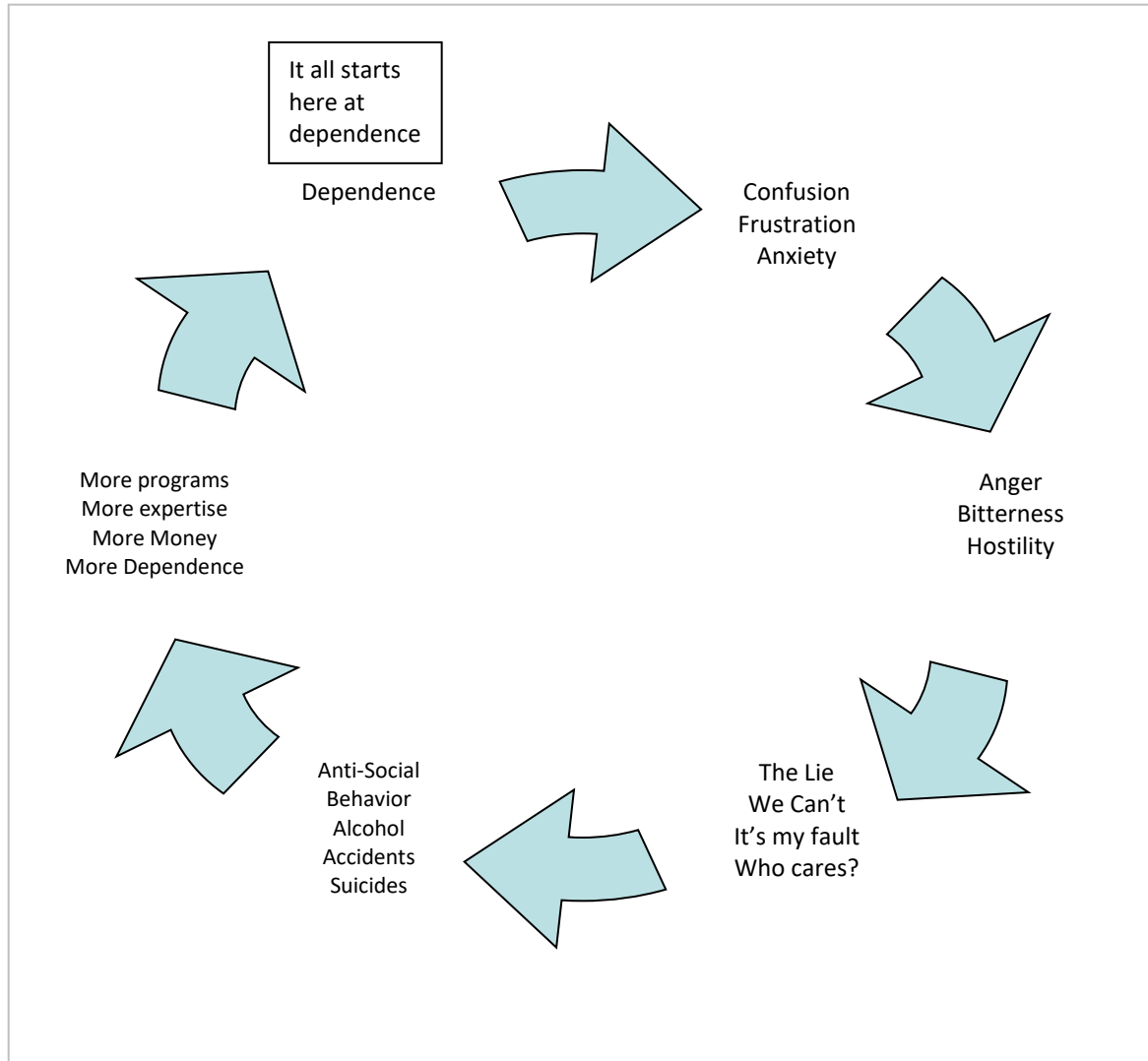


From the film *Communicating Across Cultures: The Clash of Worlds*

Russian Orthodox priest, scholar, peacemaker and raconteur Father Michael Oleksa
AlaskaOne TV Video, KTOO-TV Juneau, Alaska



Dependence – begins when people of one worldview believe that they should teach people of another culture and worldview the ‘right’ and ‘best’ ways to be and think. “We know. You don’t. We will teach you.”

Confusion, Frustration, Anxiety (often in the first generation) – when the dominant culture’s expectations are without understanding or respect for the ‘other’ culture’s knowledge, language, worldview etc. People in the ‘other’ subordinated culture, who often try to do the best they can, feel a sense of frustration and failure. The message from the dominating group is that the subordinate group’s language and culture is not enough, that it is somehow lacking.

Anger, Bitterness, Hostility (often in the second generation) – this increases when the attempts people make to accommodate the dominant culture create a condition in which they fit in no world. Loss of a sense of place in the world, loss of community, loss of language, a learned loss of respect for their own culture, language, parents, elders. These feelings may deepen if people have been forced or coerced into ‘assimilation’.

The Great Lie – When people’s efforts at learning to be competent in the dominating culture fail to bring to them what teachers and others promised, people in the subordinated culture feel a sense of defeat and disillusionment. They are neither here nor there; they often feel that the discrepancies between what was promised, and the realities must be their own fault. The feeling of dependence on the dominant culture increases. “We can’t. It’s my fault. Who cares?”

Anti-social behavior, suicide, alcoholism and drug abuse, accidents (often in the second and the third generations) – increases as there seem to be few alternatives to empower oneself and one’s community. They witness as a model their parents’ and other family members’ sense of disillusionment and failure.

Increased dependence - as *fixing* programs from the dominating culture - are introduced, more feelings of failure manifest. More feelings of the great lie. More anti-social behavior.

Healing includes revitalization: Currently people in the helping fields see that the cycle is more likely to end when groups of subordinated people are able to empower themselves, define themselves, help themselves and be recognized for the knowledge and wisdom they have that can be shared with the dominating culture.