

others clash. We all belong to national, regional, social class, ethnic, professional, religious, age, and gender cultures.

### Barriers to effective International Communication

1. **Ethnocentrism.** Ethnocentrism refers to the belief that a person's culture is much better than any other group's culture, and the tendency is for that person to judge any —out-group culture by using the norms of his —in-group culture. All of us are, to some extent, ethnocentric, whose ethnocentricity falls somewhere on a scale between —low and —high
2. **Stereotypes and prejudices.** Stereotyping and being prejudiced against cultural groups are the main barriers to intercultural communication. The negative characteristics attributed to one group can cause beliefs and feelings that lead to biases and discrimination attributed to one group can cause beliefs and feelings that lead to biases and discrimination against that group. The discriminated group often suffers from being rejected and avoided in cross-cultural interactions.
3. **Stereotypes** are often generalized negative traits assigned to a group of people (e.g., race, nationality, religions, social class, sexual orientation, age, gender), even if these traits may only reflect a selected few of the group. Simply said, a stereotype is a generalization of a group of people based on a small sample of these people stereotyping or classifying an entire group of people or culture with defining characteristics, which are usually unfair and untrue, is much easier than explaining the complexities of the uniqueness of specific situations and the individual differences essential in each event.
4. **Prejudice**, an offshoot of stereotypes, is an unfair thought, belief, or feeling of dislike for a person or group because of race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, and so on. It is a negative preconceived opinion held by one group toward members of another group that biases perception and provides a reason for discrimination. When someone is prejudiced, the prejudice usually refers to his thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about a certain group of people, which he learns only from his —in-groups, not from any first-hand, direct contact with —out-group members, and he seldom attempts to