Preferred Systems, Inc.

A Cultural Journey

Trust and respect toward others begins with awareness and respect for self
CULTURE

• Culture determines how we see the world and the way we see the world is reflected in our behavior.
DEFINITION OF CULTURE

- Culture represents the vast structure of behaviors, ideas, attitudes, values, habits, beliefs, customs, language, rituals, ceremonies and practices 'peculiar' to a particular group of people, and it provides them with:
  - A general design for living and
  - A pattern for interpreting reality.

Wade Nobles
“Man’s medium; there is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by culture. This means personality, how people express themselves, the way they think, how they move, how problems are solved, how their cities are planned and laid out, as well as, how economic and government systems are put together and function.”

Edward T. Hall, *Beyond Culture*
Culture is more than “just race”

• Ethnicity
• Gender
• Sexual Orientation
• Age
• Family Origin
• Political Orientation
• Geographical and Regional Differences
• Occupation

• Education
• Physiology
• Social / economic class
• Relational Status
• Religious Beliefs
• Institutional Styles
• And much more...
DEFINITION OF Cultural Competence

is a set of congruent:

• Practice Skills
• Attitudes
• Policies
• And
• Structures

• Which come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work efficiently in cross-cultural situations.

CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

- Emphasis on identifiable patterns of growth and experience. The response of individuals over time and various periods throughout the life cycle and responses at specific chronological ages.

ETHNO-CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT EMPHASIS:
- Relationships with others
  - Cultural heritage
  - Values/beliefs of family system
  - Cognitive and affective interactions
  - Problem solving/conflict resolution
Effects of Historical/Current Oppression

Practitioners:

1. Should be aware of sociopolitical dynamics that form or contribute to their own and their clients’ worldviews

2. Must recognize that the history and experiences of culturally diverse individuals have often been rooted in oppression, discrimination, and racism
Cultural Barriers: Special Considerations for Professionals

- Possessing an accurate understanding of clients’ circumstances will prevent tendencies to overpathologize or underpathologize clients’ symptoms.
- Be sensitive to potential linguistic and cultural barriers when working with refugees or immigrants, especially when one lacks experience or expertise.
- School and social service personnel should take responsibility for enlightening themselves about indigenous practices (i.e. healing).
Considerations

❖ All counseling and therapy is multicultural to some extent.

❖ Counselors need to recognize that race and ethnicity are only two types of cultural issues (e.g., others include: social class, gender, sexual orientation, disability, etc.).
Cultural Universality vs. Cultural Relativism

- **Etic** refers to the use of a universal perspective in understanding people.

- **Emic** refers to the use of a culturally specific perspective in understanding the experiences of individuals.
Sociopolitical Nature of Counseling/Therapy

- Counseling and psychotherapy may impose unspoken standards without regard for differences in race, culture, gender, and sexual orientation.

- Counselors/therapists may engage in cultural oppression.

- Counseling and psychotherapy are sociopolitical acts.
Nature of Multicultural Counseling Competence

- From our perspective, helping professionals have seldom functioned in a culturally competent manner.

- Much of the standards of professional competence in counseling and psychotherapy are derived from Eurocentric values, belief systems, cultural assumptions, and the traditions of larger society.

• Sue & Sue, 2004
Nature of Multicultural Counseling Competence

- People of color constitute over 30% of the population in the U.S.

- Approximately 45% of youth of color are in the public schools.

- The rapid demographic shift is due to two major trends:
  1. Immigration rates
  2. Differential birthrates
Nature of Multicultural Counseling Competence

- 75% of people entering the labor force are visible racial/ethnic minorities and women.
- When the baby boomers retire, the majority of people contributing to the social security and pension plans will be racial/ethnic minorities.
- Business workforces increasingly must be drawn from a diverse labor pool.
Nature of Multicultural Counseling Competence

- Being confronted with different worldviews, values, and lifestyles is inescapable.

- They will need to acquire, understand, and develop new culturally effective helping approaches.

- They need to adopt ethical guidelines, codes of ethics, standards of practice, and by-laws that are multicultural in scope.
Nature of Multicultural Counseling Competence

- Psychology’s theories and practices are not apolitical and value-free.

- Counselors and psychologists may be prisoners of their own cultural conditioning.
Nature of Multicultural Counseling Competence

**Ethnocentric Bias**: the assumption that racial and ethnic minorities never had counseling and psychotherapy until it was invented and institutionalized in Western cultures.

**Cultural Encapsulation**:  
(a) the substitution of modal stereotypes for the real world  
(b) the disregarding of cultural variations in a dogmatic adherence to some universal notion of truth  
(c) the use of a technique-oriented definition of the counseling process
Nature of Multicultural Counseling Competence

- People may interpret all activities of the affected individual as pathological.
- A diagnosis may cause others to treat individuals differently even when they may be “normal.”
- A diagnosis may cause labeled individuals to believe that they possess such characteristics all of the time.
Nature of Multicultural Counseling Competence

**Cultural-bound values**: Possessing a monolingual orientation.

2. **Class-bound values**: Emphasis on long-range goals and strict adherence to time schedules.
   (a) Emphasis on cause-effect relationships
   (b) Implicit assumption that a clear distinction can be made between mental and physical illness and health

3. **Language variables**: Use of Standard English and an emphasis on verbal communication.
Nature of Multicultural Counseling Competence

- Pressure to adopt the values of the dominant culture.

- Emphasis on individuation as normal and healthy development.

- Counselors emphasize and value verbal, emotional, and behavioral expressiveness.

- Assumption that it is mentally beneficial for individuals to obtain insight.
Communication Styles

Aspects of communication that transcend the written or spoken word:

- Proxemics
- Kinesics
- Paralanguage
- High-low communication
Nonverbal Communication

- Nonverbals oftentimes occur outside of our level of awareness.

1. **Proxemics**: Perception and use of personal and interpersonal space.
2. **Kinesics**: Bodily movements (i.e., facial expressions, posture, characteristics of movement, gestures, eye contact).
Nonverbal Communication

3. **Paralanguage**: Other vocal cues that individuals use to communicate (e.g., loudness of voice, pauses, silences, hesitations, rate, inflections).

4. **High-Low Context Communication**: Anchored in the physical context (situation) or internalized in the person.
Misunderstood Communication

- We may misunderstand others’ communications if we solely focus on the explicit, coded part of the message.
- Low-context (LC) cultures place a greater reliance on the verbal part of the message.
- LC cultures have been associated with being more opportunistic and individualistic and as emphasizing rules of law and procedure.
Systems Theory

• All living things are biologic systems.

• They function best when in balance (homeostasis).

• When out of balance, they seek to regain their balance
Conflict

• Differences in values, needs, interests, and opinions can lead to conflict.

* Anger can develop out of conflict
Dealing with Conflict

- Five-step process
- What is: what is the nature of the conflict?
- Motivation: what is the energy/need for change?
- Resistance: what is the energy/need to avoid change?
- Dialogue between the two sets of energies/needs, seeing the wisdom of each.
- New “what is”.
Implications of Conflict

- Stress
- Frustration
- Feeling threatened
Dimensions of Worldviews

*Worldview*: How a person perceives his/her relationship to the world (nature, institutions, other people, etc).

Worldview is highly correlated with a person’s cultural upbringing and life experiences.
Worldviews

The Basics:

• A sense of identity
• Rootedness
  - Where do you see yourself and others unique?
• Frame of orientation
  - How do we test the validity of our perceptions?
Perceptions

What our belief systems tell us and how we react....

• About recovery and resiliency
• Health services vs. illness services
• Roles and Relationships with others who are “different”
Dimensions of Worldview

- Value Orientation Model of Worldviews
- Locus of Control
- Locus of Responsibility
- Formation of Worldviews
Locus of Control

• Locus of responsibility: The degree of responsibility or blame placed on the individual or system
  • Internal
  • External

*safety → Strengths → Skills (performance)*
Locus of Control

- Rotter (1996)
- Formulation of Internal-External Control & Internal-external Dimension Concepts
- measures the degree of responsibility placed on the individual or system. The degree of emphasis placed on the individual as opposed to the system in affecting a person’s behavior is important in the formation of life orientations.
Locus of Control

**Internal control (IC):** People’s beliefs that reinforcements are contingent on their own actions and that people can shape their own fate.

**External control (EC):** People’s beliefs that reinforcing events occur independently of their actions and that the future is determined more by chance and luck.
Three Factors of Importance

1. *Control ideology*: Measure of general belief about the role of external forces in determining success and failure in the larger society.

2. *Personal control*: Person’s belief about his/her own sense of personal efficacy or competence.

Locus of Control
I-E Dimension Continuum

• High Dimension Of Externality:
  • Chance or luck
  • cultural dictates viewed as benevolent
  • political forces (racism/discrimination), interpersonal, or social/political obstacles.
Locus of Responsibility

• attribution theory (Jones et al., 1972; Zimbardo, 197 - present)
• Measures the degree of responsibility/blame placed on the individual or system.
• The degree of emphasis placed on the individual as opposed to the system in affecting a person’s behavior is important in the formation of life orientations.
Locus of Responsibility

**person-centered**

- focus on the individual. Individuals who possess a person-centered orientation:
  - (a) emphasize the understanding of a person’s motivations, values, feelings, and goals
  - (b) believe that success or failure is attributable to the individual’s skills or personal inadequacies
  - (c) believe that there is a strong relationship between ability, effort, and success in society.
Situation-centered/ system-blame orientation

• The socio-cultural environment is more potent than the individual.
• Social, economic, and political forces are powerful
• success or failure is generally dependent on the socioeconomic system and not necessarily on personal attributes.
Locus of Control/
Locus of Responsibility

Both may be placed on a continuum where they may intersect forming four quadrants:

• High internal personal control (IC) individuals believe that they are masters of their fate.
• High in internal locus of responsibility (IR) attribute their current status and life conditions to their own unique attributes.
Locus of Control/
Locus of Responsibility

- Internal locus of control-internal locus of responsibility (IC-IR)
- External locus of control-internal locus of responsibility (EC-IR)
- Internal locus of control-external locus of responsibility (IC-ER)
- External locus of control-external locus of responsibility (EC-ER)
Locus of Control/
Locus of Responsibility

- **External control-internal locus of responsibility (EC-IR):**
- most likely to accept the dominant culture’s definition for self-responsibility but to have very little real control over how they are defined by others.
Internal locus of control
internal locus of responsibility (IC-IR)

• High internal personal control (IC) individuals believe that they are masters of their fate.

• Likewise, people high in internal locus of responsibility (IR) attribute their current status and life conditions to their own unique attributes.
External locus of control—external locus of responsibility (EC-ER)

• A person high in system-blame and external control feels that there is very little one can do in the face of severe external obstacles, such as injustice, oppression, prejudice and discrimination.
External locus of control

external locus of responsibility (EC-ER)

- EC response might be a manifestation of
- (a) having given up or
- (b) an attempt to placate those in power. When individuals experience that their responses have minimal effects on the environment. Life is viewed as relatively fixed, with nothing much the individual can do.
Internal locus of control – external locus of responsibility (IC-ER)

• Individuals who score high in internal control and an external locus of responsibility believe in their ability to shape events in their own life if given a chance.

• They do not accept that their present state is due to their own inherent weakness.
DEFINITIONS: ETHICS, MORALITY & LAW

• Ethics
  • A philosophical discipline that is concerned with human conduct & decision making

• Morality
  • Involves judgment or evaluation of action

• Law
  • The precise codification of governing standards that are established to ensure legal & moral justice.
ETHICS

- Violation of confidentiality
- Exceeding one’s level of professional competence
- Negligent practice
- Claiming expertise one does not possess
- Imposing one’s values on a client
- Creating dependency in a client
- Sexual activity with a client
- Questionable financial arrangements, such as charging excessive fees
- Improper advertising
LIMITATIONS OF ETHICAL CODES

• Some issues cannot be resolved by a code of ethics.
• Enforcing ethical codes is difficult.
• There may be conflicts within the standards delineated by the code.
• Some legal and ethical issues are not covered in codes.
• Ethical codes are historical documents. Thus, what may be acceptable practice at once time may be considered unethical later.
• Sometimes conflicts arise between ethical and legal codes.
• Ethical codes do not address cross-cultural and legal codes.
• Ethical codes do not address cross-cultural issues.
• Ethical codes do not address every possible situation.
• There is often difficulty in brining the interest of all parties involved in an ethical dispute together systematically.
• Ethical codes are to proactive documents for helping staff decide what to do in new situations.
OTHER GUIDELINES FOR ACTING ETHICALLY

• Personal and professional honesty.
• Acting in the best interest of clients.
• Justify an action