

Please save the date for our upcoming CCC Breaks, all dates are online [here](#).

CCC-Break 8:10/9/2019 What do I do in my direct environment to promote intercultural diversity and tolerance?

Most people belonging to SEU or to national SIETARs, are professionally active in the intercultural sphere, mainly as trainers, consultants, coaches and academics. It seems nevertheless important that we all be active –and many of us are- in our private/social, or para-professional life. Hence the idea of sharing our ideas and experiences, as to how we try to, and often are quite successful in spreading the good word around us, about cultural diversity, the impact this has on our lives, and the need for openness, tolerance and interpersonal/intercultural understanding.

We asked the question what is our role, and how can we engage?

Hereunder some fine ideas and experiences, participants shared with each other...

How can I support in small internal conflicts such as for example, explaining to a member of the faculty, requiring a Chinese student [coming from a small city, ie. not very self-confident] to respond to questions put to him publicly, that this may cause unnecessary stress and frustration, as taking the floor in public is not something Chinese people do often or easily...

Taking steps to explain some of the finer nuances of what it means to be polite in all sorts of different national cultures. An anecdote was shared about having to explain to Germans having meetings with Fins in Finland, that when a Fin leaves a meeting, and does not say goodbye, it is his way of being polite and not disturbing an on-going meeting. For Fins, saying the obvious has little value...hence just saying 'goodbye' is really not important.

Sharing encouragement of self-exposure, as this helps in bonding, and in understanding how differences do not need to be unsurpassable barriers and discussing 'politeness strategies', to help people to better understand some fundamental practices which might look weird to people from other cultures.

Having a vision that it is essential to get people to talk to each other to better understand what makes them all really tick.

Using the SEU cook-book, as an opportunity to cook with friends, and take this as a reason to have people get to know, and talk about other nations' habits via cooking typical dishes from these countries.

Organising monthly aperitifs, where a guest comes to talk about an interesting intercultural topic, which then gives people the opportunity to talk about this around a nice meal.

SIETAR Europa Cross Cultural Coffee Breaks

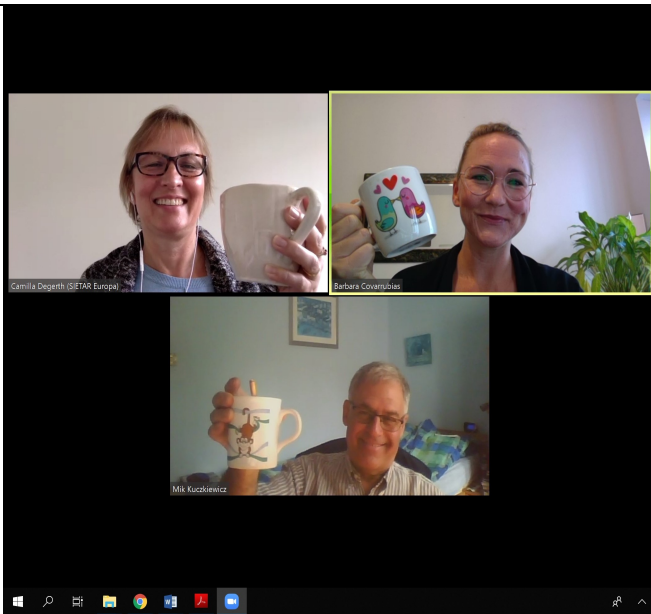
Summary

Using one or more of the above suggestions not only in our professional life but making it part of our private life also, to share with friends and family for better intercultural awareness and understanding.

Examples of exposure shared a testimony of travelling with a friend in Poland on a motorbike and getting to meet and talk with people in a more direct way than if you travel as a typical tourist. This led to visiting the remains of the Jewish communities in Poland [synagogues, cemeteries, yeshivas...] and meeting all sorts of people, including people with Jewish origins, the idea being to openly discuss and address issues related to Polish anti-Semitism.

Another example of exposure and engagement shared was organising informal meetings with a small group of chosen (male) friends, of various origins, socio-political and professional orientations, and talking about topics and issues of interest to each one of us. Each friend will in turn, share some particular issue, related to his life, his work, his views, opinions, beliefs, and have all the group exchange and share experiences and own opinions on the matter at hand. This has given us fascinating insights in matters of cultural origins, professional orientations, and many other personal experiences

Thanks for this summary of our CCC Break discussion to:

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