

## What's *normal* for you?

Discuss the following questions with your partners. You may get 1, 2 or 3 points for your performance

### A. Standing in a queue

The British often stand in queues when waiting for a bus, a taxi, at a bank or at a cinema.

- Do you often stand in queues in Germany?
- How do you react if someone pushes in?
- What do you say?



### B. Standing close to each other

In Germany, Britain and the US personal space - the accepted distance between two people standing next to each other - is about 45 cm. In Italy it is about 25 cm and in Brazil it is 20 cm.

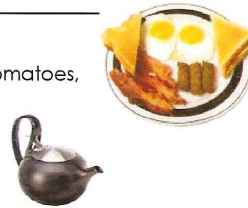
- How much personal space is normal for you when you talk to each other?



### C. Breakfast

A British breakfast consists of sausages, baked beans, fried eggs, tomatoes, buttered toast — don't forget a cup of tea.

- What do you have for breakfast?
- How would you enjoy a British breakfast?
- What would you say if you were given one?



### D. Hands in pocket

Young people in Germany, UK or the US often keep their hands in their pockets.

- Do adults you know keep their hands in their pockets, too?
- Do you keep your hands in your pockets when there are adults around?
- Do you know people who don't like it?



**You might find the following phrases helpful:**

I agree completely. — I agree in principle. — I am not quite sure ... — I think ... / I prefer ... / I'd rather ... — I don't completely agree with you. — I'm sorry, but what you are saying is just not acceptable. — I don't want to be rude, but ...

## Rules no. 1 and 2 in intercultural communication:

- 1 To understand foreign cultures I need to first understand what seems to be normal in my own culture.
- 2 Spontaneous interpretations of foreign ways of behaviour or ways of communication will be wrong in most cases.

Do you agree?

Understanding each other: national stereotypes



Which nationalities do you recognise?

What "typical" character traits are shown?

What do you think of the cartoons? – Do you agree with the stereotypes?

## Gestures



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- What does each gesture mean?
- Which gestures could you use in Germany, the UK or the US?
- Which of the gestures, if any, are different from the gestures used in your culture?
- In what situations do you use gestures?
- Are there any gestures you should not use with certain people?

Barry Tomalin / Susan Stempleski. Cultural Awareness. Oxford, 1993