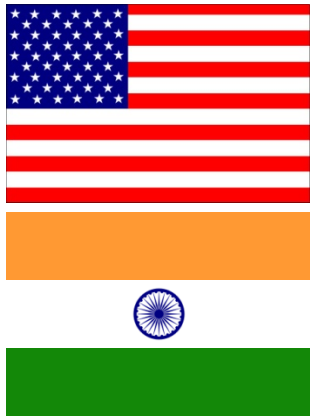


# Diversity in Social Work

Cultural diversity in Social Work &  
Its relevance



# About Speaker

- 12 month faculty at FSU
- Lived in India for 30 years
  - Studied and worked in South India
  - Lived & traveled in different regions in India
- In the US for the past 25 years
- Chairman, Asian Coalition of Tallahassee
- Former President, India Assoc. of Tallahassee

# Overview

**1. Role of Family**

**2. Traditions: Food, habits, and language**

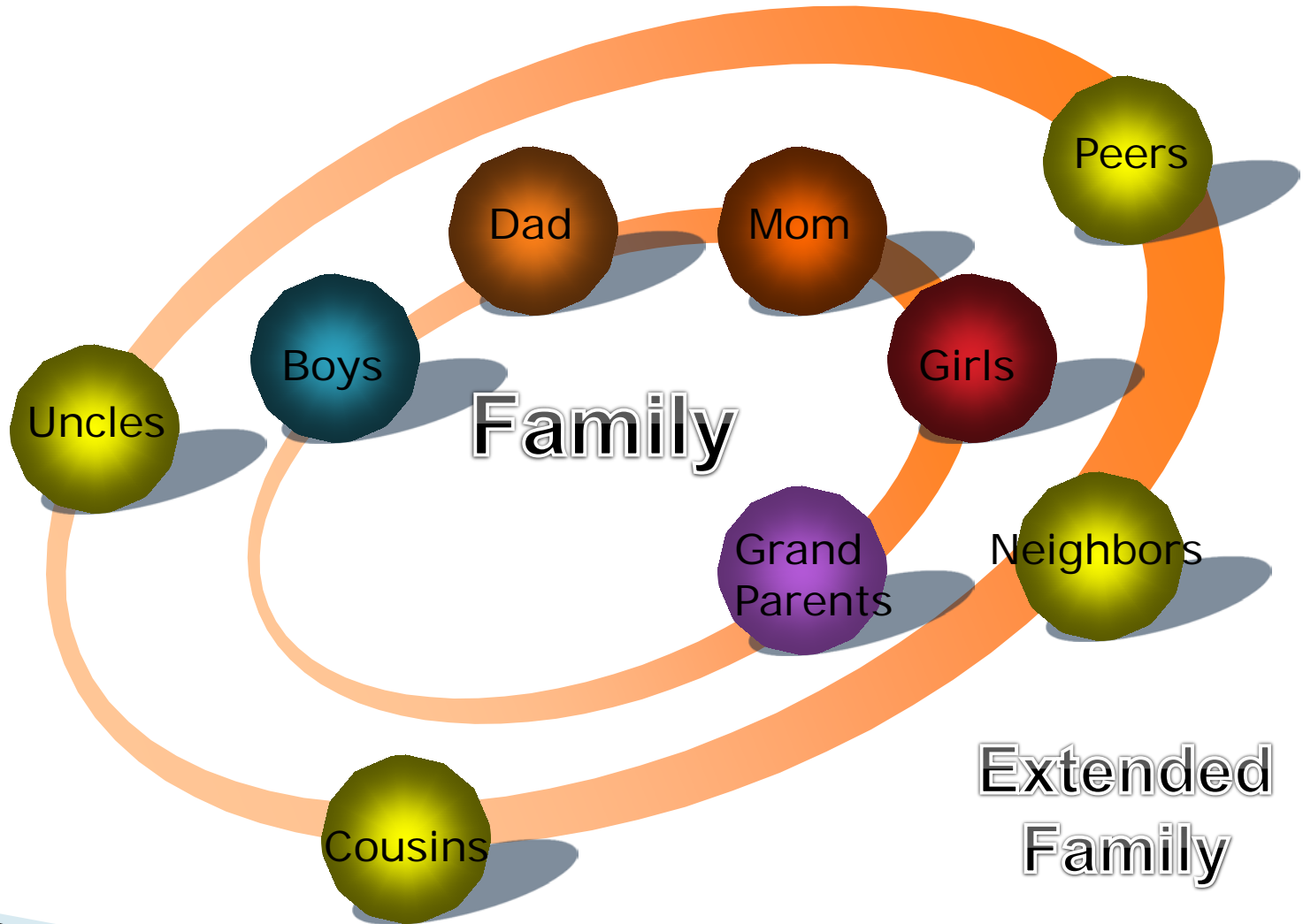
**3. Communications: Verbal and non-verbal**

**4. Social Work**

**5. Contemporary issues**

**6. Relevance**

# Role of Family



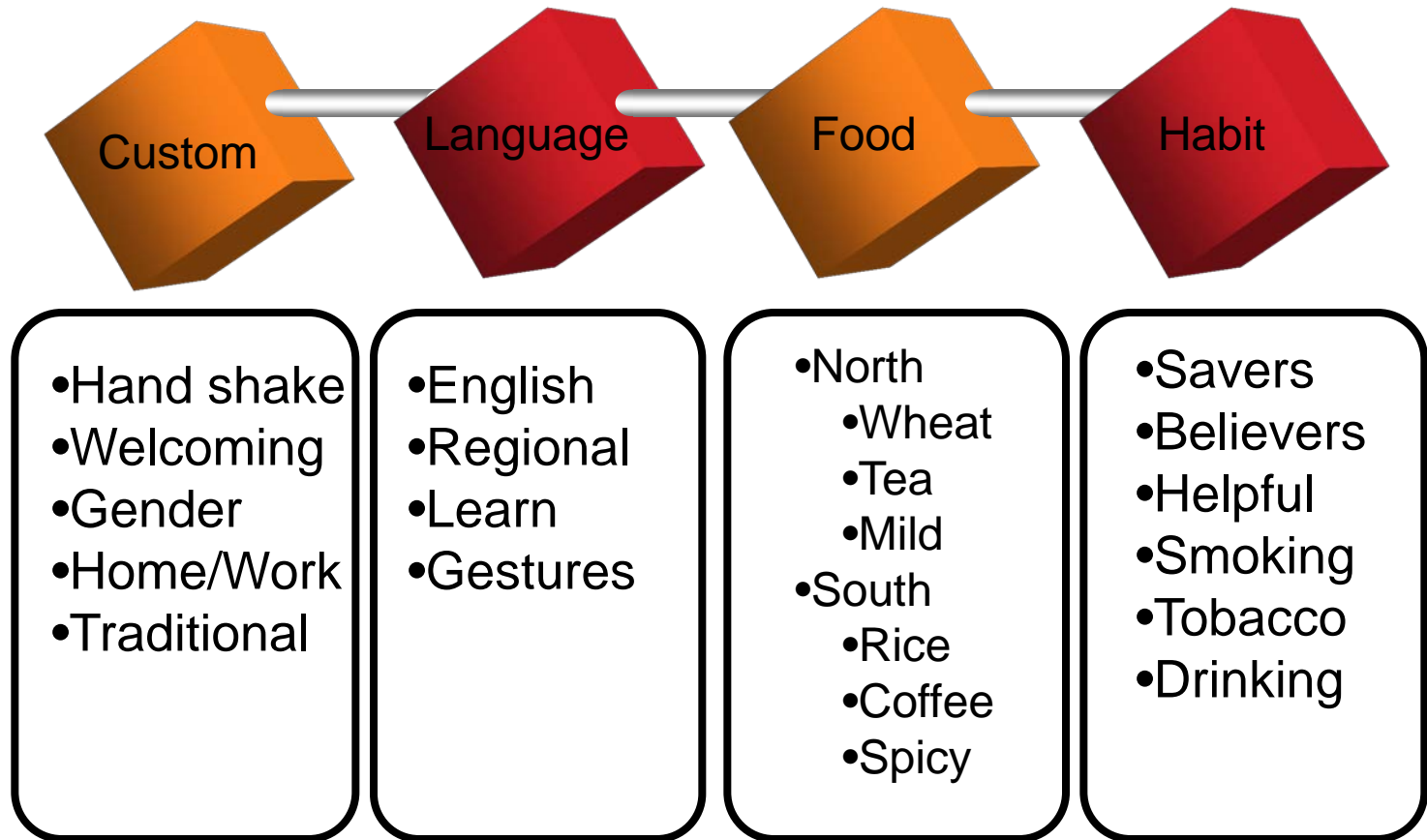
# Role of Family

- ❖ Patriarchal society
- ❖ Family comes first
- ❖ Individuals come later
- ❖ Gender roles are important
- ❖ Joint family unit still common
- ❖ Single family in urban areas

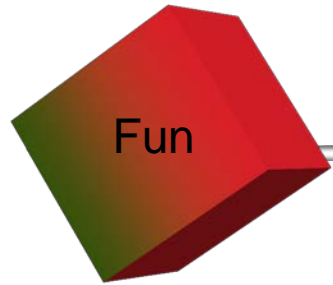
# Traditions

- ❖ Older societies w/ firmly held views
- ❖ Homogeneous population
- ❖ Change comes slowly
- ❖ Family & socio-economic rank matter
- ❖ Variations: geography and location

# Traditions

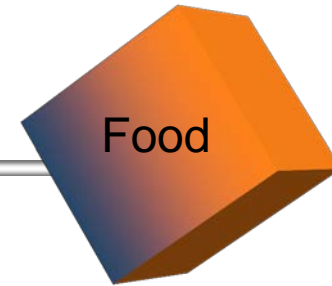


# Traditions



Fun

- Movies are very popular
- Television is popular too
- Internet popular (English)
- Night life in urban centers
- Entertainers/Entertained
- Music movie/classical
- Public transportation



Food

- Some are non-vegetarian
- Some are strict vegetarians
- Eating out is not very common
- Food and water safety important
- Alcohol still a taboo
- Smoking is common but less now



# Communications

- ❖ Verbal and non-verbal important
- ❖ Some Asians can be talkative
- ❖ But some have language barriers
- ❖ Don't feel shy to speak up
- ❖ Gender roles are bit different
- ❖ Age and experience have values
- ❖ Young and entrepreneurial welcome

# Communications

- ❖ Make eye contacts
- ❖ Avoid unnecessary body contacts
- ❖ Symbolism important
  - ❖ Hands folded
  - ❖ Proper greeting
  - ❖ Head movements (nodding)
  - ❖ Facial expressions important
- ❖ Radical ideas take time

# What to expect

- ❖ Asia
  - ❖ Crowded but connected
  - ❖ Bureaucratic and slow
  - ❖ Hierarchical and less efficient
  - ❖ Socially moderate
  - ❖ More tolerant
  - ❖ Secular despite some majority religion

# What to expect

- ❖ People are friendly and work hard
- ❖ Well educated have good skills
- ❖ Easy to please
- ❖ Low violent crimes
- ❖ Lower cost of living
- ❖ Acceptance of others

# Social Work

- ❖ Recognize the different culture
- ❖ Prepare for language barrier
- ❖ Establish rapport
- ❖ It may take some time to be open
- ❖ Family ties
- ❖ Religious differences exist

# Contemporary Issues

- ❖ Realization of global role
- ❖ Optimistic for a better life
- ❖ Women in bread-winner role
- ❖ Quick change to social fabric
- ❖ Rich but not Wealthy
- ❖ Rural migration to urban centers
- ❖ Disappearance of joint family
- ❖ Widening gap between rich and poor
- ❖ Adoption of Western way of life

# Variations

Variations based on

- ❖ Geography: North South
- ❖ Location: Urban Rural
- ❖ Language: Hindi Regional
- ❖ Religion: Hindu Muslim Sikh

# Relevance

- ▶ World is shrinking
- ▶ Economic & Political factors
- ▶ We are all inter-connected
- ▶ *Butterfly effect / African dust storms*
- ▶ Shanghai | Bangalore | Sao Paulo
- ▶ Migration of people
- ▶ Mingling of culture



# Q and A

- ❖ Explore by coming Asian festivals
  - ❖ Experience Asia (October 11, 2014)
  - ❖ Glimpses of India (Nov 2014)
- ❖ Any Questions?
- ❖ Contact

[tsomasundaram@fsu.edu](mailto:tsomasundaram@fsu.edu)

or

[somabhanu@gmail.com](mailto:somabhanu@gmail.com)

Thanks