

Episode 1 : Welcome to the Deep Culture Podcast

Time	Speaker	
00:06	Joseph	Hi, I'm Joseph Shaules. I am the host of the Deep Culture podcast, where we explore culture and the science of mind. This is a podcast for people who move between different cultural worlds: living in another countries, learning to speak a foreign language, growing up in a multi-cultural family. We're going to be talking to people about their intercultural experiences. But, we're also going to dig into the science and the psychology of culture and mind.
00:37	Joseph	For example, does the way that the human mind works depend on cultural background? Does speaking a different language change your experience of the world? Are all human beings culturally biased? So, we're going to explore questions like these. They give us insights into our own minds. Maybe they can help us gain deeper intercultural understanding.
01:01	Joseph	This is the introductory episode, Episode 1. I'll explain what's coming up in this first season. And, I'll talk about the inspirational starting point for this podcast. The vision of Edward T. Hall.
01:28	Joseph	In the 1950's and 60's, there was this very optimistic image of technology and the future, flying cars and plastic furniture. When I was a child, I used to go to Disneyland every year. They had an attraction, I think they still do, the Carousel of Progress, which showed how technology is improving our lives. There was this rotating stage, and every time it turned, it would transport you through history so you could see this parade of technological progress.
02:07	Joseph	Then, in the 1990's, there was the end of the Cold War, and another wave of optimism about future. Information technology was going to make the world into a global village, and the 21st century would be a time of coming together.
02:40	Joseph	That's the sound of rain outside of my apartment here in Tokyo.

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		<p>We've had torrential rains this year, flooding all through the south of Japan with many people dying including some in a nursing home, who couldn't be evacuated in time. There is a global climate change crisis. It is a dark time around the world. We are in the midst of a global pandemic with millions suffering in every part of the world. The greatest suffering for people with the least.</p>
03:14	Joseph	<p>A time when we need to come together to solve humanity's shared problems, but also a time of social unrest, divisive politics, structural inequality. The 21st century has not turned into a technological utopia, a harmonious global village.</p>
03:58	Joseph	<p>But, you know who I find inspiring right now? It's Edward T. Hall. Back in the 1950's and 60's when people were looking forward to their flying cars and spaceships, Edward Hall recognized that the transformational technology of the future wasn't rockets or robots. It was globalized communication and information technology.</p>
04:27	Joseph	<p>In 1959, he published "The Silent Language," considered the starting point of the study of intercultural communication. Hall was interested in how the unconscious mind is shaped by culture, and that the core of his work is a foundational insight which resonates 60 years after his first book.</p>
05:00	Joseph	<p>Hall believed that deep forms of intercultural understanding are harder than it might seem, that globalized communication is an opportunity but it's also a challenge. For Hall, superficial appreciation of other cultures is easy. It's interesting. But, deeper intercultural understanding requires more than that. Cultural difference is not just a set of customs. It represents a different way of making sense of the world, of valuing, of being ourselves.</p>
05:42	Joseph	<p>Confronting deeper forms of cultural difference can be a shock. We are forced to question things we've previous taken for</p>

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		granted. Hall understood that this is difficult, it can be threatening. But, as we expand our view of the world, we expand our mind. We transform our perceptions. Hall understood that humans are cultural beings, and that, to understand diversity, we have to first start by looking more deeply into ourselves.
06:24	Joseph	So, this podcast will be bringing Edward Hall’s vision into the 21st century. We’ll have six episodes. The first two will be conversations between me and my good friend and colleague, Yvonne van der Pol. We’ve both been working for many years in the field of intercultural education, training, consulting. We’re going to talk about how we got into this work, where we see it headed. We’re also going to talk more about Edward Hall, and how his insights anticipated by 50 years or more.
06:59	Joseph	The research that’s going on now in fields like cultural neuroscience and cognitive psychology. Following that, Yvonne will continue to be with me for a series of episodes that start to look at some findings from the science of culture and mind. For example, we’ll talk about brain imaging research that looks into how we experience the self. There is evidence that when a Chinese person thinks about their mother, their brain lights up as though they’re thinking about themselves.
07:32	Joseph	When an American thinks about their mother, it lights up as though they’re thinking about a stranger. What does research like this tell us? These are complex questions and even experts don’t agree. But, that’s all the more reason to dig into them. We’ll also talk about the unconscious mind, how it’s shaped by cultural patterns, and how this can help us understand things like culture shock.
08:00	Joseph	So, please join us. Subscribe. It helps us if you rate this podcast. Write a comment. Get in touch. Share your thoughts about being a cultural bridge person. You can reach us at

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		<p>dcpodcast@japanintercultural.org, or do a web search for the Japan Intercultural Institute. I'm the Director of JII, and it's sponsoring this podcast. On the podcast team, in addition to Yvonne van der Pol, we're getting production support from Chriss Koyama and Robinson Fritz. See you next time.</p>
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