

Topic: Cultural Adjustment
(IOM Middle East)

Activity: Family Situations

Time	15-25 minutes
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family Situation Cards (included)
Practice	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Put participants into small groups. Give each group the “family situations” sheet to discuss. Tell them that they will be asked to share their conclusions with the class.2. Hold a large group discussion, asking each group in turn to read the situation and tell what conclusions they came to.
Variation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cut up the situation sheet and hand out only a few questions per group. Each group will then read out its question and tell the group their conclusions.

Family Situation Cards: What Would You Do?

Moving to a new culture can cause considerable stress on your family. What would you do in the following situations?

1. Your 13-year-old son, Ahmed, comes home from school and tells you he wants to change his name to Andy. The other kids are laughing at him, calling him rude names. Ahmed is his deceased grandfather’s name.
2. Your children refuse to speak to you in your language. They insist on using English. You feel that, little by little, they are forgetting their language and culture. Your children never bring their friends home; they are ashamed of their parents with their poor command of the language and their old country ways.
3. Your 16-year-old daughter wants to put on make-up and wear a short skirt. This is unheard of in your culture. She cries that all the girls at school dress like this and she won’t have any friends if you don’t allow her to have her way.
4. Your wife has managed to learn the language quite well while you still cannot make yourself understood. She has even managed to find herself a part-time job while you sit at home, unemployed. You feel she is becoming quite independent and proud of herself. You have started to have a few drinks during the day to steady your nerves.
5. Your 66-year-old mother just sits in her room and stares at the wall. She can’t go outside because of the cold and she has no friends because she cannot speak the language. She keeps talking about her life in the old country and blaming you for bringing her to this terrible place.

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