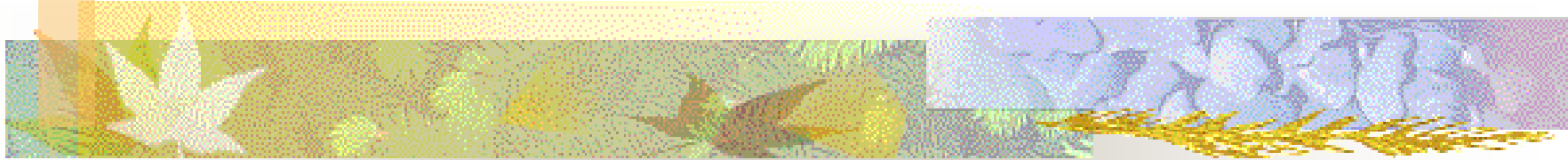


# Acculturation Psychology and Study Abroad



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# Agenda

- Acculturation: What is it? Why it is important?
- ABC's of Acculturation
- Affect, disequilibrium and adjustment
- Behavioral adaptation
- Cognitive identity challenges and changes
- Implications for study abroad



# Acculturation

## ■ **Acculturation:**

- The process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between cultural groups and their individual members (Berry, 2005).
- Changes that occur as a result of continuous first-hand contact between individuals of differing cultural origins (Ward, 2001).

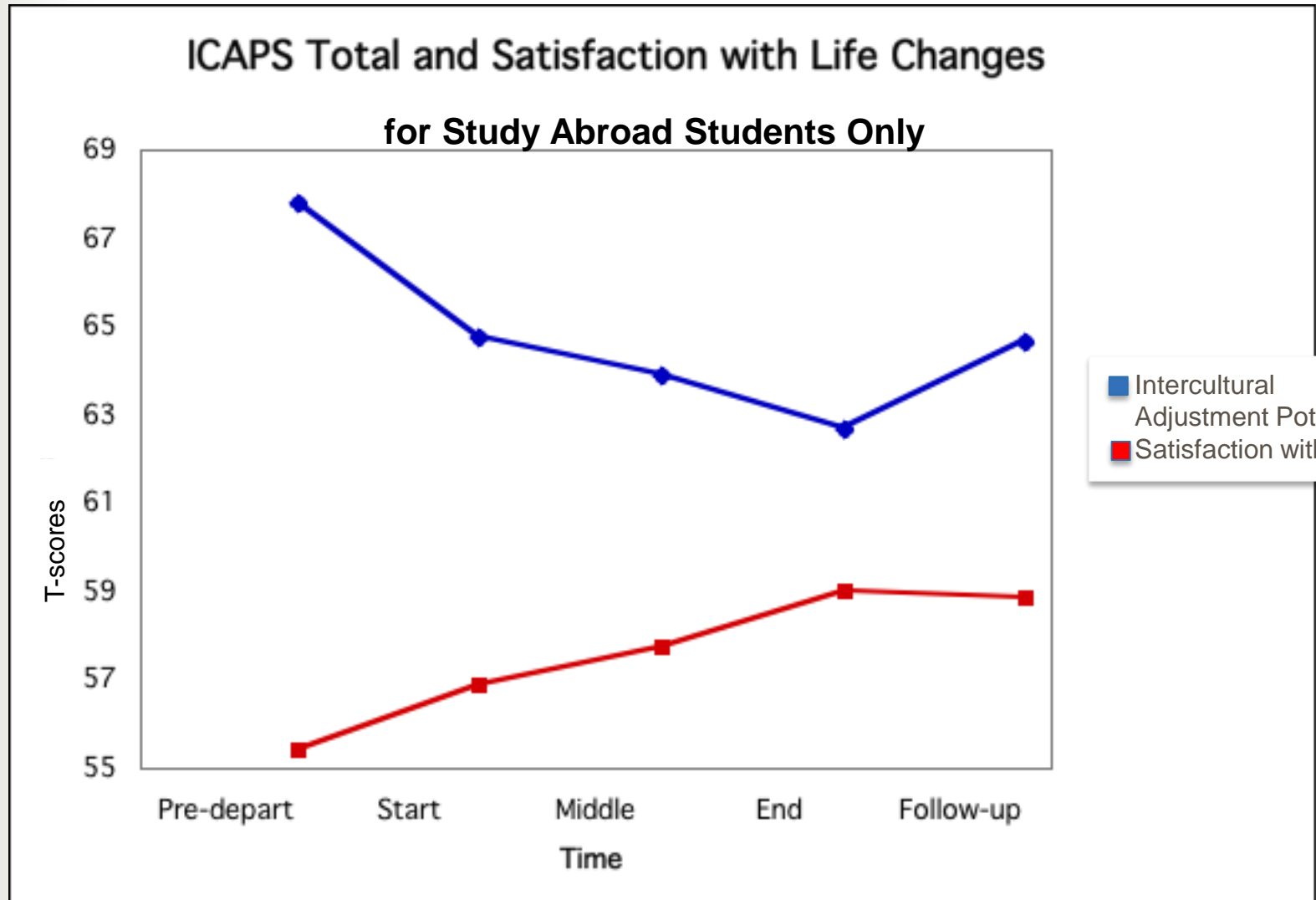
## ■ **Acculturative stress:**

- Stress reactions in response to life events that are rooted in the experience of acculturation (Berry, 2005).

# Acculturative Stress Example



# Disequilibrium and Satisfaction



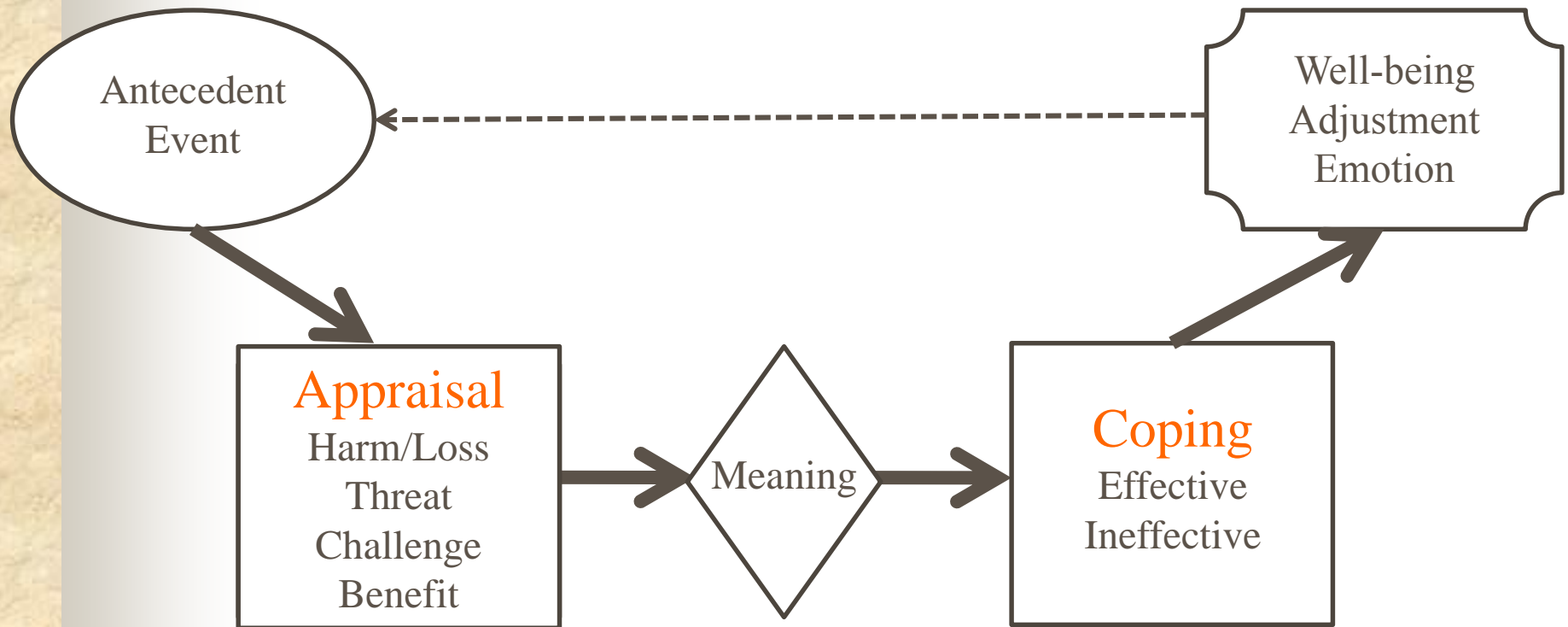




# Ward's ABC's of Acculturation

- Affect
  - Stress, coping, adjustment, well-being
- Behavior
  - Adaptation to behavioral demands, “fitting-in”
- Cognition
  - Social identity, self-description/concept

# Affect: Stress and Well-being Model



# Affect Findings

- Stress Appraisal
  - Higher Wellbeing: Challenge
  - Lower Wellbeing: Threat, Loss
- Effective coping strategies
  - Active coping
  - Planning
  - Acceptance
  - Positive reinterpretation
- Ineffective coping strategies
  - Behavioral disengagement
  - Denial
  - Venting Emotion



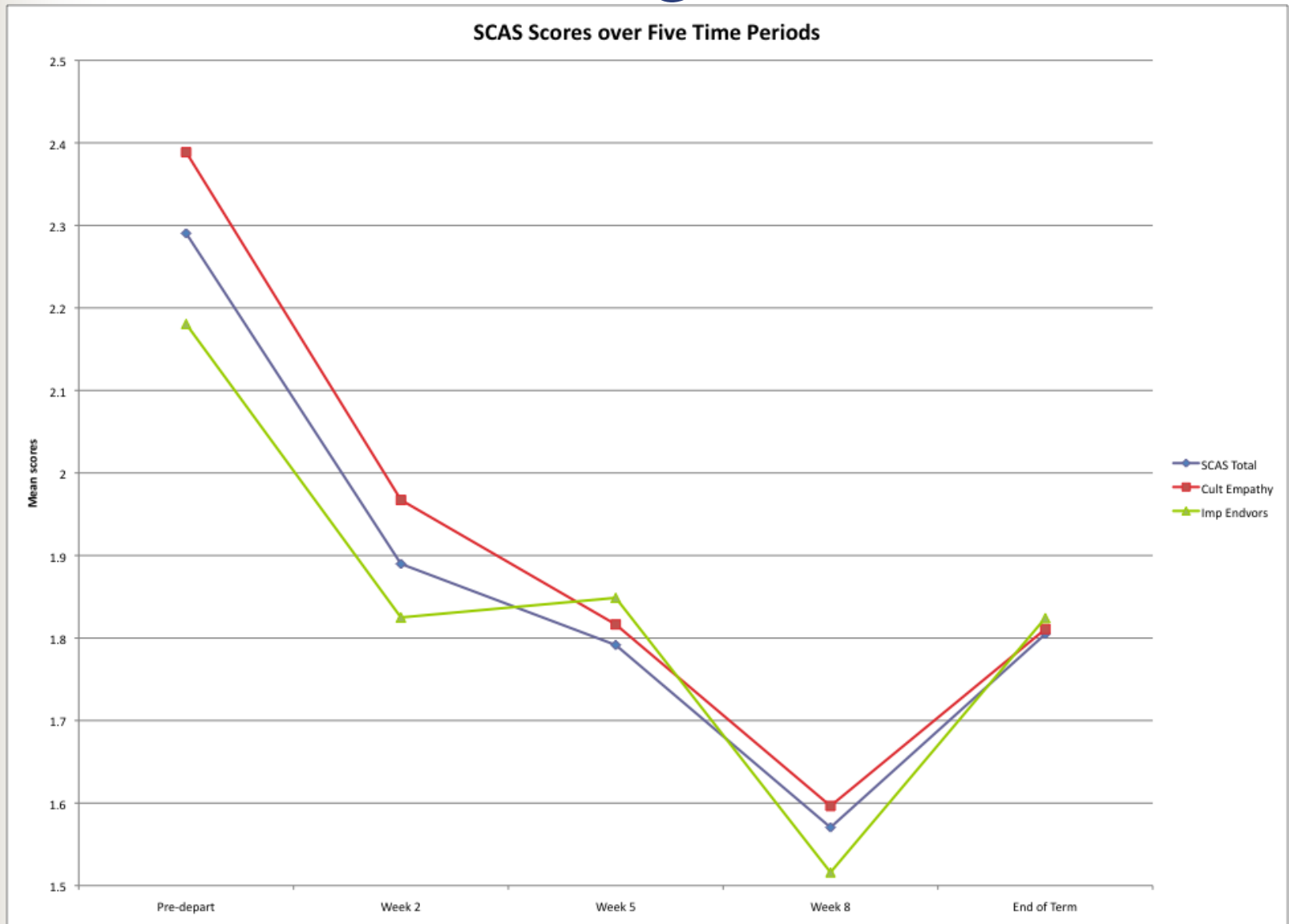




# Behavior: Socio-cultural Adaptation Factors

Cultural Empathy-Relatedness	Impersonal Endeavors and Perils
Making friends	Dealing with someone who is unpleasant/cross/aggressive
Accepting/understanding the local political system	Getting used to the local food/finding food you enjoy
Understanding the locals' world view	Dealing with people in authority
Taking a local perspective on the culture	Dealing with the bureaucracy
Understanding the local value system	Getting used to the pace of life
Seeing things from the locals' point of view	Dealing with unsatisfactory service in stores and restaurants
Understanding cultural differences	
Being able to see two sides of an intercultural issue	

# Behavior Findings, No U Curve





# Cognition: Identity

Psychological identity refers to a subjective feeling of consistency and continuity of self across situations that provides a sense of stability and serves as a guide for making key life choices. A stable identity develops over time through a process of experimentation, reflection, and observation that peaks in adolescence and may continue into early adulthood.



# Identity Components

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Family roles (son/daughter, mother/father, etc.)
- Career/work/professional
- Ideology
- Religion
- Culture
  - National





# Identity: Context

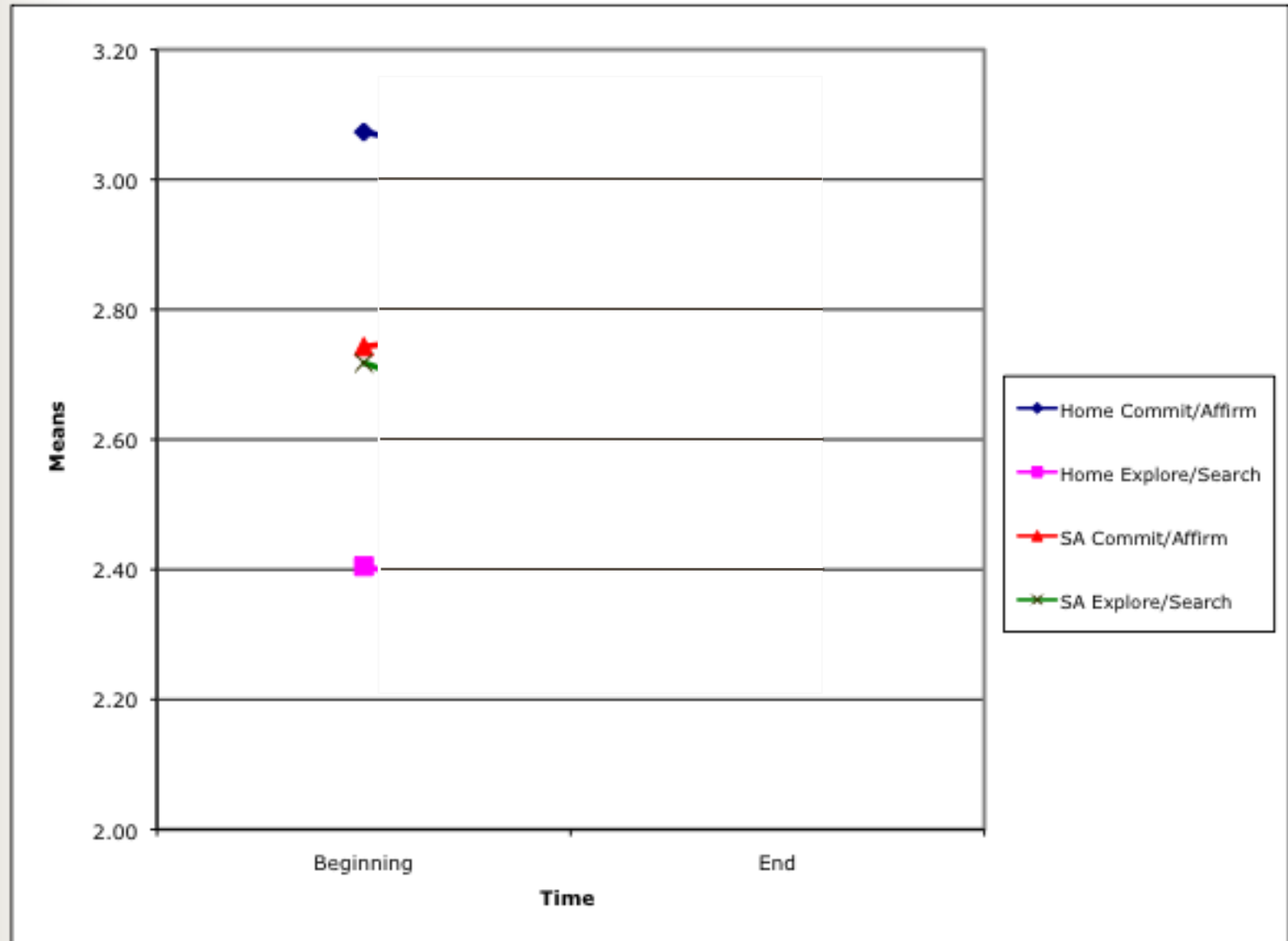
Erik Erikson *Identity, Youth and Crisis* (1968).

<b>Adolescence</b> (12 to 18 years)	<a href="#"><u>Identity vs. Role Confusion</u></a>	Social Relationships	Teens need to develop a sense of self and personal identity. Success leads to an ability to stay true to yourself, while failure leads to role confusion and a weak sense of self.
<b>Young Adulthood</b> (19 to 24 years)	<a href="#"><u>Intimacy vs. Isolation</u></a>	Relationships	Young adults need to form intimate, loving relationships with other people. Success leads to strong relationships, while failure results in loneliness and isolation.
<b>Middle Adulthood</b> (25 to 65 years)	<a href="#"><u>Generativity vs. Stagnation</u></a>	Work and Parenthood	Adults need to create or nurture things that will outlast them, often by having children or creating a positive change that benefits other people. Success leads to feelings of usefulness and accomplishment, while failure results in shallow involvement in the world.

# Marcia's Formulation

		<b>Commitment/Affirmation</b>	
		<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>
<b>Exploration/ Search</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Achieved Identity</b>	<b>Moratorium</b>
	<b>Low</b>	<b>Foreclosed Identity</b>	<b>Identity Diffusion</b>

# American Identity: Home vs Abroad





# Identity and ABC's

- Pre-Departure Commitment/Affirmation (C) correlated significantly with Post behavioral adaptation difficulties (B).
- Pre-Departure Commitment/Affirmation (C) is related to lower Flexibility, higher appraisal of cultural experiences as Threats, stronger Negative Affect and higher Anxiety (A).
- Pre-Departure Exploration/Search (C) also correlated significantly with Post behavioral adaptation difficulties (B).
- Pre-Departure Exploration/Search (C) correlated significantly with the appraisal of acculturative stress as a Threat, Critical Thinking, Negative Affect, and Depression (A).





# Discussion

- Higher Pre-Departure Commitment/Affirmation may indicate a more fixed, potentially rigid identity; thus less amenable to intercultural adaptation; or a more tender, tentative formulation.
- Higher Pre-Departure Exploration/Search may open the Study Abroad student to more identity questions and anxiety, thus more negative affect if unresolved.
- Impact of intergroup contact anxiety and symbolic anxiety

# Waiting to be served

You and your group have been waiting to be served for over 30 minutes in a local restaurant.



Compare and contrast American vs Spanish cultures.



# U.S. Cultural Values

## (as viewed by other cultures)

U.S. Values	Some Other Countries' Values
Personal Control over the Environment Change Time and Its Control Equality Individualism/Privacy Self-Help Competition Future Orientation Action/Work Orientation Informality Directness/Openness/Honesty Practicality/Efficiency Materialism/Acquisitiveness	Fate Tradition Human Interaction Hierarchy/Rank/Status Group's Welfare Birthright Inheritance Cooperation Past Orientation "Being" Orientation Formality Indirectness/Ritual/"Face" Idealism Spiritualism/Detachment





# ABC contributions

- Affect: Positive reinterpretation (more time for socializing)
- Behavior: adaptation over time (pace of life)
- Cognition:
  - Reframing to fit with Spanish cultural values.
  - Expanding meaning perspectives to include “slowness” as valuable in some cases.





# Conclusions

- Acculturation and the ABC's are a useful framework for thinking about study abroad
- Students and faculty differ in life experience and life cycle emphases
- Reflective thinking/processing is key to constructing a useful, growthful narrative.
- Cognitive identity in the form of culturally based values and beliefs can both help and hinder positive study abroad outcomes.