon any real-life intimate relationship examples (involving yourself or your family members) that have had caused you tremendous relationship frustrations and stress? Are any of them related to cultural, ethnic, gender, religion, or sexual-orientation issues?

4. If you could serve as a “relationship coach” to Ken and Kim, what would you say to them?

# Further Applications Probes for “Arrival of the In-Laws”

# Click on [Chapter 10 Further Application Probes](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/ting-toomey3e-student-resources#tag_chapter-10) to apply some concepts from chapter 10 to the scenario.

**Chapter 10: Glossary-Matching Quizzes**

Click here for[**Matching Quiz 10.1**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/ting-toomey3e-student-resources/ting-toomey3e-glossary-matching-quiz-10-1?previousFilter=tag_chapter-10)**.**

Click here for[**Matching Quiz 10.2.**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/ting-toomey3e-student-resources/ting-toomey3e-glossary-matching-quiz-10-2?previousFilter=tag_chapter-10)

**Chapter 10: Practice Quiz**

Click here for the[**Chapter 10 Review Practice Quiz.**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/content/ting-toomey3e-student-resources/ting-toomey3e-chapter-10-review-prep-quiz?previousFilter=tag_chapter-10)

**Chapter 10: Exercise Handouts**

**Note: Your instructor may ask you to** [**download,**](https://learninglink.oup.com/access/ting-toomey3e-student-resources#tag_chapter-10) **print out, and/or e-mail the following class handouts for this chapter:**

**An Intercultural Dating Dilemma**

**Interactive Probes for “An Intercultural Dating Dilemma”**

**The Case of Rajpal and Balbir**

**Self-Disclosure Activity: Public and Private Self (2 pages)**

**A Critical Incident: “Arrival of the In-Laws”**

**Interactive Probes for “Arrival of the In-Laws”**