

## Part K. Cultural Intelligence: A Better Path

1. [Cultural Intelligence \(CQ\) deals with human differences](#). It is a tool for instilling an awareness of *how* cultural behaviours differ and *why*. It decodes the behaviours, values and friction points that bedevil the classroom, street and the workplace.

2. In the Age of (mis)Information and Mobility, the interconnection between the peoples of our planet is intensifying exponentially. Their civilisational values and day-to-day cultural mores, as individuals or in clusters, are increasingly grating against one another. We are becoming aware as never before of how many tribes make up this global village - multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-caste. The very idea that a nation is defined only by geographic borders or its 'original' inhabitants is under siege from political, commercial, social and ideological cross-pollination. No tribe anywhere - not even one boasting [divine credentials](#) - can hope to exist alone in its cocoon.

3. We have no choice but to understand the 'other' if we are to live in peace and harmony. The challenge is how to forge bridges across cultural chasms.

4. Education has for millennia been the medium for inculcating 'civilised' behaviour. Rote and critical thinking have both played their parts. But in the Age of Artificial Intelligence, the effectiveness of the teacher-student architecture is waning. I would go so far as to say that the millennia-old methodology of imparting knowledge at educational institutions is now outdated. Tools must be devised that *mentor and guide* the effective use of the multiplying body of knowledge.

5. CQ is one such tool. It is neutral. In the classroom, CQ would not focus on eradicating any one prejudice - antisemitism - but would encourage understanding of the whole gamut of negative perceptions of the 'other' that plague schoolyards and public places alike: from the hijab and the Hindu swastika to the day-to-day mores of different cultures that differ, tangibly or intangibly, from majority norms.



6. For example, **Hindu phobia** in Australia is more a product of negative perceptions of Indian public behaviour than of Hinduism itself, of which little is known here relative to Islam or Christianity. CQ can help [bridge the divide between Australians and Indians](#) by deciphering the respective cultural and behavioural norms that cause irritation and friction.

7. CQ must be inculcated from childhood to nurture harmonious coexistence rather than conformity, beginning at the pre-teen stage, when interaction with the wider world begins. The Danish education system has been teaching **Empathy** to

seven-year-olds since the 1990s, resulting in a remarkable decrease in bullying and a more 'listening' environment. CQ-prompted intercultural dialogue, including interfaith understandings, should start in the classroom.

8. The Cultural Intelligence unit in the curriculum would set Australian values - fair go, egalitarianism, personal space, collective responsibility, among others - alongside those of other communities, so that social cohesion is nurtured at the ground level. Its purpose would be to instil a tolerance that counters the phobias abounding in the classroom and to foster the mindsets and character that enable effective cross-cultural interaction. It is this paradigm — not the mere raising of awareness of antisemitism, as the Antisemitism Envoy recommends — that will truly 'cure' the sickness of antisemitism, and with it strengthen social cohesion in Australia.

9. To combat a single prejudice is to bail water from a leaking boat, not mend the boat. The instinct to fear the 'other' is the common source of every phobia that troubles the schoolyard and the street, antisemitism among them - and it is precisely that instinct, not any one of its symptoms, that education must reach. A generation taught from childhood to face heterogeneity with curiosity rather than suspicion will not need to be warned, faith by faith, against hatreds it never learned. Thus the durable ambition is not to inoculate against one bigotry while others fester, but to inculcate a confidence to engage with the different. Cultural Intelligence is not a luxury of the curriculum. It is the curriculum's most urgent task.

10. As Disclaimed on the cover of this Submission, I am exploring the possibility of establishing a CQ Centre as my legacy to the First People's Land on which I landed in 1961. It will be the first such institution in Australia. I have made proposals to that effect to the Migration Hub at the Australian National University and to the Centre of Public Ideas at the University of Canberra. I would be happy to share details of my proposal with the Royal Commission.