Engaging with Key Terms and Concepts Related to Culture

1. How we experience the world and act in it is learned from the groups to which we belong.

2. Culture is the learned and shared patterns of values, interpretations and behaviors of group of people.

3. Culture can be used to describe patterns of difference at the:
   - Pan-national level (e.g., Arab culture)
   - National level (e.g., Japanese culture)
   - Ethnic level (e.g., African American, European American)
   - Gender, physical ability and sexual orientation levels

4. A cultural generalization is a relative description of a group's preference and its variation from other group preferences.

5. A cultural stereotype is often assigning negative personality traits to an individual based on his/her judged membership in a cultural community.
   - Stereotypes arise when individuals act as if all members of culture group share the same personality characteristics
   - Stereotypes are rigidly adhered to in spite of contrary evidence

6. All cultural patterns exist in all cultures, but some are preferred more than others.

7. Not all individuals who are a member of a culture group necessarily share the same cultural patterns. Nevertheless, there is a preference within that cultural community which defines at the group level the identified cultural pattern

Questions for Reflection

1. **How do you define culture?**
2. **To what cultural groups do you belong?**

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