

«PREJUDICES & STEREOTYPES»

The concept of tolerance is closely related to such phenomena as prejudice and stereotypes.

PREJUDICE is a concept taken from psychology that means prejudging someone on the basis of his or her belonging to a particular group or category of people.

STEREOTYPES are knowledge about people, accumulated both by personal experience and from other sources, which are generalized and fixed in the minds of people in the form of stable ideas.

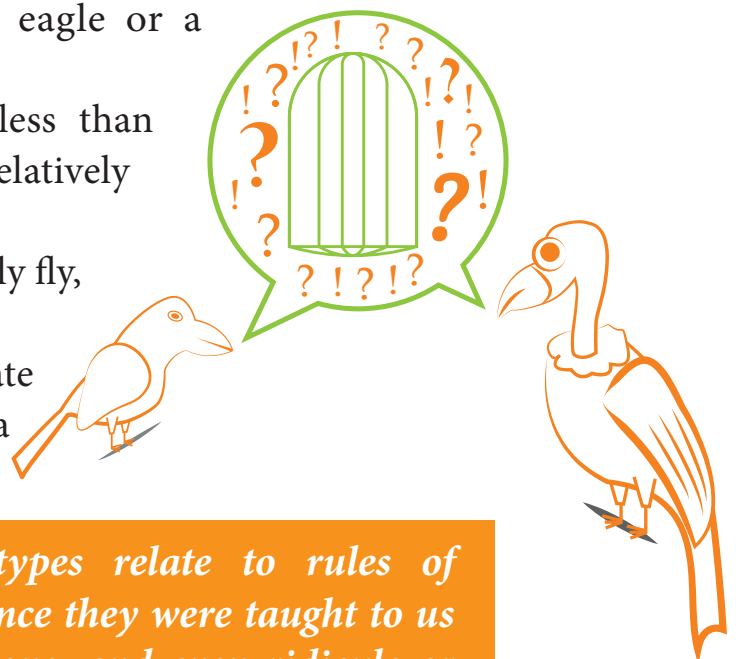
One of the sources of stereotypes is a superficial knowledge of the subject being judged.

For example, which do you think suffers more from having its ability to fly being restricted in captivity: an eagle or a sparrow?

Oddly enough, the eagle suffers less than many other birds, even living in a relatively small aviary.

The fact is that in nature, eagles rarely fly, but mostly plan.

In contrast, a sparrow does not tolerate captivity at all and dies very quickly in a cage.



Many especially cruel stereotypes relate to rules of decency and norms of behavior, since they were taught to us through prohibitions, condemnations, and even ridicule or punishment.

It is unlikely that you will listen with pleasure to a neighbor who is noisily sipping tea from a cup. But the Japanese tea-drinking ceremony dictates that participants must suck the tea from miniature cups noisily, thereby expressing their pleasure and gratitude to the hospitality of the host.

Stereotypes are rigidly embedded in our value system and are an integral part of and provide a kind of protection for our position in society.

For this reason, the use of stereotypes occurs in every intercultural situation.

NATIONAL STEREOTYPES are the most striking example.

The relationship between the cultural affiliation of a person and the character traits attributed to him or her is usually not adequate. People belonging to different cultures have a different understanding of the world, which makes communication from a single position impossible. Guided by the norms and values of his or her culture, a person him or herself determines what the facts are and in what light to evaluate them. This significantly affects the nature of our communication with representatives of other cultures.

People retain their stereotypes, even when reality contradicts them. Therefore, in a situation of intercultural contact, it is important to be able to effectively deal with stereotypes – that is, to be aware of them and be able to abandon them when they do not correspond to reality.

