

Identities of Immigrant Women: Reinventing Selves in America



What Gives Me the Right to Speak on *Multicultural Identity*



- Where I come from
- Hailing from academia
- Why I jumped the continents and cultures
- From adaptation to integration
- Ups and downs in America
- I made it my way!



Evolving Identities Shown in Books



- Isabel Allende
- Edwina Sandys
- Nadia Comaneci
- Elena Gorokhova
- Ginny Gong
- Svetlana Kim
- Ivana Trump
- Deborah Levine
- Ana Palacios McBride
- Loida Lewis
- Lidia Bastianich



Immigrant Women Speak: Fine-tuning Behaviors & Cultural Make-up

Phases of Immigrant Behavior:

- Denial
- Adaptation
- Integration

#	The ways I modified/adapted my behavior in the US	YES	NO
1	I became more assertive at home and at work	x	
2	I learned to shake off some taboos of my culture	x	
3	I adapted to less privacy, which was frustrating at first	x	
4	I adapted to more stress	x	
5	I feel more freedom in expressing my opinion	x	
6	I put more pressure on myself to achieve my goals	x	

A New Normal: Identity in a Flux: *How Living in America Impacts You*

Transitioning from Scarcity to Abundance
Mentality, or towards:

- Optimism about opportunities +
- Sharing/philanthropy +
- Inclusion of people different from self +
- Independence +
- Appreciating the community & integrating.



Centerpiece of Multicultural Identity: Creativity



http://www.huffingtonpost.com/fiona-citkin-phd/the-business-case-for-imm_b_3637093.html

Roots/Background

- **Possessing double perspective/vision** divergent from mainstream, due to different cultural upbringing
- Having double-culture-bound **richness of associations**, connecting images that seem dissimilar to locals
- Having backgrounds of differing **education systems**: the total of knowledge + logic & thinking process
- Typical for many cultures are preferences for **“relationship before task”** (unlike in the US)
- Trials and **tribulations of assimilating** in a new culture.

Outcomes/Applications

- **Perceiving** things differently from the locals
- Dredging up a large number of **unusual mental links** increasing productivity and wide-ranging results
- Different **thinking and decision-making styles**: holistic, analytical, or emotive-synthetic vs. US pragmatic
- Personality-based relationship building skills allow immigrants to quickly **connect with like-minded people**, thus enhancing their mutual creativity
- **Habitual perseverance** leads to persisting with “crazy” creative ideas, bringing them to fruition.

Challenges and Metamorphosis: *Ivana Trump*

The immigrant women face **more challenges** than immigrant men because:

- Being **outsiders** is tougher as generally, women need to feel accepted.
- Women belong to a 51% majority treated as a minority, with *condescension*: a glass ceiling, lower salary, **gender stereotyping**.
- **The working mother** creates a major inconvenience for some employers.
- Speaking broken English or **English with an accent** may sound sexy. But you need to avoid certain professions, OR - be forever underestimated.
- Challenges lead to **reinventing selves = getting new survival skills**

Ivana's metamorphosis: from model to VP of Design, to CEO, to business owner, to writer/actress/socialite: "The best is yet to come!"



Many thanks for your kind attention!

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Please share your ideas,

ask questions,

and let's do something together!