Cultural Humility
Tip Sheet

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TRIAD CULTURAL COMPETENCE PROVIDER COUNCIL

BY ASHLEY GRIFFIN, MSW CANDIDATE 2018, NCCU

DEFINITION AND HISTORY

Cultural humility is defined as a humble and respectful attitude towards other cultures. It encourages challenging structural inequality and oppressive systems while focusing on individual experiences and identity.

The term, first coined in 1998 by medical doctors Melanie Tervalon and Jann Murray-Garcia, was established due to the limitations of cultural competency. Cultural humility is designed as a learning method to teach us to become competent and knowledgeable of experiences that we assume about other cultures. Displaying cultural humility pushes one to incorporate a lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and critique to redress the power imbalances in counselor-client relationships (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia 1998, p. 123).

Like Person-Centered Planning (PCP), cultural humility recognizes the individual's strengths, interest, and needs. Cultural humility and PCP are both designed to help individuals participate in communities and develop personal relationships, skills, and the ability to achieve goals.

MAJOR KEYS

Goal: Encourage personal reflection around culture to increase growth

Value: Introspection and co-learning

HOW TO RECOGNIZE CULTURAL BIASES

- **Be nonjudgmental**
  - Suppress the tendency to view others in a negative light
- **Be flexible**
  - Readjust quickly to effectively change situations
- **Be resourceful**
  - Know how to quickly respond well to any situation
- **Pay attention to your feelings**
  - Take your feelings seriously and keep in touch with how you feel about others
- **Personalize observations**
  - Express personal beliefs in a warm, personal way regardless if they are the same as someone else's

THREE MAIN COMPONENTS

1. **Lifelong commitment to self-critique**
   - It's okay to not know everything
   - Remain humble and aware of differences
   - Be critical of your own cultural biases
   - Challenge your assumptions, judgements, and prejudice
2. **Adjust your power imbalances**
   - Places opportunity to acknowledge power and privilege
   - Recognizes that everyone brings something different to the table
   - Gives a chance to look at client's expertise, history, and interests
3. **Develop partnerships with people and groups who advocate for others**
   - Creates positive change
   - Limitations are revealed
   - Helps develop caring, compassionate, and effective practice
   - Enhances awareness and insights
   - Learning and growing process

AVAILABLE TRAININGS

Kathy Fitz Jefferies, LCSW LCAS CCS
Practical Applications, PLLC Clinical Addictions Social Worker/Clinical Supervisor/Educator
Email: PracApps@icloud.com
Phone: (704) 267-9039

REFERENCES

https://culturallyconnected.ca/cultural-humility/

https://www.naadac.org/assets/2416/kathleen_fitzjefferies_ac17ppt.pdf

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVmOXVIF8wc