As the world gets smaller, people with different cultural backgrounds are colliding more than ever before. Everyday tensions between men and women, whites and people of color, richer and poorer people, and people with Eastern and Western heritage undermine productivity and well-being in our workplace and communities. Although these are vastly different conflicts, many stem from the same root cause: the clash between people who construe themselves as relatively independent (individual, unique and in-control) and people who construe themselves as more interdependent (relational, conforming and adjusting). Miscommunication abounds and tensions flare when people using their independent self come into contact with people using their interdependent self. Drawing on studies from across the social sciences, this approach explains not only how the independence-interdependence divide can ignite conflict and also how we can harness these culture clashes for good.

Biography

Hazel Rose Markus is the Davis-Brack Professor in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University. Her research examines the role of self in regulating behavior and how the self is shaped by the social world. She developed the concepts of self-schemas and possible selves. In experimental and survey studies as well as in analyses of cultural products, she studies the constructive role of the self in all aspects of behavior throughout the life course. She received her B.A. from California State University at San Diego and her PhD. from the University of Michigan. She was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1994 and in 2008 received the American Psychological Association's award for Distinguished Scientific Contribution. She has served as co-director and director of Stanford's Research Center for Comparative Studies in Race and Ethnicity (CCSRE). She is co-author of Culture and Emotion: Their Mutual Influence, Engaging Cultural Differences: The