

The Shabby Guitar Player

You are in a restaurant having dinner with an acquaintance. A shabby man with a guitar comes to your table and offers to play. How do you feel about this?

1. This man is a beggar and should find a job.
This is a masculine point of view; the man is a loser. It could also speak of long-term orientation.
2. This man is filthy and disgusting.
People from uncertainty avoiding cultures would feel this way. They might even be afraid of contracting a disease from the man.
3. This man is to be pitied.
People from feminine societies might feel this way.
4. You do not know this man, and you have nothing to do with him.
If you and your acquaintance are from a collectivist society and belong to a group to which the newcomer does not belong, then you might feel this way. But you might also feel this way if you are from an individualist, masculine culture. In that case you might not feel any moral obligation to care for a loser who caused his own misfortune and who is nothing to you.
5. Could be interesting. Maybe he plays well.
This is how people from uncertainty tolerant cultures might feel. A novel, ambiguous situation piques their curiosity.
6. The waiter should remove this man.
People from cultures high on power distance might feel this way. Or it might indicate strong uncertainty avoidance: the man is out of place in a restaurant and that is unsettling.

A Meeting in the Street

You are walking along the street in a town that is not your own. The street is quiet. Somebody crosses the street and walks toward you. What do you think?

1. This person means to rob you.
People from a masculine culture might feel this way. In a masculine culture, strangers don't trust each other. If this culture is also strongly uncertainty avoiding, this would add to the distrust.
2. This person means to ask for directions.
In feminine countries, people tend to trust strangers, and they might feel this way.
3. This person means to have a chat with you.
This is an uncertainty tolerant point of view. It might also speak of collectivism: taking time for socializing.
4. This person might invite you to dinner.
A person from a collectivist culture might have this expectation if the person has reason to expect that he or she will be considered part of the ingroup.
5. This person is going to tell you that you are not allowed to be here.
Somebody from an uncertainty avoiding country might think this, particularly if power distance is also large.
6. This person means to sell you something.
This might occur in many countries, but it is more likely to happen in collectivist nations, where personal contact and trade are more mixed than in individualist ones.