

Assignment Takeaway: Considering Cultural Values

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Of all the American values described by L. Robert Kohls, Action/Work Orientation (number 9) applies quite extensively in my own life. Versus “Being” Orientation, Kohls (1984) discusses that Americans are more concerned with how they fill their time instead of living in the moment. This value happens to be one that I struggle with, and often regret not meeting. As pointed out, Americans focus heavily on accomplishing tasks and place merit on themselves in regard to quantity of tasks completed. I am one who has a hard time being “lazy”. Not that I am an inherently idle person, but I do have the sense that I am not accomplishing as many tasks as I should. Even with completing schoolwork for online classes, I find myself feeling guilty that I am sitting at a computer instead of taking care of things around the house. This isn’t due to neglect. In fact, my feeling simply stems from an intense feeling that I should be up and doing something instead of “wasting time” in front of a screen.

Kohls points out that Americans are unique in their necessity to maintain a dense schedule. With that being said, I believe people from other cultures might find Americans to be a bit rude. Hypothetically, if one from another culture were to plan a relaxing day with an American, they might find it to be anything but. Typically, an American would have full day planned of activities. This could be considered aggravating to someone from another culture, as they would likely anticipate relaxation rather than more activity. All in all, Americans value the use of their time and accomplishing tasks much more than other culture, and this could be considered a negative value in American culture.

References

Kohls, L. R. (1984). The Values Americans Live by. Meridian House International.