



## **Anchoring identity**

**Euro TCK 2019 - workshop  
Maria Techow**






## TCK groups

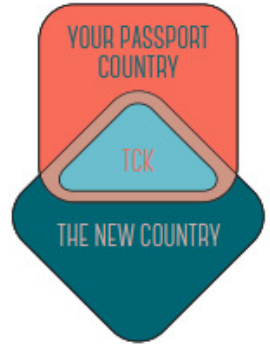
TCK children group  
– a safe place to think, feel and share

# Identity - Third Culture Kid


- Definition of a TCK:
  - “A traditional third culture kid (TCK) is a person who spends a significant part of his or her first eighteen years of life accompanying parent(s) into a country that is different from at least one parent’s passport country(ies) due to a parent’s choice of work or advanced training”
  - Pollock, 2017
  - “The TCK frequently builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture may be assimilated into the TCK’s life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background.”
  - Pollock, 1989

The book has 3 parts:

- 1 BEFORE YOU LEAVE...  
LOOK FOR THIS SYMBOL  
  
IN THE BOTTOM CORNER OF THE PAGE.  
from page 8
- 2 WHILE YOU ARE IN THE NEW COUNTRY...  
LOOK FOR THIS SYMBOL  
  
IN THE BOTTOM CORNER OF THE PAGE.  
from page 46
- 3 WHEN YOU RETURN TO YOUR PASSPORT COUNTRY...  
LOOK FOR THIS SYMBOL  
  
IN THE BOTTOM CORNER OF THE PAGE.  
from page 124



CHILDREN WHO MOVE ABROAD WITH THEIR PARENTS ARE SOMETIMES REFERRED TO AS THIRD CULTURE KIDS (TCKS), BECAUSE THEY GET TO EXPERIENCE THREE CULTURES. THE FIRST ONE IS THE CULTURE OF YOUR PASSPORT COUNTRY, THE COUNTRY YOU MIGHT BE LEAVING SOON. THE SECOND CULTURE IS THE CULTURE(S) YOU WILL BE LIVING IN FOR A PERIOD OF TIME. AND THE THIRD CULTURE IS A SPECIAL CULTURE THAT YOU WILL SHARE WITH OTHERS LIKE YOU WHO HAVE ALSO MOVED AROUND.  
MORE ON THAT LATER!



**SAFE TRAVELS!**

**TCK life as both a blessing  
and a resource**

”It is my conviction that being a TCK is not a disease, something from which to recover. It is a life healthily enriched by this very TCK experience and blessed with significant opportunities for further enrichment”

Pollock & Van Reken, ”Third Culture Kids: Growing up amongst Worlds”. 2009

## Film-clip Distance

EFD [2]3



## Slide nummer 5

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**EFD [2]3** Måske link og tid kan placeres i noter nedenfor fremfor på selve slidet.

Emilie Frijs Due; 16-05-2019



## Identity - IDEM

The traits of personality that describe and delimit the person as different from others.

# Self-concept Social-identity

Giddens, 1991, Ravn, 2004





# What are the challenges of forming an identity abroad?

## DO YOU KNOW THE FEELING?

HERE ARE SOME QUOTES DESCRIBING SOME OF THE COMMON THOUGHTS THIRD CULTURE KIDS MAY HAVE. CAN YOU RELATE TO THEM? FEELING THIS WAY CAN BE HARD SOMETIMES, BUT IT'S VERY COMMON.



Sometimes I feel like I'm bragging when telling people regular things about my life.

It makes me feel all alone when I feel like I don't fit in.

SOME OF MY FRIENDS SEEM A LOT LESS MATURE THAN ME.

Sometimes I don't know where I belong.

I'm not like everyone else.

One of the things I've cried about the most is not knowing where I come from.

I often behave in a certain way just to try to fit in.

I OFTEN FEEL LIKE NO ONE AROUND ME GETS ME.

## The voice of TCK's....

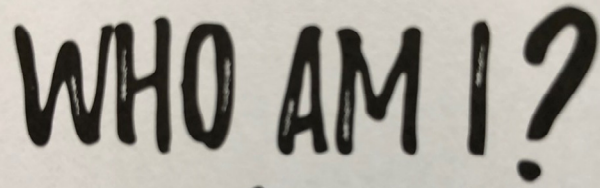
"It is difficult to find your identity if you are trying to fit in and not stand out and be weird"

"Sometimes you want to just be like the others and not feel too different from them"

"It's hard to find your identity if you feel that others think you are strange"

"It can be tough when you move, because people in different places have other ways of doing things and you just want to fit in"

"Identity is also about where you are from, but that can be a difficult question too when you have moved around a lot and are unsure about it"



WHO AM I?

## **Developmental tasks**

- Developing a sense of personal identity
- Building strong relationships
- Developing competence in decision making
- Achieving independence
- Moving into adulthood

Stern, 2000, Erikson, 1950

High on developmental tasks due to:

- Global awareness
- Relating to adults
- Communication skills
- Early autonomy (skills)

Developmental tasks

- Developing a sense of personal identity
- Building strong relationships
- Developing competence in decision making
- Achieving independence
- Moving into adulthood

Knuckles, 2008, Pollock & Reeken, 2017

# Uneven maturity

Low on developmental tasks due to:

- Adolescent developmental tasks
- 'Home' cultural expectations
- Differentiation from system

Developmental tasks

- Developing a sense of personal identity
- Building strong relationships
- Developing competence in decision making
- Achieving independence
- Moving into adulthood

Knuckles, 2008, Pollock & Reeken, 2017

# Group talk

What is helpful for the TCK in a global setting in anchoring his or her identity when it comes to this specific task?

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DEVELOPING A SENSE OF  
PERSONAL IDENTITY



BUILDING STRONG  
RELATIONSHIPS



DEVELOPING COMPETENCE  
IN DECISION MAKING



ACHIEVING INDEPENDENCE



MOVING INTO ADULTHOOD







“The shortest path to oneself leads around the world.”

German philosopher Hermann von Keyserling, 1919

“Almost 100 years later, our research provides empirical evidence in support of this idea.”

Hayo, 2018



# Connecting people and life



76 // Enjoy the journey



## Will you still listen to me?

Maybe you will get a sense that people around you are only interested in hearing about your 'exotic life abroad' for a short period of time and then just stop asking. This can be very upsetting and make you feel like your stories and memories don't matter or that no one understands you. Some don't understand, others are busy, and others yet might just want to hear it little by little. Be patient and keep on sharing your stories with the people around you!

The first few days after we got back, everyone kept asking if I had seen a lot of lions and elephants. I hadn't. They didn't seem to care about my house or my friends, and that made me feel alone.

- Jonathan



## IDEAS FOR TELLING OTHERS ABOUT YOUR LIFE ABROAD:

- SHOW THEM PARTS OF THIS BOOK - LIKE THE COLLECTION PAGES.
- SHOW THEM PHOTOS OR VIDEOS YOU'VE TAKEN.
- INVITE THEM OVER FOR SOME LOCAL FOOD.
- ASK YOUR MUM OR DAD TO COME AND TELL YOUR NEW CLASSMATES ALL ABOUT LIFE IN THE COUNTRY WHERE YOU LIVED.



# Social identity: Ingroup – outgroup



	System win	System lose
Individual lose	Not fit Keeps trying to conform  <i>Chameleon</i>  Win/lose	Not Fit Continually resists system  <i>Screamer</i>  Lose/lose
Individual win	Fits Internal match  Win/win	Not Fit Neither conform nor resists but quietly does own thing  <i>Wallflower</i>  Lose/win

Barbek Model: Identity in Relationship to the system, Knuckles1988

## Does this sound familiar?

People react differently when they move back to their passport country. Three reactions are particularly common during re-entry. Do any of them remind you of how you have reacted?

**THE CHAMELEON**  
Tries to blend in by acting like everyone else.

**THE SCREAMER**  
Clearly declares being different than everyone else.

**THE WALLFLOWER**  
Tries to stay invisible, observing everything from the side-lines.

# Help to maintaining relations



CENTER FOR  
FAMILIEUDVIKLING

134 // Goodbye again



YOU MEAN SO MUCH TO ME BECAUSE

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I REMEMBER WHEN WE

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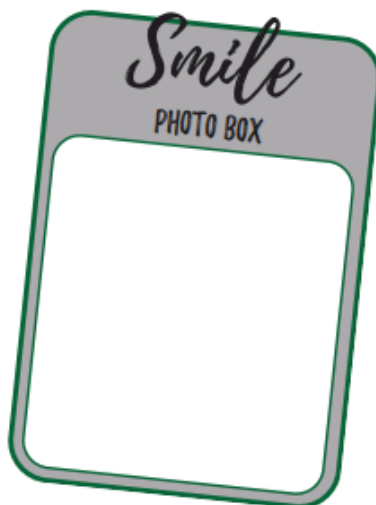
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THE BEST THING WE HAVE DONE TOGETHER IS

I'D LOVE TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOU, AND THE  
BEST WAY FOR US TO DO SO IS:



// 135



YOU ARE SO PRECIOUS TO ME BECAUSE

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I REMEMBER WHEN WE

THE BEST THING WE HAVE DONE TOGETHER IS

I'D LOVE TO STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOU,  
AND THE BEST WAY FOR US TO DO SO IS:

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# Building strong relationships



## Secure attachment

- Safe place for expressing feelings
- Adults are role models, creators and gatekeepers for the safe place

Bowlby, 1988, Allen, Fonagy & Bateman (2008), Allen, 2014

# Developing competence in decision making

Learning to trust:

- my way of perceiving the world
- my feelings
- God is in control



Guidance to healthy thinking and behaving

Children need to be heard and to have input in decisions that will affect them.



# Dealing with the feelings



20 // Thoughts and feelings



// 21



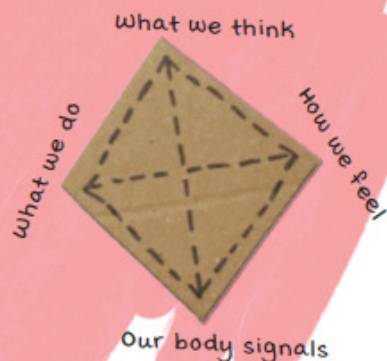
# Dealing with the thoughts



18 // Thoughts and feelings

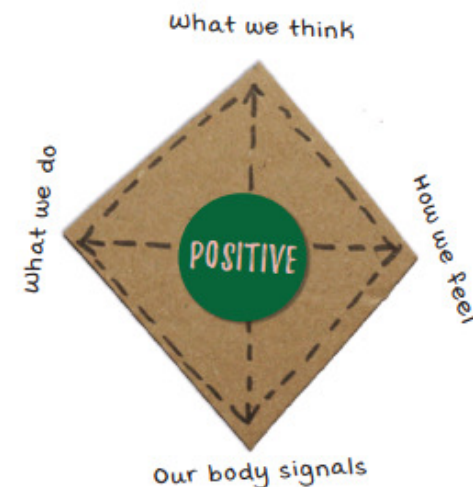
the  
**EXPERT**  
says

WHEN WE EXPERIENCE THINGS, THEY AFFECT WHAT WE THINK AND FEEL. OUR FEELINGS CAN EVEN MAKE OUR BODIES REACT AND THEY INFLUENCE HOW WE ACT. WHAT WE FEEL, THINK, HOW OUR BODIES REACT AND WHAT WE DO ARE ALL CONNECTED - LIKE FOUR CORNERS OF A DIAMOND.



FILL OUT SOME  
MORE YOURSELF.

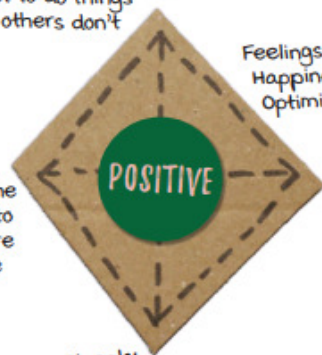
WHAT DID YOU THINK, FEEL, SENSE IN YOUR BODY AND DO WHEN YOU FOUND OUT THAT YOU WERE MOVING?  
POSITIVE THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS AND NEGATIVE THOUGHTS AND FEELING.



Thoughts:  
It's going to be exciting to get to do things that others don't

Feelings:  
Happiness, Optimism

Actions:  
Search the Internet to learn more about the country



Body Signals:  
butterflies, fidgety

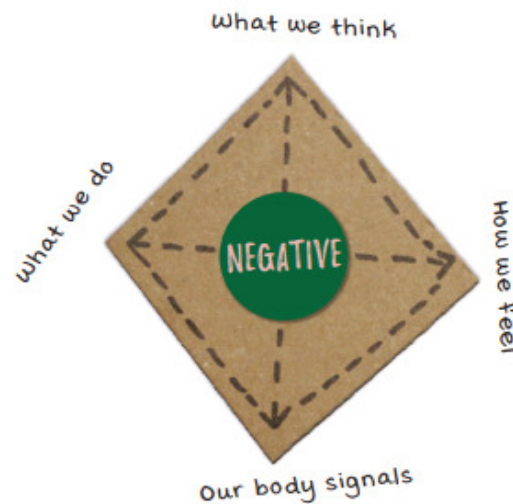
Thoughts:  
I'm going to miss my friends. Will anybody want to play with me?

Feelings:  
Sadness, happiness

Actions:  
Staying in my room, distracting myself with my phone/tablet



Body signals:  
Headache, stomach ache, unease



## The Dunedin study



- Ideals, norms and values are cornerstones for building the child's standards
- Children are better off, when they are not protected against hardship
- Children need to learn to master challenges and resistance
- Children need parents to be there and to teach them to overcome challenges without solving them for them

Münster, 2017



# Equipping children for the complexity of life



- The will to take on challenges and the ability to keep on going even if it sometimes feels hard or boring
- The courage to fail and the strength to handle defeat and disappointments
- The ability to take responsibility and contribute to a community
- To learn to put oneself aside
- The ability to handle big and vulnerable feelings.

Münster, 2017

# Moving into adulthood



## The importance of peers

- TO FIT IN & TO get new friends
- Networking
- Parents have to let go



## The voice of the TCK's...

What helps you in the process of finding out who you are?

- "It helps me figure out who I am, when I can spend time with people who understand me"
- "It helps me when others get me, so I know it's ok to be who I am"
- "It helps to talk to people about it"
- "It helps to talk about how you are feeling"
- "It helps to have friends you can be 100% yourself with."
- "In a way I think moving around makes it easier to be who you really are"
- "I don't think about it a lot"





**Film-clip Distance**



## Moses – searching for identity – who am I and who are you, God?

Moses: “I have become a foreigner in a foreign land.”

Moses: “Here I am.”

God: “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.”

*At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.*

Moses: “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?”

God: “I will be with you. I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

Moses: , “Pardon your servant, Lord. I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.”

God: “Who gave human beings their mouths? Who makes them deaf or mute? Who gives them sight or makes them blind? Is it not I, the LORD? Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.”



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