



IDENTITY AND BELONGING

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How is the process of identity development different in different cultures?

How does a person become who they are, while living life as a TCK?

Why is there a feeling of “not belonging” to any place in particular, while at the same time feeling at home everywhere?

CULTURE

Traditional View on Culture: culture is somehow static and never changing. It is like a “thing” that belongs to a nation or a society. Culture is associated with territory and nationality.

Contemporary View on Culture: Culture is a continuum flux of meaning that depends on a person’s interpretation of himself and of others in a continuum of interrelationships; a process that cannot be separated and will last a lifetime.

IDENTITY

Ordinary View on Identity: Before the 20th century, the Western idea of identity was a traditional one. People would become what their parents had been or what society told them to be. Tradition would guide everyday life through the re-creation of habits. Society would make the rules and individuals would follow them.

Contemporary View on Identity: People become who they are by self-creation. Every person develops individually throughout life, as well as through relationships with other people, becoming a unique person. This development is a process of relationships with others. The perception of the world reflects the personal experience. “Each one of us has a personal history that make us who we are” (Toren). Personal identity is always in a developmental process, making every one singular.

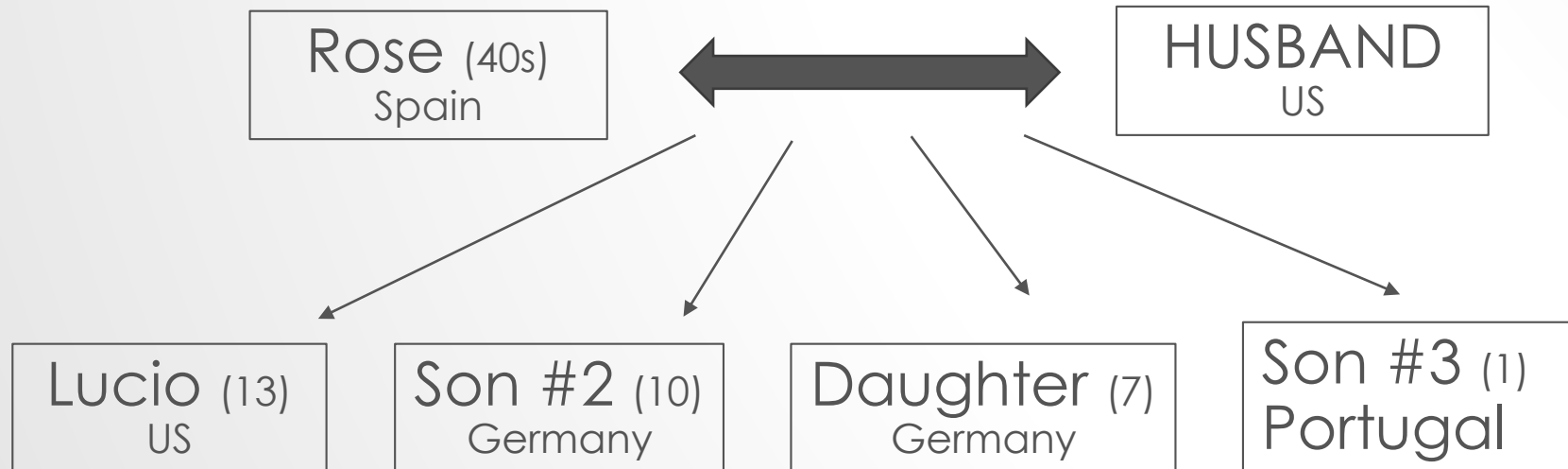
BELONGING

The traditional idea of belonging is linked to the concept of territory and the culture that is rooted in that space. For example: “American Culture” or “Indian Culture.” Being rooted in a place is normal; mobility is not.

Mobility of people through territories has been around since the beginning of times. Mobility is not abnormal and should not be treated as such. We are not trees to be rooted in one place. We should be able to feel free to consider any place to be our own, to belong anywhere and everywhere we feel comfortable.

CASE STUDY #1

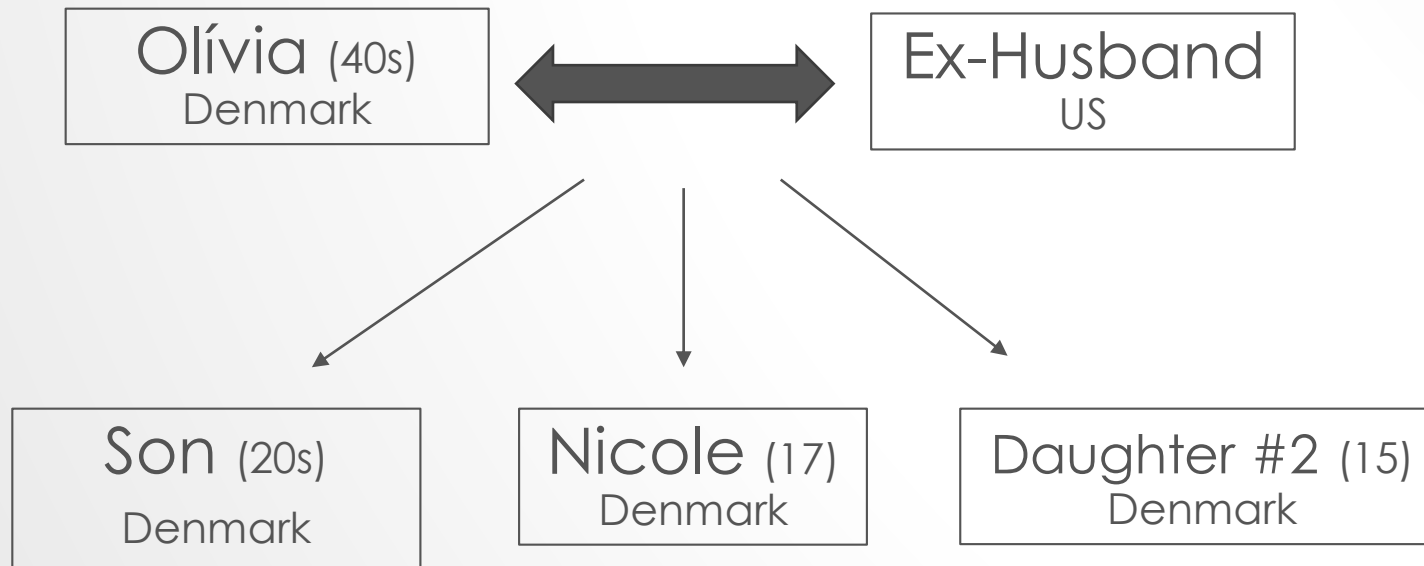
THE FAMILY THAT NEEDS ROOTS



The family lived in The USA, Germany, Portugal.

CASE STUDY #2

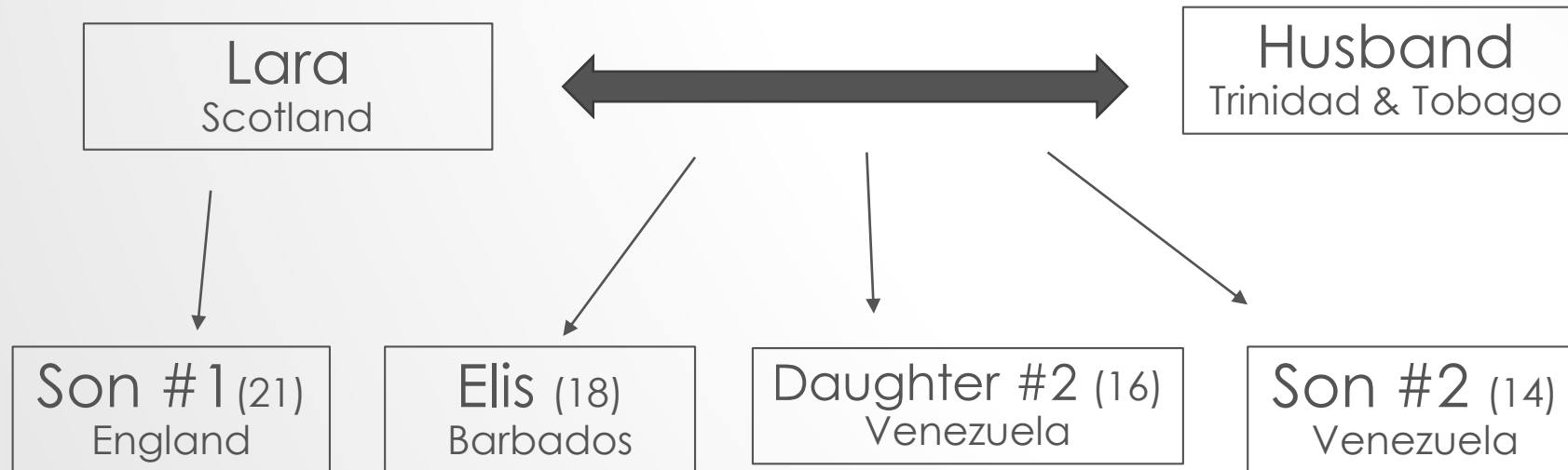
THE SECLUDED FAMILY



The family lived in Russia, Italy and Portugal.

CASE STUDY #3

THE “HOT FOOT” FAMILY



The family lived in Trinidad (2), Barbados, Venezuela, Norway, USA, England (2)